

Clyde House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106936
Inspection date	19 November 2007
Inspector	Karen Elizabeth Screen
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Registered person	Ian Mann
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Clyde House Day Nursery has been registered since May 1988. It is located within a two storey Victorian House, in the Bishopston area of Bristol. Children under the age of two years are cared for on the first floor. Children aged two and above are accommodated on the ground floor. There is a secure garden for outside play.

The nursery is open from Monday to Friday between 08.15 and 17.45 throughout the year, except for bank holidays. It offers full and part-time care for children aged from six weeks to five years old. There are 55 children on roll aged between four months and four years old. Of these, eight receive funding for early years education. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employ ten members of staff including a general manager who oversees both Clyde House and its sister nursery Ashgrove Park. Of this number, eight work directly with children. All hold appropriate early years qualifications, six at Level 3 and two at Level 2. The nursery have gained the quality assurance award 'The Bristol Standard for Early Years'.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines and develop independence in using the facilities provided. For example, older children remember to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Younger children who need assistance in completing personal tasks, receive a high level of support. Children's health is promoted well. A prominently displayed poster about infection control, helps to make parents aware that they must not let their children attend with infections illnesses. Good records are kept of children with particular health requirements in order to safeguard their welfare. In addition, most staff members hold valid first aid certificates and demonstrate a clear understanding in the treatment of minor accidents.

Children's healthy diet is given top priority within the setting. The nursery offer a good variety of nutritious meals and snacks, made with fresh produce whenever possible. Even very young children enjoy meal times as a social event and chat to their friends whilst enjoying the plentiful and freshly cooked food. They also benefit from a relaxed approach, which ensures ample resources and time. Babies and toddlers quickly develop confidence in feeding themselves, supported by staff who are alert to their needs and 'requests'. For example, a child aged under 12 months happily feeding himself using his fingers, holds out a spoon to a member of staff who asks 'would you like some help?'. She pushes some of the Ratatouille and rice onto the spoon and hands it back to the child, who carefully puts it into his mouth.

Children have a positive attitude to exercise. They are able to enjoy daily exercise because staff make regular provision within their planning to offer energetic outdoor and indoor experiences, such as negotiating the climbing frame and dancing to music. Children recognise when they are hot or cold. For example, a child remarks that her 'hands are cold' and asks for help to put on her gloves.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

A warm welcoming atmosphere is evident everywhere, but especially upstairs. Comfortable 'nursing' chairs in the baby room give a homely feel, and are used by staff and parents to cuddle and feed the babies and young children. The environment is inviting to parents, with helpful information posted on the notice board, such as up-to-date named staff photographs and recent photographs of the children engaged in a variety of activities and experiences. Older children make confident choices from the resources provided, many of which are labelled and accessible. However, the organisation of craft materials does not enable children to easily make selections for themselves.

Children are well protected by senior staff who are clear about child protection procedures. They are aware of the possible signs of children at risk and of their responsibility to report their concerns, according to Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Less experienced members of staff are aware of the nursery policy and procedure, and of their own role in safeguarding children.

Generally, children are able to move safely around the nursery. Their safety and welfare is fostered by strong promotion of the nursery procedures for collecting children, such as use of

the safety catch on the tall gate. Communication between staff and management for reporting accidents is robust. For example, an accident which happened outside, is treated inside straightaway and reported to the manager. The accident record is also quickly filled in by the member of staff who witnessed the accident. Although staff carry out regular risk assessments for many aspects of the nursery, staff deployment sometimes lacks foresight and awareness of potential dangers. For example, children's safety is compromised when they use the trampoline, because it is not always positioned and supervised appropriately, or used safely by children. In addition, a box full of 'junk' materials positioned against the end of a child's cot, poses a risk to their safety, because some of the items are small or slim enough to fit through the bars of the cot.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Overall, children receive a good level of care. They are happy, keen to attend and quickly settle. They make friends with their peers and develop strong, secure, relationships with the warm and friendly staff team. Children benefit from staff who are interested in what they say and do. They are also becoming aware of the benefits of sign language as an additional means of communication. Their confidence and self-esteem are raised by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. Children are curious and have a positive approach to new experiences. They are encouraged and supported to use all of their senses to test the properties of different materials, over time. Staff offer effective support through well-timed interventions, such as knowing when to assist and when to leave the children to explore on their own. Even very young children take pride in helping to keep their environment tidy, such as helping to put away the toys before snack time.

