

Chatterbox House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY244989
Inspection date	07 November 2007
Inspector	Mandy Mooney
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Registered person	Kathleen Sheila Christine Jones
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?

Chatterbox House Day Nursery is a privately run business situated in a large detached house in Sidcup, Kent, close to local offices and residential houses. The nursery has been registered since 2002.

The premises which are on two levels, consist of a ground floor office, baby room, children's bathroom, toddler room, messy play room and kitchen. The first floor comprises a large base room for three- to five-year-olds, a quiet room, a physical playroom, children's bathroom, staff toilet and laundry facilities. There is also a large, recently refurbished garden for outdoor play.

The nursery is open all year round from 07:30 to 18:30 with the exception of weekends and bank holidays. Registration is for 48 children. There are currently 67 children on roll, of these 29 receive nursery education funding. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is not their first language.

The nursery employs a large staff team which comprises a manager, a deputy, a part-time teacher and ten nursery staff, of these, all but two hold an appropriate childcare qualification.

The nursery receives support from an advisory teacher from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a clean and organised environment. Effective cleaning routines and checklists throughout the nursery mean that all areas are inspected and cleaned to reduce the risk of cross contamination. For example, in the bathroom area, where staff are vigilant as they check to see if toilets are flushed and unblocked and sink and floors are free of spills. Staff have consistent hygiene routines, such as washing down the surfaces with anti bacterial spray and implementing effective nappy changing systems. This includes wearing disposable gloves and aprons, which are discarded after each use, wiping down the mat with anti bacterial spray and disposing of nappies promptly. However, on occasions, the smell in the bathroom area becomes overwhelming because of insufficient ventilation.

Children learn the benefits of having appropriate personal hygiene routines, such as regular hand washing, which most of them do as a matter of routine after using the toilet and before eating and accessing tissues to wipe their noses. Although children do not brush their teeth whilst at the nursery, staff continue to reinforce the benefits of doing this and the positive impact it has on their bodies. This is further reinforced by having visits from a hygienist.

Children's medical health is well promoted. Staff follow consistent procedures when dealing with accidents and for the administration of medication. Most staff hold a current first aid qualification and are confident in dealing with medical emergencies. The procedure for taking a child to hospital is in place and known by all staff and written consent to do this is recorded. This means children's needs can be met promptly and effectively.

Children have daily opportunity to take part in vigorous physical activities. Good use is made of the newly converted and well resourced garden and children use tricycles and low slides with confidence and skill. Regular walks to the local park and to the shops ensures children get the opportunity for fresh air and to explore the local community. Appropriate indoor alternatives, such as using the first floor physical room in the nursery ensure that children have opportunity to develop their physical skills whatever the weather.

Children are offered a varied and balanced diet. Main meals are thoroughly enjoyed and the manager and chef regularly review the success of the food, for example, if it appears the children are not as keen on one dish they look at the possible reasons why and then agree whether this dish needs to be adapted or removed from the menu. All meals are freshly cooked on the premises and are on a two weekly rota. Main dishes include, casseroles, shepherds pie, chilli, lasagne and always include various vegetables to further develop the healthy living theme. Babies also enjoy the food, which is prepared according to their needs. Children are kept well hydrated as older children have drink stations in the room, which they help themselves to, to develop their self help skills and younger children have individual cups to promote independence. Children are learning about the benefits and the procedures for cooking as a recent implementation in the nursery has been for the older children to have weekly cooking lessons with the chef, where they create a different dish or cake, whilst learning how the ingredients become an eatable dish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel welcomed into a setting, which has very well maintained and presented premises. The layout of the room and displayed information for parents enhance the environment and help to make it warm and inviting. Children's safety and comfort is supported by a range of child-sized furniture and play equipment that are kept in good order. Staff use effective policies and procedures to keep children safe. For example, they supervise children at all times, including the toilet areas and during outdoor play; risk assessments are provided to reduce risk and the premises are secure and visitors are vetted prior to entry.

Children have developing awareness of keeping safe because staff educate about relative aspects, through themes, such as the current theme of 'people who help us', with visits from a local fire officer and nurse to reinforce the important safety messages. They are involved in fire evacuation practices and are also encouraged to tidy up after themselves; even the youngest children know the tidy up routine and staff are calm and consistent in ensuring they all take part in this to keep the room organised and in a safe order.

The setting has written child protection procedures and contact details for relevant local agencies and the policy identifies a designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection liaison, who is confident in the role and procedures to follow and this contributes to safeguarding children. Staff have a suitable understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have a concern and this helps to protect children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and eager to play. Staff greet them individually and take time to exchange information with parents. Rooms are well laid out ready for the children to take part in free play, with toys and resources arranged at low level to encourage children to make independent choices and also take responsibility for tidying away after themselves. Staff spend quality time with the children, offering one to one attention when wanted, getting down to the children's level, encouraging participation. Children receive lots of cuddles from staff, who are very responsive to their needs and are skilled at encouraging children to develop their early communication skills and to interact with each other. Most children settle well, however, on occasions some children take longer to make the transition from the home setting to the nursery environment. This can be particularly distressing for the babies and this can be made more difficult because the settling in time is not flexible enough to accommodate each child's individual needs. Although staff are skilled at reassuring and comforting the children, sometimes offering a child a bit longer for settling can make all the difference.

