

# Playhouse Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	255146
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jackie Nation
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<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Playhouse Day Nursery is one of two private nurseries run by a sole owner. It opened in 1987 and operates from four rooms within a two-storey building. It is situated in Smethwick, Sandwell. A maximum of 37 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday, all year round from 07:30 until 18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 43 children on roll. Of these 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Five children attend the out of school provision. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. All staff attend appropriate training and are vigilant in ensuring the environment, toys and equipment are clean and suitable for use. Children show a good understanding and willingness to keep themselves healthy and they learn simple hygiene practices through daily routines. Children wash their hands after using the bathroom and before and after meal and snack times. Babies and younger children become familiar with hygiene routines whilst having their nappies changed or when having their faces and hands cleaned at meal times. Staff give good attention to children's personal care, for example, they encourage children to use and dispose of tissues appropriately. Clear nappy changing procedures are well-implemented and this helps prevent cross-infection. For example, change mats are cleaned after use, nappies disposed of immediately and staff use disposable aprons and gloves.

Children's health care needs are supported appropriately with policies and procedures which work in practice. For example, if they require medication, have an accident or become unwell. The nursery obtains written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. A member of staff is on duty that is qualified to administer first aid and therefore respond appropriately to accidents should they occur. There is a policy in place about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious. This supports children's health and well-being.

Good organisation ensures that children are able to access water independently and confidently to ensure they remain hydrated throughout the day. Children enjoy sociable meal and snack times. They are well-nourished and all aspects of their individual dietary needs are discussed with parents and information about any specific needs are recorded. Very good arrangements are in place for the provision of nutritious and appetising meals and snacks for children. Children's meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day and promote healthy food options. This has a positive impact on children's health and well-being.

Children are engaged in a variety of healthy exercise both inside and outside. They explore, test and develop physical control using a variety of toys and equipment. This includes bikes, pushchairs and cars enabling children to practise manoeuvring and pedalling skills. They like to visit the local park and woods and enjoy exploring the busy environment surrounding the nursery. For example, they walk to local shops and complete surveys in the local high street. Staff's good understanding of each child's stage of development means the youngest children are confident to try out new skills in a well-organised environment. Their finer manipulative skills and control are actively encouraged through interesting craft activities and painting activities. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and the home routines of younger children are respected and followed. They benefit from constant supervision, clean linen, suitable cots and mattresses while sleeping.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment by friendly and approachable staff. They are cared for in age-appropriate groups where they are able to move freely and independently around their playroom. All children are cared for in a bright and creatively decorated playrooms. In each room equipment is arranged to provide children with sufficient

space to move around activities. Staff make good use of both the floor and table tops to enable children to play with varied toys or take part in activities. The organisation of the playrooms and use of appropriate resources helps younger children to become independent. Children use a range of child-size furniture, equipment and toys that are appropriate for their purpose, of suitable design and condition and well-maintained. Good attention is given to cleaning toys used in all rooms to make them hygienic and safe for children to use.

Children play in an environment where potential hazards have been assessed by staff. Staff are vigilant and supervise the children well. Daily room checks are carried out and the outdoor area is checked for safety before children play outside. However, there are occasions during the day when radiator temperatures become too hot. This potentially compromises children's safety. The setting has good safety and security precautions in place and access to the premises is closely monitored. Visitors to the setting are required to show identification and sign the visitors book. Effective procedures are in place for the safe collection of children from the nursery, parents are asked to keep the nursery informed of any alternative arrangements. Policies and procedures are in place for children who are lost or not collected. Children understand the necessary boundaries in place to keep them safe because staff discuss safe practices with them. They are developing an awareness of fire safety through discussions and by practising fire evacuation procedures. This helps children to understand how to react in an emergency.

Children are well protected by staff, who have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures. They are fully conversant with reporting procedures and have attended training, giving priority to children's welfare. Information is displayed on the notice board and this ensures parents are fully informed of the setting's responsibility for safeguarding children in their care.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in nursery. They arrive happy and eager to participate in activities and play with the other children. Those who are new to the setting are helped to settle by staff that are sensitive towards their individual needs. Staff have an understanding of the range of experiences and activities which enable all children to make progress in all areas of their learning and development. Many activities are child-initiated although planned activities are incorporated to look at specific areas of learning. Planning and assessment of children's progress incorporates the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

Staffing interaction with the children is very good. Babies respond well to the staff's gentle responses, smiles and praise during play, care routines and meal times. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their home experiences and have a strong bond with their key worker. Staff plan a range of activities for children under three years which they find enjoyable and are appropriate to their stage of development. For example, babies have the opportunity to explore a variety of natural and man made objects in the treasure baskets. Their early development is supported as they begin to roll, crawl and attempt to stand up and take their first steps. Babies and younger children are able to explore their senses as staff plan a good range of creative and imaginative activities for them to take part in. For example, sand, water, role play, dressing-up, construction, singing, musical instruments and messy play. Children's art work is displayed in each playroom demonstrating that staff value their efforts and achievements. This helps to foster their self-esteem and confidence.

