

# Sylvan Court Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY224651
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jane Pamela Berry
<b>Setting Address</b>	9 Farm Lane, Worsley, Manchester, M28 2PU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 794 6688
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Sylvan Court Day Nursery LTD
<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 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?

Sylvan Court Day Nursery opened in November 2002. The nursery is privately owned. It operates from a two storey building on Farm Lane in Worsley and serves the local community and surrounding areas. It is close to the motorway networks.

The setting provides full day care for 68 children under the age of five years. There are currently 54 children on roll altogether. This includes three funded three-year-old children. Children attend on both a full and a part-time basis. They are grouped according to their age and stage of development. The setting currently supports children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery operates Monday to Friday from 07.30 until 18.00, all year round, except for Bank Holidays.

The proprietor/manager is National Nursery Nursing Education Board, level three qualified. There are 11 staff who work directly with the children, most of whom hold an appropriate childcare qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's dietary needs are well met because staff consult parents, and all staff are made aware of any allergies or any special dietary requirements. They benefit from nutritious meals which cater for their individual needs and promote their healthy growth and development. They are provided with freshly cooked meals, mostly made from organic produce. Mealtimes are a relaxed, social occasion where children chat to each other and share their experiences. Their personal independence is promoted as they use appropriate cutlery to eat their meals and they sometimes help to prepare snacks for themselves. Fresh drinking water is readily available, throughout the nursery, as the children readily access individual drinking bottles with their name or photograph on. This helps to keep them well hydrated and fosters their personal independence.

Procedures are effectively followed by staff to protect children from illness and infection. Children are developing an awareness of hygiene practices. They wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. A suitable sick child policy is in place which excludes any children with infectious illnesses from the setting. Staff contact parents immediately if children become unwell. Children's needs can be responded to quickly by trained and qualified first aiders should an accident or emergency occur. However, on occasion parents have not been asked to sign entries in the accident record.

Children develop their manipulative skills as they play with play dough and use a range of tools, such as cutters and rollers competently. Older, more able children, however, do not gain sufficient access or benefit from sessions that focus on active, robust, energetic play. The outdoors is underutilised by all ages in colder weather, despite children enjoying these experiences when dressed for all weather play. The children have daily opportunities for outdoor play, where they benefit from some fresh air and exercise. They use the apparatus to climb under and through, they run, jump and use wheeled toys to develop their strength and to gain control of their body.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents receive a warm and welcoming greeting on arrival. The environment is bright with children's work displayed, at their height, giving them a sense of self and a feeling of belonging. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded as staff have a sound awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are clear on the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child. However, the safeguarding policy is currently under review as the section for allegations against staff lacks clarity.

Children benefit from adequate space that is well organised to allow them to participate in a range of different activities. Children, therefore, play in comfort and in safety. They move about freely and make choices about their play and learning. The toys and equipment are suitable and meet the needs of the children. This includes a wide range of sensory play materials, such as natural materials, wooden toys and tactile activities.

The children are protected by the nursery being secure. A doorbell system is in place at the entrance to manage access to the building, preventing any unknown persons entering. The nursery carries out regular risk assessments to ensure any potential hazards are identified and

resolved. Children are learning what to do in an emergency evacuation as fire drills are carried out regularly and the procedures are clearly displayed.

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

The provision is good.

The children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting, as they actively engage in play according to their individual choices from an early age. They benefit from close warm relationships that are well established with their key workers. This enables them to be happy, settled and to make other secure relationships. They receive consistent care from familiar adults who know them well. The staff skilfully interact well with the children and are supportive to their individual needs as they play. For example, those who are insecure are given lots of reassurance and cuddles. Mostly, the children are making sound progress in their learning, with very few exceptions.

Staff have a good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan a suitable range of activities and experiences. They make regular observations which are used to inform future activities to enhance the children's learning. The children engage in a good array of creative and messy activities and this results in them having great fun. They get excited as they draw in the gloop, dig with their hands in the sand and spoon the pasta into bowls. Babies confidently explore their environment pulling themselves up to look at themselves in the mirror. They play eagerly with different textures and shiny foils that stimulate their senses. Their early communication is positively supported by the staff who listen and respond appropriately to their babbles and sounds. Personal relationships are afforded high priority, with language and non-verbal communication being particularly well fostered in the baby rooms.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of the nursery education is satisfactory. The children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Planning adopts a thematic approach and is linked to the six areas of learning, however, some areas are not paid as much attention to as other areas. That being said, the curriculum is sufficiently covered overall. Although, gaps or indeed strengths in children's learning are not easily identifiable from their assessments. There are many strong areas noted, such as the development of continuous provision. This enables children to take control of their own learning and follow their interests, for example, exploring sinking and floating in the water play.