Children enjoy the interesting range of planned and spontaneous play opportunities. These include, sensory activities, such as feeling, pouring and emptying pasta and rice on trays for toddlers and painting activities for the babies. Staff have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and the opportunities offered to the children are planned around the framework. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress, as key workers complete a daily sheet for toddlers and a day book for babies.

Quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this used to influence planning. The room leader is responsible for developing the long term and medium term plans and other staff take turns on a weekly

rota to do the short term plans. The current theme is 'people who help us' and this is reflected in the short term plans displayed, however, the long term and medium term plans do not relate to this and therefore it is not clear how the short term plans have been developed. This means the learning intentions for the activities do not link up with the planning. Stepping stones are reflected in the planning and staff use their observations of children when planning and although plans have an area to record the Birth to three framework, in practice, differentiation for the more able/less able or older/younger children is not evident. Staff portray positive role models for children and most are skilled at extending children's thinking by asking open ended questions. Staff prepare children for the day by going through what the plans are for the session when they are all sitting together, children then choose what they would like to do and happily go off and play. A rota is in place which states who is responsible for organising the different areas used and for the most part this works well, however, on occasions the maths and literacy areas are very under used because staff focus on their particular area too much. Children behave well because they know the rules and boundaries and staff are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour. Staff use a checklist to track children's progress, using symbols to indicate when the child has achieved an area. Parents are kept sufficiently informed of the child's progress, primarily through daily discussions and also at the annual meeting where they receive a written report.

Children are very confident in the nursery environment, they know the routine well and make good choices about their play. They develop friendships and their early social skills are developing appropriately. They take turns, for example, at the computer where they know that only two children at a time can use it and they give the next person a turn when reminded by staff. They enjoy each others company as they share audio stories and wear head phones and giggle as they listen together. Children are developing appropriate self help skills, such as using the toilet independently and automatically washing their hands afterwards and freely accessing the water station in the room. Some four-year-olds recite well known stories linked to a recent theme of 'fairytales', listening to an audio story, a child says 'she's eaten a poison apple and is going to die' (referring to Sleeping Beauty). Children begin to develop an awareness that English is not the only language spoken as they have been learning French and displays show greetings recorded in Spanish. Most children can recognise their names as they choose from the board at circle time and snack time and some can write their names, forming recognisable letters correctly. Children have daily access to resources to support their writing skills; however, this area is not always well supervised which can result in it being underused and because staff routinely write children's names on their work, this restricts the opportunities for children to do this and further develop their scribing skills.

Most children can count to ten and beyond and many are able to identify numbers. Staff consolidate this learning during every day activities, such as when counting how many children are here today and when completing puzzles together, asking children 'how many is this?' and 'where is number nine?'. Children complete increasingly difficult puzzles successfully and are able to follow the correct patterns. Some children are able to do simple calculations, such as addition sums. Although there is an appropriately resourced maths area in place, this is not utilised fully as adult supervision is not routinely offered here. Children have many interesting and fun ways to increase their understanding of the world. They have daily use of the computer, on which they independently and skilfully complete the age appropriate programmes, such as 'Bob the Builder' and manoeuvre the mouse with ease. They learn about how to care for living things and lifecycles as they help care for the room's fish and plant daffodils. Their understanding of the local community is developing through regular visits to local places of interest, such as the park and shops and this is further enhanced through visitors who work in the community, for example, the current theme is 'people who help us' and as part of this children have a visit

from the fire brigade and nurse. Children gain a great sense of responsibility as they take the nursery teddy 'Chatterbox Charlie' on holiday with them and this also contributes to developing their self esteem and sense of value because on their return, photographs of their travels are displayed for all to see. Children's understanding of how to care for the environment is well supported because they are learning about why we recycle and have developed their own recycling collection points.

Children's spatial awareness is developing appropriately. They move around both indoors and outdoors, freely negotiating furniture and each other. They use the space outdoors appropriately as they increase their balancing skills on the tyres, crawl through tunnels, run around and climb the small slide. Children's hand eye co-ordination and fine motor skills continue to develop sufficiently. They confidently find pieces to puzzles and slot them in the right place and use the computer mouse skilfully. Children have daily opportunities to take part in creative activity, such as free painting at the easel, splash painting for firework night and printing. However, these activities are not always well thought out and therefore lack excitement and result in children abandoning them after a short time. They use their imagination well as they negotiate roles in the home corner and play with small world figures at the table.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated as individuals and their differences acknowledged, such as cultural and family backgrounds. Children are encouraged to talk openly about their family lives and what they do at home. This gives them a sense of security and belonging. Children's understanding of each other and themselves is increasing because they take part in planned activities to acknowledge different festivals and celebrations, such as bonfire night, Christmas and Easter. They play with a suitable range of toys and resources, such as dolls, play figures and role play equipment to support their understanding of the local and wider community. This is reinforced further because children are taken out locally to the park and shops and this gives them the opportunity to explore the local environment. The systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or a disability are appropriate. Although there are no children currently attending who need additional support, the named special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is confident in the role and able to access advice as necessary.

