

Downs Park Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106941
Inspection date	11 February 2008
Inspector	Carol Cox
Setting Address	46 Downs Park West, Westbury Park, Bristol, BS6 7QL
Telephone number	0117 9628526
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Registered person	Downs Park Nursery
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Downs Park Day Nursery has been operating in the Westbury Park area of the city of Bristol since 1988. It is based in a large Edwardian semi-detached house, and children are accommodated on the ground and first floors. A maximum of 44 children may attend at any one time. The nursery operates all year round, excluding Bank Holidays, Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 18:00. All children share access to an outside play area to the rear of the premises and a garden at the front.

There are currently 86 children aged from seven months to under five years on roll. Of these, 37 children receive funding for early years education. The nursery has experience of supporting children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as a second language.

The nursery employs 15 members of staff who work directly with children. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Staff promote children's health and well-being very effectively through thoughtful and detailed procedures and routines. Throughout the nursery staff support children in becoming independent and learning good self-care skills. For example, in the pre-school room children independently take themselves to the toilet and remember to wash their hands. In the toddler room younger children recognise when they need a tissue and confidently seek help, they also understand the importance of disposing of tissues properly. There are excellent procedures in place to exclude children who have infectious illnesses, thereby protecting others from the spread of infection. The medical needs of all children are carefully identified and addressed through vigilant procedures; staff seek written guidance and consent from parents and carefully record any medication administered. Most of the staff have current paediatric first aid certificates which means that any minor injuries may be treated appropriately.

Children thrive on regular outside play and fresh air in the garden or on local visits. Even the youngest babies enjoy play periods in the garden whatever the weather. Staff promote children's large physical skills through well-planned activities. For example, older children enjoy pedalling bicycles, rocking the seesaw and practising their ball skills. Babies and toddlers relish the opportunity to crawl and toddle around on the safety surface. As part of their outdoor activities children also learn about their bodies and how to address their own needs. For example, babies and toddlers happily wore hats to keep their ears warm when playing in the garden on a very cold and frosty morning.

The nursery provides healthy and nutritious meals and snacks which are all freshly prepared by the cook. The individual dietary requirements of each child are meticulously documented, these details are supplemented with photographs of the child concerned to ensure no mistakes are made. Children enjoy opportunities to taste different foods as part of their everyday learning. Staff are rigorous in checking that each child's specific dietary needs are not compromised during such activities. For example, when children enjoyed tasting Chinese food a packet of prawn crackers containing eggs was carefully kept away from children with egg allergies. All children in the nursery have access to drinking water at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff are very knowledgeable about how to provide a safe and stimulating environment where children of all ages may learn and develop. Each room offers interesting and cosy spaces appropriate to the ages of the children. The rooms are brightly decorated with many examples of children's own work. Staff conduct rigorous risk assessments and daily checks of the premises, activities and outings. Regular fire drills are held to ensure that all staff and students are clearly aware of the procedure to follow; these are recorded meticulously. There is an abundant range of high quality toys, resources and equipment in each room to stimulate children's interests and learning. Stringent procedures ensure that children's safety is further safeguarded. For example, only people authorised by parents are allowed to collect children, in case of an emergency a password system is agreed with parents.

Children are effectively protected from abuse because staff have a very clear understanding and knowledge of how to recognise signs and symptoms of different forms of abuse and the

appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns. Staff regularly attend child protection training to ensure their knowledge and the nursery's procedure meets current Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. The child protection policy is shared with parents and a record is maintained of accidents happening outside of nursery.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children, toddlers and babies make excellent progress in the care of experienced and knowledgeable staff. Each staff team plans comprehensively for the play, learning and development of the children in their care, using both the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The planning of activities for babies and younger children is securely based on the interests and achievements of each child. Staff evaluate activities daily to ensure that all children are offered an exciting and appropriate curriculum. Younger children and babies particularly benefit from the staff's excellent knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework. Staff maintain meticulous records of each child's progress in individual profiles. These are beautifully illustrated with photographs of children's achievements, examples of their work and detailed observations, which are colour-coded to match the components of the framework. This helps staff identify next steps in learning for each child and enables parents to further understand how their children are progressing. Staff plan a wealth of interesting activities to inspire children and promote their learning in all areas. For example, toddlers enjoyed an activity about caring for babies which stimulated discussions about their care and emotional needs and how to address them. Babies and young children are stimulated by the use of different materials and experiences, such as splashing in the paddling pool in the baby room or exploring gloop, experimenting with musical instruments and helping to water the garden with the fire-fighter's hose! Young children's language development is sensitively promoted by staff who build close relationships with children and spend time talking and listening to them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are supported to become confident and eager learners by intuitive and sensitive staff who build close relationships with children and have a good knowledge of how they learn. This depth of knowledge and understanding ensures an exciting and stimulating range of activities is made available to children. Staff understand the importance of supporting children in their chosen activities and listen carefully when they present ideas. For example, children's own interests are incorporated in planning for next learning. Each child's learning needs are carefully identified and activities supported where necessary, for example, during circle time a child with limited speech was enabled to join in through a voice box communication tool and book of photographs. The child was fully included and delighted that other children listened carefully and were eager to see the photographs.