Language and literacy skills are well developed using appropriate methods that inspire children to think and to reflect on their ideas. The children are developing language skills as they listen to stories, sing familiar songs and they are beginning to form recognisable letters and words. Children actively ask about the initial letters of words and some proudly recognise all the letters of the alphabet. Their handwriting and communication skills are developing well. Many children are able to form recognisable letters and some are able to write their own name. They learn that print carries meaning as objects around the room are labelled, some of which the children have created themselves. Time is set aside each day for children to listen to a story and the children speak confidently with high levels of self-assurance. They use the computer and electronic toys, such as the keypad to write their name skilfully.

Children are making steady progress in relation to mathematical development. They learn about measure in practical situations as they make play dough and carefully measure out the

ingredients. They eagerly count up to 10 and beyond as they count the number of objects. There are rich opportunities for children to develop problem solving skills in everyday situations, for example, calculating how many and whether they need more or less of something.

Children have many very good opportunities to explore different textures, such as cutting and sticking in the creative area. The children frequently access the role play area where they take on a number of roles. They use their imagination very well as they pretend to care for animals, such as offering another child who is pretending to be a dog, a bowl of water, and talk to people on the pretend mobile telephone stating what they have had for their lunch.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly greeted on arrival making them feel welcome. They settle well because an effective settling in procedure, which includes a key worker system is in place. All children are treated with equal concern and have access to all the resources available. Children are becoming aware of the wider world and are developing positive attitudes to difference. They use resources that promote equal opportunities. Children learn about the festivals of other cultures, including Eid and Chinese New Year. They are very well behaved and display a positive approach to learning. Staff use consistent and effective strategies to manage children's behaviour. Younger children learn to share, take turns and play together cooperatively following adult guidance. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the friendly relationships shared between parents, carers and staff. Informal chats at the beginning and the end of the day provide opportunities to discuss children and any issues relating to their care. A daily diary is completed for very young children to ensure parents are kept fully informed. A gradual admission procedure is in place which allows practitioners to work with parents and make detailed observations on the children.

There is a fairly robust system for responding to written complaints, however, minor weaknesses were noted in relation to this documentation. An information booklet provides detailed information about the curriculum for parents, however, there is no transfer of activities between home and the nursery. Progress reports are made available to parents, although some parents are not aware of these records. Discussions with parents indicate they are satisfied with the standard of education offered to their children and appreciate the friendly staff who mostly keep them informed of their children's progress.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are protected because staff are appointed through suitable recruitment and selection procedures. Sound procedures are in place for the vetting of new staff. A good induction procedure and probationary period ensures staff are clear about the policies. Children benefit from a well qualified staff team who generally work well together. Adequate ratios are maintained and suitable contingency arrangements are in place to cover for staff shortages.

All the necessary policies and procedures are in place and effectively work in practice. Documentation is correctly maintained, although, some minor adjustments are noted. The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and the children's assessment portfolios does not fully ensure that

equal attention is afforded to all six areas of children's learning. This results in some strong areas, such as personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, maths and creative development. However, evidence regarding other areas of learning is slightly limited, such as for promoting technology, physical robust play and to a lesser extent knowledge and understanding of the world.

The manager monitors the quality of the education and care provided, through working closely with staff. There is a clear commitment to improvement and regular staff meetings enable any training needs to be identified and met. The team works closely with the local authority and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of the provision and is very committed to self-improvement. The team are able to clearly identify the setting's strengths and areas for development and access to training is consistently good. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve the observation and assessment of children's progress and planning, and to improve the play materials that reflect diversity. Satisfactory progress has been made on both of these issues.

The planning systems are now linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and regular observations and assessments are made of the children. Some staff have training needs identified in this area and the help of the advisory teacher has been useful. This assists staff to meet children's unique and changing needs over time.

There is a good range of resources reflecting positive images of diversity, which includes displays, multicultural dolls, and books. This helps children to learn about the diverse world they live in.

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

Since the last inspection one complaint has been made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. A childcare inspector visited the provision in January 2007, following a complaint about safety and hygiene practices. During the visit documents were viewed, observations made and discussions took place with staff and managers. At the time of the visit National Standard 7 was not being met in relation to health and hygiene, and National Standard 6 was not being met in relation to fire exit doors. Two actions were raised and both have been satisfactorily addressed. The provider, therefore, remains qualified for registration.

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):

- ensure parents are asked to sign all entries relating to accident records
- further develop the safeguarding policy in respect of allegations made against staff
- develop the complaints procedure in line with current legislation.

### **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):

- extend physical activities and provide more outdoor 'all weather' experiences to support children's learning (also applies to care)
- evaluate planned and spontaneous experiences to ensure equal attention is afforded to all six areas and that assessments more clearly evidence how the needs of the more, and the less able children are met.

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