Children behave well because staff are calm and consistent in their approach. Staff portray a positive role model for children and this has a good effect on children, resulting in minimal unwanted behaviour. Children receive lots of praise for their good work, such as, taking turns when playing games and sharing. They are developing appropriate manners, as they routinely say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff continue to develop friendly, working relationships with parents. They work in partnership to ensure children's needs are met. This includes having sufficient information to meet children's care needs and required consents to promote their welfare. However, the settling in procedure for younger children is not flexible enough to ensure all children settle according to their needs. On occasions, this results in children being distressed for longer than is necessary. Parents receive daily verbal feedback on their child's day, for younger children this includes a daily sheet or book, and they have sufficient opportunities to be involved in the nursery, this includes having daily chats with their child's key worker, completing questionnaires to improve practices in the nursery and a regular newsletter. Parents are provided with information about the nursery

when their child is admitted and this includes information on the Birth to three matters framework.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are given daily verbal feedback on their child's progress and are kept up-to-date in this way. They can ask to look at their child's progress file and are invited to an annual parents evening. However, opportunities for parents to be actively involved in their child's learning are limited, for example, they are not routinely involved in developing the next steps for learning for their child. Parents receive some information on the Foundation Stage curriculum in the information pack and activity plans are displayed in the activity rooms, which enables them to be aware of what activities and opportunities their children are taking part in.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a well qualified, committed and motivated staff team who work well together and know their roles and responsibilities. This includes the deputy who is nominated for nursery nurse of the year by a national publication. This means that children play and learn in an environment that is organised to enable them to make good use of the space available both indoors and outdoors. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure staff are suitable and ongoing suitability is ensured because staff access regular training to keep themselves up-to-date with changes and advancements in childcare. Recent training opportunities include, Birth to three, food hygiene, first aid and child protection awareness.

Children's attendance is recorded in the main nursery register and parents sign their children in and out. Although required ratios are maintained to ensure children's safety and welfare, the system does not guarantee accuracy because some parents forget to record their children's attendance hours. This means the information recorded is not fully reflective of who is on the premises. A current certificate of registration is displayed on the notice board in the main entrance and ensures conditions of registration are clear. All required policies, procedures and records are in place for the safe management of the provision and these are stored in a confidential and accessible way.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Management work closely with staff and an advisory teacher and an Area SENCO to provide a satisfactory nursery education provision. Children's individual needs are met because staff plan together and use observations to influence planning. However, weaknesses in the quality of teaching are evident because learning intentions are not consistently developed, differentiation in activities is not clearly reflected and next steps for children's learning are not in place for all children. This means the systems for monitoring the nursery education provision is not fully effective. Management have worked well together to make improvements since the last inspection and have a clear vision of areas they would like to improve to benefit the children.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to review and evaluate the use of rooms in the pre-school area. This has been reviewed and this is an ongoing situation, depending on the needs of the children attending. Because of the reorganisation of the use of rooms

generally within the nursery, all children have the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of activities, including physical and messy play.

Several areas for improvement were identified for care at the last inspection. The provider agreed to ensure all rooms in the nursery are used effectively to comply with space regulations and the needs of children and to review the nursery routines to give children more opportunities to make choices. Space was observed to be well used and organised to maximise use by all children, ensuring they get opportunities to use all areas of the nursery, whilst ensuring required ratios are maintained at all times and promoting choice and decision making.

The provider agreed to review children's teeth cleaning routines and storage of toothbrushes and develop staffs' understanding of good hygiene routines in regards to food handling and nappy changing. Children no longer brush their teeth whilst at the nursery, however, staff continue to educate them on the benefits of having good personal hygiene routines. Staff have effective routines when changing nappies, wearing disposable gloves and aprons and minimising the potential for cross infection by wiping down the changing mat with anti-bacterial spray. Staff demonstrate appropriate routines when handling food and several staff, including the chef have attended relevant training in this area.

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.

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):

- review the settling in period to ensure this contributes to ensuring all children have sufficient time to become familiar and secure in the environment according to their individual needs
- ensure that the record of children looked after accurately indicates their hours of attendance

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):

- ensure learning intentions are clear for all activities and opportunities
- review and improve system for planning to reflect differentiation for the more able/less able and older/younger children
- review and improve the system for developing the next steps for children's learning, ensuring all parents are able to contribute to the process
- review and improve the management systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the nursery education provision

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