The plans and patterns within the day are well established. Children are beginning to predict what will happen next, and to extend their skills in a secure environment. Plans are used as a basis for the day, but are not rigid and are subject to review according to the children's interests and other variables such as the weather. Provision for children aged under two is particularly strong, but there are weaknesses in some aspects of care for children aged between two and three years old. Generally, children aged under two years old are cared for upstairs and follow the Birth to three matters curriculum. Staff have a secure understanding of the curriculum, but do not use it to the best advantage to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are given sufficient attention throughout the week in order to meet the needs of children attending on a part-time basis; or as a tool for planning individual children's progress. Children aged between two and three are cared for downstairs, often alongside children aged between three and four years old and follow the Foundation Stage curriculum; rather than the more appropriate Birth to three matters curriculum.

Group sizes for planned activities are suitable and allow children to participate fully. However, grouping of children aged between two and four years old at other times tends to be too large, with too great a stretch of abilities, such as during dance or story times. This results in some children losing interest, and affects the ability of others to contribute, or to express their thoughts and feelings about personal or significant events.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals is variable. Similarly, they have variable expertise in the use of effective questioning and prompting to reinforce children's learning. Staff make

regular useful observations, but these are not linked effectively to planning, to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are delivered to a constant standard, or to help children to build on what they already know. Staff plan the environment well to enable children to select and use appropriate resources and materials, such as for building and construction; but this is not carried through to the organisation of resources for craft activities or experiences. Activities are generally adult-led, and sometimes insufficient attention is directed towards developing children's capabilities. For example, staff present children with a pre-cut Christmas tree shape and green paint, instead of allowing children to benefit from studying trees, cutting out the shape and mixing shades of paint for themselves. This also applies to the care and education of children aged between two and three who are taught alongside children aged from three to four years old. Although there are currently no children present with learning difficulties or disabilities, the manager demonstrates a sound knowledge and understanding of the process of identification and measures for supporting individual children.

Children show a strong sense of self as a member of the nursery and as a member of their own families. They respond well in a caring environment where they learn to consider other people's needs as well as their own. They learn to be cooperative and work well together, for example when it is time to tidy up, one child holds the box, whilst the other puts away the mobile telephones they have both been playing with. Children are very aware of behavioural expectations and all stop to listen to new instructions, even though they are engrossed in outdoor pursuits. Children show increasing independence, for example independently managing their own hygiene. However, some opportunities for encouraging children to become active and independent learners are not always sufficiently well fostered, such as encouraging and supporting all children to pour their own drinks.

Children demonstrate good speaking skills, for example an older child describes to her friend, how her mother styles her hair 'but sometimes it hurts when it's knotty'. Children negotiate and organise their play. They use talk well to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what is happening next. For example, two of the older children pushing warmly wrapped dolls in pushchairs, stop outside the play house. One remarks 'this one here is another doctors' to which the other replies 'no, it's another house!' They eventually agree that is a house and navigate the playground until they agree they have found the correct clinic. Activities such as painting are not sufficiently exploited to include writing for a purpose, such as encouraging children to add their own names to their work. In addition, mark making is not always fully supported; for example in role play, by the regular provision and modelling of pencils and paper to make shopping lists; or through regular planned activities such as making shapes in sand and foam, using just their fingers, rather than the more formal 'pencil control' sessions currently favoured by the nursery.

Children are beginning to use language to compare size and shape as they construct with plastic bricks. They also talk about, recognise and recreate simple patterns using peg boards and 'number bears'. They enjoy singing nursery rhymes, learning to subtract by one as they sing 'Five Little speckled Frogs'. However, opportunities to develop children's understanding of calculations through everyday activities such as laying the table, or finding out if they have enough chairs for snack time, are insufficiently fostered. The potential to develop children's understanding of volume, weight and capacity is not always sufficiently exploited as they play with sand and water.

Children are developing an awareness of features of their local community through numerous purposeful visits, such as posting letters and buying the ingredients to make cakes from the local supermarket. They explore and investigate objects and living things to find out more

about them, such as noticing the habits of the semi-tame pigeons on the bird table and looking closely at the insects living in and around the natural habitat created by a tree stump and several logs. Children also learn about life-cycles as they plant and nurture pumpkin seedlings, rescued from the pumpkin lanterns they made to mark Halloween.

Children are improving their physical competences, such as in balancing as they regularly negotiate narrow beams and 'stepping stone' beams. They show respect for each other's personal space, carefully avoiding bumping into each other as they peddle tricycles around the playground and weave toy pushchairs in and out of the 'traffic'. However, the rules for physical play equipment are not sufficiently well rehearsed; for example, two and sometimes three children attempt to use the trampoline together.