Children are learning to share and have respect for each others feelings. Children's behaviour is good, they are actively and consistently praised by staff for their effort and achievements, consequently, their self-esteem is carefully fostered. Staff intervene appropriately with positive strategies when behaviour issues arise, these are usually related to sharing or taking turns. Children willingly help tidy away toys when requested. Children form strong friendships and join in co-operative play with each other as they develop their ideas and activities. Children are self-assured and eager to share what they know and can do with visitors, staff and their peers. For example, some children confidently use the computer with little need for staff direction, accessing appropriate software and manoeuvring the mouse with precision to complete the activity.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and competently put this into practice. Planning is flexible, clear and covers all areas of learning. Staff know how children learn and this enables them to plan a broad and balanced range of practical activities that relate to children's interests. Staff use their knowledge of the children's starting points and appropriate assessments to evaluate children's progress and use this to plan future activities. Staff initiate plenty of conversations and display enthusiasm in their teaching, they question and challenge children's thinking as they use open ended questions effectively. The room is set out to stimulate children's interest in learning and as a result, children are motivated and make many good links in their learning. The opportunities for children to self-select resources and develop their own play is good. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and child-initiated play. This has a positive impact on children's learning.

Staff with responsibility for children who have identified special needs have a sound knowledge of the procedures and recognise the importance of establishing good relationships with parents and other professionals. This ensures children with special needs are included in all aspects of play and make good progress. Good consideration has been given to sources of support for children with English as an additional language.

Children access a good range of well chosen meaningful resources which support their learning. All children have equal opportunities for play and learning as resources are organised in low-level shelving units and trays which children can access independently to support their play ideas. Children are given opportunities to discuss what they would like to play with and these activities are displayed in pictorial form to remind the children about their day. Children are encouraged to develop independence with regards to their own personal care and they competently put on their coats, hats and gloves to play outside. However, opportunities for older children to further develop their independence skills are not fully incorporated at all times during some daily routines, such as snack and meal times.

Good emphasis is placed on developing children's communication, language and literacy skills. For example, by encouraging listening skills, extending their vocabulary and planned activities which link sounds to letters. Children see their own names and other words displayed within the setting which supports them as they develop an understanding that print carries meaning. There are good opportunities for children to be creative and practise writing for a variety of purposes in the well-equipped writing area. They use paper, envelopes, notepads, and pencils as part of their play. Children show a keen interest in books and independently access a well-stocked book corner. Books are used well in the setting, and children enjoy story time as staff use puppets to encourage children's participation and enjoyment.

Children are developing mathematical skills through a variety of enjoyable activities, such as sorting, matching, ordering and sequencing. Children use mathematical language effectively while engaged in activities and are familiar with words to describe size, position, shape and quantity. They access a well-resourced mathematical table, sing action songs and play games to help with number sequences and simple number problems, for example, more than, less than and counting up and down. Containers for pouring and comparing amounts are available in the sand and water trays, and planned activities help children to experiment with a variety of objects which 'float' and 'sink'.

Children learn about their own and other cultures and they celebrate different festivals throughout the year. For example, Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children use a range of artefacts, musical instruments and dressing-up clothes to support their learning and this helps to contribute to children's social and cultural awareness. Visitors to the nursery, such as a police officer and 'lollipop lady' help children learn about their community. Children develop a sense of place as they explore and recognise features of their local environment and community. Children enjoy a visit from the 'Animal Lady' who introduced the children to a range of animals, including a tree frog, giant snail, owl and a snake. This supported the current topic in the setting, children listened intently about their feeding habits and country of origin. Children handled the animals with great care. Children are inquisitive and ask questions about why things happen and how things work, such as magnets and remote control equipment. They access an interesting range of items on the science table, including torches, magnets and a 'wormery'.

Children move around confidently, with control and co-ordination, this is evident when they use the cars and bikes during outdoor play. They show a good awareness of space, of themselves and of others as they sit during story time and move around the room with care. Children are able to use a range of small and large equipment, they handle tools, objects and construction safely, and with increasing control. During outdoor play they develop skills, such as throwing and catching.

Children develop their creativity and imagination. They have good opportunities to be creative, paint and print using various techniques, and they like to explore the properties of sand, water and dough. They design, build and construct in two and three dimensions. Role play is a very popular activity and the areas, which change frequently, are well-utilised and supplemented with a good range of dressing-up clothes.

