

# Cornerstone Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY285254
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Alison Jane Kaplonek
<b>Setting Address</b>	Cornerstone Day Nursery, Priestley Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 9PU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 818118
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Fencebright Ltd. trading as Cornerstone Nurseries
<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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cornerstones Nursery opened in March 2002 and was newly registered due to new ownership in 2004. It operates from nine rooms and has a large central hall which is used for a variety of activities and an enclosed outside play area. It is situated on the outskirts of Basingstoke. The nursery is registered to care for 150 children under the age of five. There are currently 177 children on roll. This includes 47 three and four year olds who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to provide support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five days a week, all year round from 7:00 to 18:00. Thirty seven staff work with the children. There are 17 members of staff qualified to Level 3 and seven to Level 2 in childcare and education. The manager and staff also hold relevant qualifications in childcare. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children are provided with nutritious snacks such as fruit, vegetables or breadsticks. Healthy main meals are cooked on the premises and adapted to accommodate the varied dietary needs of the children. Parents are consulted about their child's health and dietary needs, when completing the registration forms. They are kept well informed about the food and drinks their children have had each day, through the use of information sheets which are given to them when they collect the children.

Children independently take themselves to the toilets, and older children wash their own hands and clean their teeth after lunch. However, children are not adequately protected from the spread of infection, as many areas of the nursery are not sufficiently clean and children sometimes have to share a communal towel. Babies are put down to crawl around on the floor while eating their snack.

Children develop physical control, experiment with movement and improve their manipulative skills during a satisfactory range of activities, both indoors and outside. Babies and toddlers learn to develop control of their bodies, for example as they crawl or climb on the small wooden climbing frames, or push the dolls prams outside in the garden. Older children take part in music and movement sessions and are gaining an awareness of the space around them as they move between activities. Children use a satisfactory range of equipment, tools and materials safely as they paint, build and draw. Their outside play, however, is unplanned meaning that opportunities to fully promote physical development and extend the learning environment are missed.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an acceptably safe and secure environment where entry to the building is monitored. Sound procedures and the necessary safety equipment are in place to ensure children's safety. Check sheets are used in each room within the nursery, to assess risks, and check that the premises and equipment are safe. Children are safeguarded by staff who follow effective procedures, such as recording accidents or the administration of medicines. Appropriate use of the available space enables children to move freely between activities, accessing well maintained toys and play materials. Evacuation in the event of a fire is practised with both staff and children.

Children are protected by staff who have a satisfactory understanding of child protection procedures and keep local contact numbers accessible. They record any concerns they may have about the children in their care. Parents are provided with information about the child protection policy in the prospectus provided.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children are provided with a satisfactory range of resources for learning, some of which they can access themselves. They interact well with some staff and behave reasonably well. Babies and younger toddlers enjoy a range of activities such as exploring the contents of a treasure

basket or the sensory tray, and practising their crawling or walking skills. Older children are provided with activities such as construction, small world play or paint pens. They have access to pens and paper, and learn to use tools such as paint brushes, as they paint the outside fence with water. They enjoy using the varied outside environments, although their outside play is unplanned. Many activities are inappropriate for the children's age or stage of development. For example, they are asked to complete worksheets or colour in pictures which are too hard for them and from which they learn little. Most children are interested and keen to learn. However, the lack of consistent and appropriate planning restricts their ability to do so.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate.

Children are reasonably happy and enjoy the activities which they have the opportunity to take part in. They are kept busy with the routines of the day, such as tidying up for snack or lunch. The pre-school rooms within the nursery are colourful and laid out with some resources at child height for easy access. However, some areas are very under resourced, such as the provision of books for children to access themselves or resources for children to use when playing in the water tray to stimulate learning about quantity or measure. Children are sometimes put into small groups to take part in activities, such as looking at the shapes of buildings and then building their own models. While these activities are quite structured, they do have clear learning intentions. Activities are often very adult led and children are unable to use their imaginations or initiate their own learning. Plans are written for each room within the nursery, but are not overseen by a lead member of staff or linked to assessments of children's learning. Staff are all involved in making observations, but children's records of achievement are sometimes not accurate or kept up to date. Staff lack the knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn, to enable them to provide a stimulating, child led environment, where children are challenged correctly and able to make the best possible progress.

