

# Treetops at Sunny Corner

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY268855
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Carol Johnson
<b>Setting Address</b>	146 Haunch Lane, Birmingham, West Midlands, B13 0PY
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<b>Registered person</b>	Treetops Nurseries Limited
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 good. 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?

Treetops at Sunny Corner Day Nursery has been open since 1990 and is one of 18 nurseries owned by Treetops Nurseries Limited. It operates from eight rooms in a converted convent building, in the Kings Heath area of Birmingham. There are good bus routes to and from the city. Several shops are within walking distance and Kings Heath High Street is in close proximity. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07.45 until 18.15. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 65 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these six receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery serves the local area. Suitable systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 member of staff. Of these, 8 hold appropriate early years qualifications. A cook and a cleaner are also employed. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are effectively protected from the spread of infection because they are cared for in a clean and healthy environment. They benefit from thorough and hygienic nappy changing routines and toys and equipment are regularly cleaned. Staff members are good role models and they help children to understand why everyday routines are necessary. Older children are encouraged to be independent with regards to their personal care and they have easy access to liquid soap and paper hand towels.

Children benefit, in the event of illness or a medical emergency, from the well-stocked and easily accessible first aid supplies and the high number of staff who have attended first aid training. A clear written sickness policy makes sure that parents are aware of the setting's health procedures and know not to send children who are clearly unwell and could pose a potential health risk to others. The nursery has clear systems regarding the administration of medication and this ensures that children are protected from a variety of risks, for example, from being given the incorrect medicine or dose. Only management are allowed to administer medicines.

Children benefit from healthy options at snack and mealtimes because menus are carefully devised to offer children a balanced and nutritious diet. Meals are cooked and prepared on site and care is taken to incorporate a serving of five portions of fruit or vegetables every day. Portion sizes are generous and food is attractively presented. Parents can choose to send in food for meal times and staff liaise with parents of babies to ensure that meals suit their needs. Mealtimes are well organised and encourage children's social skills and promote safety. Children are not at risk from dehydration as drinks are offered at mealtimes and all children have access to water within their rooms. Children are effectively protected from the risks associated with special dietary needs and food allergies because children's individual dietary needs are noted and respected.

Children in the nursery benefit from lots of physical play and exercise that helps to develop their muscles, co-ordination and confidence. The outdoor area is regularly used by all children and they have lots of opportunities to run about, enjoy fresh air and generally let off steam. Resources to support children's physical play are plentiful and easily accessible. For example, children can choose from a variety of wheeled toys, climbing equipment and balls. Young children are able to eat, rest and sleep according to their needs because staff talk to parents and discuss home routines. Staff endeavour to meet children's individual requirements and comfy areas are available for older children who may still need to sleep or relax quietly throughout the day.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the provision's warm and welcoming premises. There is plenty of space within the nursery and this is satisfactorily organised to provide room for children to play in comfort and safety. Children are provided with furniture and equipment that is safe and of good quality and the nursery is brightly and attractively decorated. Displays include examples of children's work, photographs of staff and children and general information about the setting. Consequently, children are helped to develop a sense of belonging and parents are provided

with additional information about what their children are doing and how the setting operates. Generally, there are lots of toys and resources available for children. Their independence and freedom of choice is promoted as a variety of toys are stored at their height within individual rooms. For example, in the room used by babies, a range of toys is placed out on the floor and a further supply is stored in low-level boxes and baskets that more mobile children can reach.

Children's safety is assured because a wide variety of security and safety precautions are in place. Thorough written risk assessments cover all areas of the premises, equipment and procedures. These assessments are regularly reviewed and staff carry out additional daily safety checks. Children's safety in the event of a need to evacuate the premises is effectively protected because appropriate and well-maintained fire safety equipment is in place. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in the event of a need to evacuate the building and fire drills regularly take place. Fire exits are marked and kept clear.

Children's welfare is protected by a staff team who demonstrate a good awareness of child protection issues. They are able to identify possible signs and symptoms of abuse and they know that their first priority is children's safety. Staff are regularly reminded of child protection procedures and they know to promptly report any suspicions to the manager. Children are not left unsupervised with unvetted persons, for example, workmen or visitors and they are only released into the care of known individuals.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use it effectively to help young children learn and achieve. Activity plans are displayed for parents to see and these include a wide range of experiences. For example, they include creative activities, physical exercise and music. Observations of children under three years of age are frequent and systematic. Staff use the observations to plan children's next steps in learning and also share them with parents.

Children enjoy a good balance of spontaneous and planned activities that help to improve their all-round development. They are encouraged to explore and investigate using all of their senses and enjoy easy access to a range of textures. They frequently engage in messy play activities, for example, using water, dough and paint. Resources to support children's experiences are suitably organised and as a result, encourage children to explore, gain independence and become confident in their surroundings.