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

The provision is good.

Children are respected and valued as individuals. All children are welcomed into the setting and staff know the children well. Staff are very aware of their individual needs and preferences and this helps children feel secure and settled. Settling-in arrangements for children are flexible and staff are sensitive to the individual needs of the child and family. Each child is allocated a key worker and this provides a useful point of contact for parents and continuity in terms of meeting their needs and discussing their progress and attainment. The setting's inclusion policy makes sure all children are included; all areas are accessible to children to help them feel valued, secure and included. Consequently, children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by the group.

Children are well behaved and know the routine well. Staff act as good role models, they treat children with respect and clearly enjoy children's company. Children are learning good social skills and they use conventions, such as 'please' and 'thank-you' without prompting. Younger

children are encouraged to touch each other gently and older children show concern and kindness to their peers. A clear written statement regarding behaviour management is shared with parents. Resources positively reflect different cultures and disabilities and children learn to treat each other kindly, sensitively and acknowledge people's differences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive daily written feedback about their child's care, routine and play and comprehensive information about the provision. They are provided with a prospectus, policy information and information about the nursery education provision, and the early learning goals. Staff welcome parents into the setting and establish trusting, meaningful relationships with them. Arrangements are in place for parents to have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and attainment and they can approach their child's key worker at any time. Staff make themselves available at the beginning and end of the session to talk to parents informally. Parents are actively involved in their child's learning, they are provided with planning information each term and are asked to contribute their observations of learning that takes place in the home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are well-settled and happy because the routine and organisation of the setting is designed to ensure children have freedom of choice. There are extensive opportunities for children to develop their own ideas and play. Children benefit from being cared for in individual base rooms with their peer group and there is plenty of space for children to relax and play in comfort. Children benefit from a key worker system, this is because staff are aware of children's individual needs, provide continuity of care and share information with parents. Staff work together with enthusiasm to create and maintain a caring environment for children.

Effective management ensures that staff are well-supported in their work. Staff are effectively inducted and supervised and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They effectively implement routines to give children a broad range of stimulating play and learning experiences. All of the regulatory records are in place. Registration systems for children, staff and visitors are maintained effectively. An employment policy is in place and the recruitment and selection procedure is sufficiently rigorous and robust to show how staff are selected and vetted for their positions.

Leadership and management is good. This contributes to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. The management is fully committed to ensuring that all children receive good quality of care and education. They actively encourage staff to review and evaluate practice issues and they support staffs on-going professional development. They are clear about their aims and objectives and are committed to improve the quality of care and education for all children and improve the outcomes for children.

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 was required to: devise and implement a procedure for transporting children in a vehicle; ensure children's privacy is respected during toileting and nappy changing; ensure information regarding children's medication is stored to confidentially; ensure that suitable furniture is available to meet the need of children 0-2 years; ensure the

complaints procedure available to parents includes all relevant information regarding the regulatory body Ofsted; improve the quality and displaying of books to stimulate children's interest and increase the resources available to children which reflect disability positively.

The provider has taken appropriate action to address the recommendations from the last inspection. Suitable procedures are in place relating to transporting children in a vehicle and appropriate documentation is in place. Doors have been fitted to toilet cubicles on the ground floor and a curtain strategically placed around the nappy changing area in the baby room on the first floor. This helps ensure children's privacy while using the bathroom and during nappy changing routines. Medication forms are stored in children's individual folders to ensure confidentiality. A range of suitable furniture has been obtained in rooms where children under two years are based, this includes child-size table and chairs. Information about the complaints procedure is displayed in the entrance hall and details all the required information for parents. The range of resources reflecting positive images has increased and this helps develop children's understanding of the wider society. A good range of books and puppets are provided in the comfy book corner and this effectively stimulates children interest in books and story time.

Regarding the nursery education, at the last inspection the provider was required to provide training opportunities to raise staff awareness of how to extend children's learning in mathematical thinking and problem solving and improve children's personal independence during practical routines. Children are developing mathematical skills through a variety of enjoyable planned activities and a well-resourced mathematical area to develop their problem solving skills. Children are encouraged to develop independence with regards to their own personal care and they competently put on their coats, hats and gloves to play outside. However, opportunities for older children to further develop their independence skills are not fully incorporated at all times during some daily routines, such as snack and meal times. This has been carried through as a recommendation at this inspection.

### **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 good.

### **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 daily risk assessment procedure to ensure the effective monitoring of radiator temperatures.

### **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):

- provide further opportunities for older children to develop their independence skills during daily routines.

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)