

Christopher Robin Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122439
Inspection date	13 November 2007
Inspector	Patricia Jane Daniels
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Christopher Robin Nursery has been under its present ownership since 1996. It operates from the hall of St. Christopher's Church in Hinchley Wood. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 to 12:15, term time only. The children have use of the main hall and access to a secure outdoor area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 13 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community. The nursery has procedures in place to support children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs five staff. Four of the staff, including the owner/manager, hold an appropriate early years qualification. Three members of staff hold a current first aid certificate.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have training in paediatric first aid and written parental consent to seek emergency treatment is in place. This ensures that children have appropriate treatment if they have an accident. Written parental consent to administer medication ensures that children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. Children who are contagious do not attend, which prevents the spread of infection and illness.

Children learn some aspects about good personal hygiene through organised routines. For example, they all wash their hands before eating their snack. However, all children use the same bowl of water to wash, which presents a potential for cross contamination.

Children receive a range of nutritious snacks including bread and fruit, which promotes healthy eating from an early age. Staff talk to children about the importance of a healthy diet, to develop their understanding. Fresh drinking water is available at all times for children to help themselves. This encourages children to think about their personal needs. However, children's independence is not fully promoted at snack time because staff butter toast and pour drinks for the children.

Children play outside every day and benefit from the fresh air and exercise. They move confidently, pedalling the trikes and scooting along forwards and backwards. They negotiate space well, changing speed and direction to avoid each other. They are competent when using the climbing frame. Children use a range of small tools and equipment such as scissors, cutters, pencils and glue sticks to develop their skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

A very welcoming environment is created by the inviting presentation of toys and equipment for children's selection. Children's artwork is beautifully displayed and labelled with their names and descriptions of their work. There is an excellent range of toys and resources for children, maintained in good condition.

A formal, written risk assessment is undertaken to identify potential hazards and the actions needed to remove them. Staff make daily checks of all areas used and maintain a high level of security to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access. Staff interaction helps to develop children's awareness of safety within the setting. For example, children are told not to walk around with scissors and to sit cross-legged so that others do not trip. Staff generally supervise children well to ensure their safety, but sometimes younger children play unreliably with smaller resources. Fire drills are held once a term, using the same exit. This does not ensure that all children can become familiar with the procedures to follow and that all exit scenarios are considered.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of their roles in safeguarding children, which promotes their welfare. The written policy indicates the procedures to follow but does not include contact numbers for reference, or the circumstances surrounding the need to contact Ofsted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy themselves playing and learning from a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities. They make choices about what to do during the free play part of the session. The routine is structured so that all indoor resources are put away before snack time, outdoor play and story. This limits the opportunity for children to make truly free choices throughout the session. Children benefit from positive relationships with staff, which contributes to them feeling settled and secure. Staff offer praise and encouragement to build children's confidence and self-esteem.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff create a stimulating environment with plenty of resources. They generally interact well with children and respond to their interests. Sometimes staff steer learning rather than follow the children's direction. Staff ask open-ended questions to stimulate thought and challenge the children. They motivate children's learning by presenting activities enthusiastically. Staff observe the children during free and focussed activities, but do not have a consistent system to evaluate children's progress in all areas of learning. Written plans are in place but they do not cover all areas of the curriculum or show how activities should be differentiated, to ensure effective learning.

Children concentrate well at their self-chosen activities and enjoy new challenges. They are developing relationships with their peers and understand the need to share and take turns when playing together. Children are beginning to understand differences in their lives to others around them. They talk happily about their home life and family. They initiate conversations confidently with each other and with adults. Children attempt to write their names on their artwork and in their workbooks. Some write their names correctly. They enjoy looking at books independently and listening to stories, joining in with familiar phrases enthusiastically.

Children rote count confidently and accurately during circle time and develop understanding of simple addition and subtraction during everyday activities and one to one sessions. For example, they count the total number of children present and then the number of boys and girls within the two groups. They recognise numerals that are important to them, such as their age and house number. Children recognise the properties of simple shapes and use size and positional language.