Children are treated with kindness and concern by caring staff. They are settled and at ease to go to them for comfort, support and reassurance. Their well-being is supported because staff balance the familiar, predictable times of the day with the flexibility to change times according to children's individual needs and interests. Children are confident and happily interact with adults and each other. Staff sit with young children as they play, placing themselves at child level as they encourage communication and interaction. They skilfully balance children's need for independent play and exploration with their need to be held, carried or cuddled. They don't interrupt play unnecessarily but ensure that they are available for children who need support or are less able to amuse themselves.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a range of experiences to help children progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. For example, children take part in role play activities and a Christmas nativity production is planned. Staff help children to learn through the use of a range of teaching methods including role modelling language and skills, asking questions and encouraging children to try new experiences. Some staff skilfully use open-ended questions to help extend and consolidate children's learning and generally, staff encourage children to communicate and share their ideas. However, at times some staff show a limited understanding of how children learn and this has a negative impact on children's achievements and experiences.

Written planning is displayed for parents to see on the notice board outside the 'Clever Cross' room. However, planning displayed at the time of inspection related to October and therefore, provides parents and other adults with limited information about what is planned for the children. This restricts their ability to become involved in children's learning and to support it at home. Plans are not evaluated following their implementation and this means that staff have not fully considered the success of the learning environment, teaching strategies and whether their intentions for children's learning has been achieved.

Staff observe children during their play and record observations on sticky notes that they transfer to children's individual progress records. However, these observations and assessments are not systematic and are not effectively used to plan children's next steps in learning. Staff demonstrate a limited knowledge of how to observe children and effectively record and use their findings. Consequently, children may not be appropriately challenged and the information recorded in children's progress reports is not always accurate.

Children are outgoing, confident and are learning to be independent. They show good levels of independence and are able to select some resources and activities for themselves. Children go outside on a daily basis and get lots of practise at putting on and taking off coats and shoes. Most can do up the zips and buttons on their coats for themselves and staff offer necessary support and encouragement to others that are less able. Children demonstrate good computer skills and they confidently and competently use the mouse. More able children show a clear ability to follow on screen instructions and independently start and stop different programmes. However, children are not exposed to a variety of technology and this restricts their ability to develop an understanding of everyday technology that is all around them, for example, calculators and mobile phones.

Children are learning to listen to others in group situations and take turns in their play. Children are beginning to recognise some letters and more able children can identify many of the letters that make up their first name. Children are developing knowledge of number, shape, space and measure and a mix of both planned and spontaneous activities are used on a regular basis to promote these skills. For example, children count the number of chairs at the table at mealtimes, they talk about the shape of construction toys and they compare groups of objects identifying whether they have more or less. However, opportunities for children to recognise and independently use numbers and letters in their play are not fully exploited. This is because resources are not always available or effectively used. For example, resources to encourage reading and writing for a purpose are not evident in the role play area and the mark-making area contains limited resources.

Regular opportunities are provided for the children to be creative and children have experimented with shape, colour and textures and have used a variety of different materials to create pictures.

Children's artwork is displayed on the walls around the setting and this helps to create an attractive and welcoming environment. Also, this shows children that their efforts are valued and increases their self-esteem. A music teacher visits the setting on a weekly basis and helps children to explore their creativity through music movement and sound. Children demonstrate developing physical skills. They are able to negotiate an appropriate pathway when walking, running and using wheeled toys. Staff encourage children to gain an awareness of their bodies through exercise and asking them to use and point to different parts of their bodies. They stretch, hop and jump and the regular use of the large physical play equipment outside actively encourages their confidence, balance and co-ordination.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are taken into account because staff take time and make the effort to get to know children and their families. Children and their parents are warmly welcomed and their individuality is recognised and celebrated. Staff encourage children to talk about home and share their experiences and children are gaining a sense of belonging. An effective keyworker system helps to provide children and parents with a consistent adult with whom they can develop a trusting and supportive relationship. Children have access to a variety of toys and resources that reflect diversity. They learn about a range of religious and cultural festivals through craft activities and stories and children explore differences and similarities through everyday discussions and activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The provision has suitable systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The commitment to inclusion and the promotion of children's positive attitudes towards equality is evident in all policies and practices. A variety of relevant training has been attended by the nursery Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). Reasonable adaptations to the premises have been made but the design of the premises is not disability friendly as the provision is over two floors. However, the nursery is willing to work collaboratively with parents and other agencies to try and meet children's individual needs.