Most children talk to each other and staff as they play and some use language to explain what they are doing. They listen to and enjoy stories. However, the provision of books which children can access themselves is limited and there is little extension of language by staff. Children can access pencils and paper and enjoy drawing their own pictures, although activities such as tracing their names are inappropriate at this stage. Children have some opportunities to count and learn about shape and size during the small group activities or while using construction kits. However, there is little emphasis on problem solving or the introduction of mathematical language.

Children have some opportunities to explore the properties of different materials such as dough, clay or sand. They build with construction kits or design and build their own houses with junk materials. Children have access to some electronic toys but seldom use the computers available to support their learning. Children have some opportunities to explore colour or texture as they paint or explore the materials in the sensory tray. Overall, however, children are making insufficient progress in all areas of their learning.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are all valued and treated with respect. Information about their individual needs is obtained on clear registration forms when they first start at the nursery. Children behave

reasonably well and many are gaining in confidence and self-esteem. Some of the older children are learning to share and take turns with resources. They independently access the toilet facilities and some help to tidy up. Children are supported by staff who are calm and consistent in their management of behaviour. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or English as an additional language are also welcomed and included at the setting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Parents are provided with a wide range of information regarding policies and procedures in a handbook, when their children start at the nursery. Additional information such as the menus for the week, is available on the parents notice board and plans are displayed outside each room within the nursery. Parents find staff approachable and feel able to discuss any issues which may arise.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

There has been staff and management changes in the past few months. This is reflected in the organisation of both the outcomes for children's health and the education provision. Staff are beginning to work as a team. They are deployed within particular rooms within the nursery and work directly with the children. Satisfactory essential records are kept such as children's registration forms and permission slips, although systems to monitor the number of children on the premises are not always accurate. The registered person does not ensure that staff have regular meetings or are supported in identifying their training needs. Children are cared for in an environment where cleanliness, hygiene procedures and staff's knowledge of how children learn is inadequate to meet the needs of the children. Overall the nursery does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is inadequate.

The registered person does not ensure that staff are appropriately experienced or supported to fulfil their role within the nursery. There is no system in place to monitor or evaluate the provision for nursery education. As a consequence, children are cared for in an environment where they are inappropriately challenged and are making insufficient progress in their learning.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the nursery was asked to ensure that children under two years are cared for in groups of 12 or less. The children are all now cared for in small groups according to the ratios set out in the National Standards.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 4: Physical Environment, National Standard 8: Food and National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. Concerns raised were that the premises were not suitable due to a fire that occurred, that children's needs regarding food availability were not met and that parents were not informed immediately of the fire. Concerns were also raised that adult: child ratios were not being met.

Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to investigate and found that staff acted appropriately in relation to the fire that occurred and that adult: child ratios were being maintained. Ofsted took no further action in this matter. However, during the visit concerns were raised that the times the children arrive and depart at the nursery was not recorded, staff attendance records were not fully maintained and that a record of visitors was not maintained. As a result three actions were set under National Standard 2 and National Standard 6.

A response to the actions was received from the provider and Ofsted was satisfied that the provider was meeting the National Standards. Ofsted took no further action and the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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.

## 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- make sure that all areas of the nursery are kept clean and that children are protected from the spread of infection, particularly when washing and drying their hands.
- plan and provide a suitable range of stimulating activities for children, which are appropriate for their age and stage of development, and make sure that there is a consistent approach to this throughout all areas of the nursery.
- make sure that registers of children present are completed accurately.
- make sure that staff and management have the necessary training and experience to fulfil their roles effectively.
- develop systems to ensure that staff have regular meetings and appraisals.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn, to ensure that all children are correctly challenged in their learning and making good progress.

- make sure that assessment records are completed accurately for all children and that the information gained is used to inform future planning.
- develop systems to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education to improve the quality of teaching.
- expand the range of resources and activities, with particular regard to the provision of books, problem solving activities, and outside play.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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)