Children benefit from freedom to choose resources and activities and use their imagination freely to express themselves. They understand that marks have meanings and staff support this by writing dictated captions for children's pictures and encouraging children to label their own work. Children show a great love of books and listened in fascination to the well read story of 'The boy who cried wolf'. Through gentle questioning and discussion a member of staff was able to help children explore and explain the story and its meaning.

Children are surrounded by numbers and opportunities to count and begin simple calculation through activities such as number rhymes and counting and adding objects. They recognise and name simple shapes in everyday objects, for example, they talked confidently about the curved edges of a floor puzzle. They use number skills in cooking activities, use charts to record their findings, for example when tasting Chinese foods, and confidently recognise numerals on their home made number line.

Staff offer many opportunities for children to learn about the world around them, for example, through local visits to the park and library. Older children are beginning to have a good sense of location, for example, a child described a visit to a restaurant and was able to explain which road it was in. They enjoy finding out about the lives of others when visitors, such as the librarian or hairdresser, come to speak to them about their jobs. They learn about their bodies and their physical needs through discussions. For example, one child explained that he had had an allergic reaction from touching animals on a farm visit. He clearly described how he was treated and asserted that he was better now. Children understand the importance of exercise for healthy bodies and thoroughly enjoy the regular outdoor play sessions in all weathers. Children thrive on opportunities to explore and express themselves and their ideas in role play situations which are thoughtfully resourced by staff. For example, a box of torches next to the cave challenges them to experiment with light and dark.

Staff use a wide range of thoughtful teaching methods to help children learn. They model good language to extend children's vocabulary and sentence construction, offer demonstrations of new skills and challenge children to explore and extend their activities. Thus, children become enthusiastic and confident learners able to make choices about resources and activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Each child is highly valued by sensitive and skilful staff who work closely with children and their families. For example, each child's learning and care needs are carefully identified in close consultation with parents. The nursery is experienced in working in partnership with multi-disciplinary teams of professionals and thus can provide excellent specialist care and education when needed. Staff members clearly enjoy the close and warm relationships they have with children who thrive from the attention they receive. Children are encouraged to feel great pride and ownership of their environment. This is demonstrated through the many examples of children's work decorating the rooms and the lively discussions children have with staff about their chosen activities and ideas. Children learn to value diversity by understanding the differences between themselves and their friends through carefully planned activities such as 'looking after babies'.

Parents are highly valued as prime partners in their children's care and learning. They contribute detailed information to ensure that children's needs are addressed in line with home routines. Staff always make time to talk with parents who value the attention their children receive. The nursery holds regular formal parents' evenings when they learn more about their children's progress through the wonderful individual profiles kept for each child. Staff are sensitive to parents' needs and are happy to reassure them when their children start attending nursery. For example, staff offer regular phone calls, photographs and videos to reassure parents that their children are becoming settled. There is a clear complaints procedure and a log to record any complaints made by parents, none are recorded.

Children behave extremely well through consistent and thoughtful behaviour management which encourages good behaviour. Children are offered opportunities to learn how their behaviour may affect others and how to respond appropriately in difficult situations. For example, children helped draw up simple rules for the pre-school room.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents spoken to report their high satisfaction with the care and education their children receive. They are kept well informed of how their children are progressing through regular formal and daily informal discussions with staff. There is clear and informative information made available to staff about the Foundation Stage curriculum. The nursery tries to build good relationships with local schools to prepare children for moving on. Parents find this very helpful and reassuring. The views of parents are sought and all present very positive and appreciative comments.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered extremely well through the rich variety of activities and resources on offer and the sensitive and knowledgeable staff.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management of the nursery is outstanding. The owner and manager are committed to providing an excellent service and constantly review the quality of the provision on offer. The staff are very well qualified and experienced and use their knowledge and understanding of how children learn to promote excellent progress in all areas. The nursery maintains a high ratio of adults to children which means that children's specific care and learning needs are always carefully considered and addressed.

There is an effective system in place to support staff through regular meetings when individual and organisational training needs are identified. For example, a training evening has been arranged to introduce staff to the new Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. There are rigorous procedures in place to ensure that children's safety is maintained at all times and staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are well supported by the clear and well-written policies and procedures which clearly meet national and local requirements.

All necessary documentation is in place and records are maintained meticulously, regularly reviewed, updated and stored securely. Staff obtain all necessary consents from parents which are recorded in the children's files. Parents share all records maintained about their children in confidence and sign and date to confirm their accuracy. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and shared with parents and the whole staff group.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to continue to develop the children's assessment system, to further support their learning and progress. Since the last inspection staff working with all children in the nursery have developed detailed and meticulous systems to record children's achievements. These individual profiles are now used to identify next steps in learning for each child and to plan for future activities. Thus, children's learning has been further enhanced and secured.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints 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 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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