Children investigate the sounds made by musical instruments and observe changes during cooking activities. They learn about the natural world by looking for signs of autumn and by sowing seeds. They are developing a sense of time through discussion of the day and date at circle time. Children have some opportunities to investigate information and communication technology, such as telephones and keyboards provided for role-play.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. They paint, draw and make collages that represent their experiences and ideas very well. They recognise different colours and explore the effects of mixing colours together when painting. Children join in action songs with enthusiasm and use imagination when engaged in role-play activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a positive attitude towards diversity. Children become aware of their own and other cultures through a range of resources, planned activities and as they celebrate a variety of festivals. Staff have a good understanding of children's home faiths, so that they can support and acknowledge important cultural events. Some parents supply quite detailed written information about their children's needs, preferences and abilities. However, this is not in place for all children.

There are systems in place to offer support to children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Liaison with parents and outside agencies ensures children's needs are met. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Staff encourage children to have good manners and praise them for being polite and helpful. The interesting environment keeps children purposefully occupied during the free-play time, which prevents inappropriate behaviour from developing. Staff support children in taking turns and generally manage behaviour with appropriate strategies during the free-play time. Sometimes children become unsettled, for example, as they wait for others during snack time and when preparing to play outside. Staff do not always manage behaviour in line with the group's policy during these times, resulting in an inconsistent approach.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Some parents contribute to an initial assessment of their child, which helps staff to build on what children already know. Informal discussions with parents promote continuity of care for the children. Parents receive regular newsletters that contain information about the current theme and related activities. They are encouraged to support their children, for example, by bringing in leaves and conkers as evidence of autumn. This builds links between the group and home. Information about the areas of learning and the Foundation Stage curriculum is provided for parents. However, there is no formal system for sharing children's progress towards the early learning goals, to ensure that all parents are informed. Parents do not always know how to access the information contained in the groups' policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff organise the indoor space effectively, allowing children to move around safely, freely and independently. All required checks are in place, ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children. Required information relating to the names and addresses of staff members is kept on site. However, there is no system for keeping records and evidence of staff training and qualifications. Regular staff meetings are held to share and to discuss relevant issues. However, there is no system of appraisals to assess staff and identify their training and development needs. Staff attend first aid training on a regular basis, but do not regularly attend training in other areas to update and refresh their knowledge and skills.

All required documentation relating to the safety, health and welfare of the children is in place. The attendance register is accurately maintained to record the times of children's attendance. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager's aim to provide an environment in which children develop confidence and independence is generally reflected within the setting.

She promotes this amongst her staff through regular staff meetings. Nursery education is evaluated and monitored by discussion and by checking records of children's progress, although these are incomplete in some areas.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, Ofsted requested that the groups should develop the use of the stepping-stones towards the early learning goals in planning, observation and record keeping in order to ensure that children's individual learning needs can be accurately incorporated into short term planning. The staff now use profiles to record observations of children. However, they have not developed a consistent system to incorporate children's individual learning needs into short term planning.

Ofsted also requested that the group should extend the use of home experiences to develop learning in the setting, particularly with regard to the rich cultural diversity of the children. This has been achieved. Ofsted also requested that the group should develop the steps taken to ensure that all children with special educational needs can access all areas of the curriculum, in order to make the best possible progress. The group has improved links with outside agencies so that children's needs and their access to the curriculum are more effectively met.

Ofsted requested that the group should improve records and documentation, and ensure that these are available at all times. Required documentation is now in place and available for inspection at all times. However, first aid certificates remain unavailable for inspection and this is highlighted again for improvement.

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 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):

- improve the children's hand washing routine
- improve understanding of safeguarding children and the procedures to take

- improve the system for sharing policies and procedures with parents

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):

- improve the system for sharing children's individual learning and progress with parents
- implement an appraisal system for staff
- improve planning to reflect all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum and to show how activities are differentiated

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