Children are learning to behave and staff encourage children to be caring and considerate towards each other. They explain why some behaviour is unacceptable and good behaviour is acknowledged and praised. Staff provide children with good role models; they react to situations calmly and quietly and they explain the reasoning behind necessary rules and boundaries. They encourage older children to sort out minor conflicts for themselves and they plan a variety of activities that encourage them to take turns and follow instructions. Older children show an understanding of rules in place to protect their safety, for example, they walk slowly and sensibly down the stairs, holding the hand rail, so as not to fall and hurt themselves or others.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Relationships are suitably enhanced and supported because staff and parents maintain regular and friendly two-way communication. However, confidentiality for children and their families is not always respected as some personal information is currently accessible in public areas. The nursery offers a warm and welcoming atmosphere and the main entrance foyer area provides parents and carers with a wealth of useful information about the nursery, for example, policies and procedures and photographs of staff. Daily information sheets are completed, by staff, for children under the age of three years and these provide valuable information about children's routines and activities. Parents are invited to twice-yearly parent evenings where they have an opportunity to discuss their children's progress. Parents are asked to comment, following these meetings and several positive

remarks have been recently received. For example, parents comment on the friendly and helpful staff. Settling-in arrangements for 'new' children are flexibly and carefully devised to suit individual needs.

However, additional information given to parents and/or carers of children receiving funding for early education is limited. Little information is shared to help them understand the Foundation Stage curriculum and although progress records are maintained for individual children, staff have yet to develop a clear and accurate system for gathering evidence to support these records. Some strategies are in place to encourage parents and carers to be involved in the setting and children's learning. For example, they are invited to social events and are asked if they want to come into the nursery and share their experiences, knowledge or expertise. However, these strategies are not actively encouraged, explored or promoted and as a result children's learning potential is not fully maximised.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in a welcoming environment. Staffing is organised appropriately to ensure children's welfare and safety. Good contingency plans are in place to cover both planned and unexpected absences and the manager is supernumerary. Recruitment and vetting procedures are thorough and management provide new staff with a carefully planned induction to ensure that they are able to implement the setting's policies and procedures. Required documentation is in place and suitably organised. However, children's welfare is not fully protected as records for staff and visitors do not always include their departure times.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The provision is one of a chain of nurseries and the nursery manager receives support from the head office and senior management support team. Policies and procedures are drawn up centrally and the manager at this setting is responsible for ensuring that they are followed by all staff and meet the needs of this nursery. The staff team demonstrate a commitment to providing quality care and education. The manager describes how she keeps abreast of childcare related subjects and any changes in legislation through her own professional development, reading publications and sharing good practice with other nurseries run by the company. The provision has recently achieved a recognised quality assurance award.

Staff receive regular appraisals and these are used by management to recognise staff achievements and identify their training needs. Staff have attended a wealth of training courses to improve their knowledge of relevant subjects for example, 'Food Hygiene', 'Health and Safety' and 'Child Protection'. Staff meetings are regular and these are used to discuss everyday practice issues and cascade training and good practice. However, there are some gaps in the systems for monitoring staff training needs and the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education. Also, space and resources to support children's care and learning are not always available or used effectively and this has a potentially negative impact on children's welfare and learning. Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure that the behaviour management policy was consistently applied throughout the nursery and to improve the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Training in behaviour management was implemented for all staff. Policies are regularly reviewed within staff meetings and an introduction to the setting's behaviour management policy and procedures forms part of the setting's staff induction procedures. Additional resources were purchased including a wider selection of role play items, posters, jigsaws and books and these are used to help children develop a sense of belonging and an understanding of diversity. Also, a greater range of activities are now introduced to increase children's understanding of the wider community, for example, children go on outings in the local environment and they learn about a range of religious and cultural festivals. Consequently, satisfactory improvements have been made to children's care and learning.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been two complaints made to Ofsted since April 1 2004.

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.

A concern was raised 09/09/2004 about an accident in the nursery and raised issues about levels of supervision of the children. This related to National Standard 6: Safety. Further concerns were raised relating to National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers and National Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted carried out an unannounced inspection on 16 September 2004, and raised one action in relation to National Standard 6: Safety. This was to review the risk assessment for the outdoor play area; and ensure that accident records are linked to any action plan drawn up to minimise any risks identified. The provider remained qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised 01/11/2005 regarding inappropriate staffing ratios. This concern related to National Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the setting and raised two actions and one recommendation; Ensure a record is kept of all staff working on the premises; Ensure that staff ratios are met at all times; Ensure that procedures for sleep promote the welfare of the children. The registered provider reported that all staff have received further training on the importance of signing in and the manager monitors the register on a daily basis, and has provided a copy of the contingency plan to ensure that staffing ratios are maintained at all times. Ofsted was satisfied that the registered person took appropriate steps to address the concerns, and the provider remained qualified for registration.

## **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 good. 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 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):



- ensure confidentiality for children and their families is respected
- ensure records show hours of attendance for staff and visitors.

### **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 staff knowledge and understanding of how children learn and the Foundation Stage curriculum
- improve systems for planning, observation, evaluation and assessment. This specifically refers to ensuring that children are provided with appropriate challenge and support and ensuring that observations and assessments are used effectively to inform future planning and children's progress records
- improve information shared with parents regarding the Foundation Stage and develop strategies to involve parents and carers in children's learning
- improve systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education
- improve the organisation of space and the organisation and availability of resources to increase children's enjoyment and achievement and expand their range of experiences (also applies to care).

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)