Children enjoy singing simple songs from memory, and learn to link sound and movement through daily participation in dance and music making sessions. They actively engage in imaginative play based on their own experiences. For example, a child tells her younger friend 'you be the baby, I'll be the mummy, 'cause I'm big'. They are supported by staff who model the pretending process well and who ensure that the 'dressing-up' clothes and resources are presented well. Children enjoy combining different media and materials, but the organisation of craft resources does not encourage children to extend adult-led creative activities for themselves, or to explore and research their own ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children behave very well. They are encouraged to negotiate solutions to conflicts and to explain how they feel. Staff provide good role models through their calm and polite manner and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They set and maintain clear and consistent limits, using positive behaviour strategies. Children respond well to guidance about rules and boundaries. For example, children playing outside all stop to listen when they are advised that 'it's the last turn on the equipment before it's time to go in'.

Children are beginning to learn about the different activities and the people involved in their residential and commercial community. Their awareness of features of their environment is raised through a number of impromptu outings such as to the local bottle bank. Children learn to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through books and resources chosen to reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. Through discussion, staff and management display a 'can do' attitude towards finding a solution to any difficulties affecting the inclusion of all children. Staff are committed to undertaking any relevant training needed in order to support children's individual needs, such as use of the sign language Mackaton.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children are developing a sense of belonging through the warm welcome extended to their whole families. Staff are well informed and sensitive to the parents own needs. Parents speak positively about the settling in procedures and the very good relationships enjoyed between staff, parents and children. Parents receive general information about the setting when they register their children and are asked to provide detailed information about their child's development and preferences. The notice board contains helpful information about the organisation of the nursery and a copy of the twice yearly newsletter. However, they receive little information about the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage of learning, or explanations about the purpose of the activities and experiences and how these help children to learn.

There are effective informal channels of communication, but less attention is paid to providing formal feedback on children's learning. Parents feel able and welcome to discuss their observations of their children's learning and development with staff at any time, but many are unaware that they can also add their observations to their children's files at any time too. This means that children's records are not quite as full and accurate as they might be and that parent's knowledge of their children is not always exploited to support and develop the learning opportunities provided by the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Records meet regulatory requirements and are easily available at all times. Emergency numbers are clear and easily available. Detailed personal information and permission for specific activities is obtained before the children are due to attend and is filed securely for each child. Policies and procedures, such as the child collection policy, have been specifically developed for the nursery, in order to help promote the efficient management of the provision.

Leadership and management is satisfactory.

The whole nursery team throughout the provision work well together and have developed a particularly strong team spirit. Children benefit from staff who feel valued, included, recognised and respected. Staff hold the management in high regard, and many have remained at the setting and/or its sister nursery Ashgrove Park, for many years. Staff are well qualified and exceed the expected qualification requirement. Children profit from the management's commitment to supporting staff training and development, and through the staff's commitment to undertaking relevant training, in order to develop their own practice and to support children's individual needs. Management and staff recognise that their practice will benefit from improved delivery of the curriculum and from reviewing practices for safeguarding children. Although management review the quality of their practice and provision, they are not always successful in addressing areas identified for improvement through inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery agreed to improve safety, organisation, planning and hygiene within the nursery. Children are protected, such as in the event of evacuation, because their names and accurate records of their attendance ensure that they can be accounted for and protected. Although risk assessments are undertaken regularly and action taken to address any identified risks, some escape notice. Space is not always organised effectively to best meet children's requirements. Children aged under two years old are offered a greater range and variety of play materials, but multi-sensory experiences such as water-play are offered less frequently, so that children attending on a part-time basis are less well provided for. Procedures such as staff wearing disposable gloves during nappy changes, sustain good levels of hygiene and help to prevent the spread of infection.

As a result of the last education inspection, the nursery agreed to improve planning, assessment and delivery of the curriculum. Although planning records show which areas of learning have been addressed, they do not highlight those which have not been covered in sufficient detail. Staff undertake regular observations, but these are not effectively linked to planning, in order to track children's progress across the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, or to help children to build on what they already know.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of the complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review staff deployment and undertake risk assessments of potential dangers to children when using the trampoline and sleep room
- ensure that children are grouped appropriately to develop their listening skills according to their individual needs (applies to education also)

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all staff have a secure understanding of the curriculum used to support children's learning
- develop links between observations, assessment and planning; in order to draw attention to areas within the curriculum which are not delivered to a constant standard, and to support individual children to build on what they already know (applies to care also)
- ensure that the curriculum promotes a 'child-led' approach to learning (applies to care also)

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk