

Blue Skies Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY343285
Inspection date	09 October 2007
Inspector	Debra Elizabeth Jean Dahlstrom
Setting Address	184 Crewe Road, Alsager, STOKE-ON-TRENT, ST7 2JA
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Registered person	Sheridan Woodcock
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 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?

Blue Skies Day Nursery moved to the present premises and registered in 2007. The nursery is privately owned and operates from a converted house close to Alsager town center. A maximum of 31 children aged under five years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 07.00 until 18.00 all the year round. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is also able to support children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently 31 children on roll, of which 13 are funded for nursery education. There are 11 members of staff, of which nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and one person is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment with robust practices in place to reduce the spread of infection. Effective hygiene practices and routines are implemented throughout the setting to help protect children from illness. Children are learning about personal hygiene such as hand washing, whilst older children readily blow noses after selecting tissues which are safely disposed of in the bin. After lunch dental health is promoted, as children learn about teeth cleaning and use their own tooth brush labelled with their name on.

Almost half the staff team hold a current certificate in first aid. All the necessary permissions and records are in place regarding the administering of medication and accidents to children.

Children enthusiastically run, jump, pedal bikes as they enjoy outdoor play on a daily basis. Consideration is given to the benefits of fresh air for young children, therefore babies are frequently taken for walks in double pushchairs. Young children, not yet mobile are encouraged to develop physical skills as staff place emphasis upon creating an environment where babies are encouraged to explore. Toys and play resources are carefully positioned to provide sufficient challenge to them, as they stretch or reach out. Thus developing balance and coordination in their young bodies.

Children enjoy the social experiences that meal times provide and are positively encouraged to eat a wide variety of home cooked foods, such as bacon and liver casserole or homemade pies. Fresh produce is delivered weekly from local butchers and fruit and vegetables shops.

Children are appropriately hydrated and older children help themselves to their sports bottles brought from home. However, fresh drinking water is not necessarily readily available at all times for younger children. Therefore opportunities for young children to learn to manage their own thirst using accessible drinking water is limited.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and comfortable environment that is made interesting by the displays of their art work. They choose what to play with from an appropriate range of age appropriate toys and equipment placed at their level.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring the setting remains secure for children. There are effective security systems at the main door with CCTV and fingerprint entry system. Fire fighting equipment is in place and systems to ensure it is checked at specified intervals. A clear evacuation procedure is displayed in all rooms for staff and visitors, however, since moving into the new premises there has been no fire drill carried out. Therefore children and staff are not practised in emergency evacuation procedures. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly, however, it was noted the corridor which children access to both playrooms on the ground floor contained potential trip hazards to children.

Staff have an appropriate understanding of child protection although they are currently awaiting updated training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. They enter their rooms happily and older children quickly leave their parents and carers to play with their friends. Staff establish strong, positive relationships with children, helping them to feel settled and secure. Early communication skills are well supported through good adult-child interactions. Staff working with children under

two-years-old, for example, support young children's listening as they talk about what they are doing, thus helping babies to start to link words with actions. They are very gentle and caring and know the children well, so young children make themselves understood through gestures as they express their feelings. Toddlers in the garden, for example, express mixed emotions at seeing the slugs and snails in the garden. Staff are good role models, they are enthusiastic and support and encourage them to move closer. In doing so all the children stare enraptured as the creatures crawl away leaving shiny trails behind them. They clap with delight and point towards them often repeating key words learned from adults.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform their planning and practice and this has a positive effect on the quality of children's learning. Clear plans are in place to ensure that all children take part in a range of interesting play and learning opportunities. Children achieve well and benefit from a broad range of activities that promote their good all-round development. Skilful intervention from staff encourages children to think and make connections. Children are developing a sense of belonging, they are familiar with the daily routines and remind others of what happens next. Children in the preschool room are confident speakers; they talk about their homes and families, sing rhymes and readily anticipate their enjoyment for both free play and group time. They readily bring in things from home to contribute towards the theme.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use guidance on the early learning goals to plan a varied programme of activities across the six areas of learning. Development records however are not filled in regularly and observations of children's learning, achievements and progress are not sufficiently detailed to necessarily plan for children's next steps. Staff use appropriate questioning to help children make steady progress in their learning.

Children show an awareness of and take an interest in colour and number, some independently count their small plastic bear figures on the maths table. They use positional language and comparisons, such as 'middle', 'biggest' and 'smallest' as they line them up in order of size. Children having decided they are family members devise a role for each one based on size 'grandma' or 'granddad bear' as children join into share the theme.

Children's enjoyment of stories is significantly enhanced by the very good storytelling skills of both staff and children. Children listen well and are animated as they are encouraged to freely contribute to their favourite parts. They confidently select books from the well stocked book corner and sit and show the pages to their friends. Children with great enthusiasm can be heard making the animal sounds as they clearly identify by name the gorillas, chimpanzees or gazelles in the story. Children use marks readily to represent their ideas on paper, which contributes to their confidence, emergent writing skills and language development. They use recognisable letters and sound out their names as they do so for their peers. "W is for my name" said one child looking to his friend and pointing to his written work.

Children currently have limited access to information and communication technology equipment, such as computers and C.D player as well as resources which promote investigation, therefore children's experiences are limited in this area of learning. Opportunities for children to develop an understanding of the wider world is supported through a variety range of experiences such as growing sunflowers, celebrating festivals, visiting the toy museum or the airport.

A good range of activities, equipment and regular opportunities to play outside is supporting the children's development of physical skills. Children participate in activities that promote their fine motor skills and hand and eye coordination. They competently use tools, such as scissors, spreaders, rollers cutters, during creative activities. They express themselves by using a variety of media, such as construction, imaginative resources and creative materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have access to a range of good quality resources that provide positive images of diversity, such as books, posters, jigsaws and imaginative play equipment. Children participate in activities that help them learn about their own and the customs, religious and cultural beliefs of others. Menhdi, for example provides opportunities for young children to enjoy the painting of their hands with henna dye. Children have equal access to the play activities, ensuring that they are all valued and included. Staff are very knowledgeable about children's individual needs and use this information in their planning, particularly for those younger children.

Staff carefully negotiate with older children to resolve minor squabbles in a friendly manner without the need for sanctions. They are good role models for children and consistently focus upon children's positive behaviour and reward them with lots of praise and recognition for their work. This skilful approach enables children to learn right from wrong ,to share and take turns. This works well as children show kindness and consideration for the feelings others.

The partnership with parents is good overall. Parents are made to feel very welcome at the nursery. Parents are spoken to in a friendly yet professional manner by staff. They speak highly about the nursery, staff in particular and the good progress their children are making. Newsletters and daily discussions helps to keep parents up to date about events at the nursery and their child's day, although information about the areas of learning for parents of pre school children is currently not readily available to parents. Children happily bring in items from home to support the themes. Informal parents meetings provide time to discuss children's educational progress in more detail and opportunities to look at development records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a consistent, hardworking and enthusiastic staff team to support them in their learning and play. The key worker system enables staff to get to know individual children very well. The staff team is appropriately deployed to supervise and support the children's play and learning. Attendance on further training courses for specific subjects, such as child protection and behaviour management are helping staff to develop their skills and practice. The available space is organised to offer the children access to a variety of activities and opportunities and they can move freely around their rooms.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. There have been changes in the management structure since the move to the new setting, so therefore there the improvements are in their formative stages. Regular team and staff meetings and the planned introduction of appraisals are helping to ensure staff work together to review, evaluate and improve practice.

Required records and documentation are in place, appropriately maintained and stored securely. Sensible policies and procedures are used to inform staff practice and underpin the care provided. Induction procedures are good ensuring staff are clear as to their roles and responsibilities. Recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure that persons working directly with the children are appropriately vetted and suitable to do.

Overall, the provision meets the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- consider how younger children are given more opportunities to readily access fresh drinking water
- ensure fire evacuation procedures are carried out regularly and any potential hazards are removed from the corridor accessing the kitchen.

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):

- consider how children's records of development are sufficiently updated to inform planning and the next steps in their learning
- consider how parents are given greater information about the Foundation Stage

- ensure there are sufficient resources to develop children's understanding knowledge of wider world.

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