

Victoria House Neighbourhood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY276595
Inspection date	05 March 2008
Inspector	Patricia Dawes
Setting Address	Corbett Street, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 3PX
Telephone number	0121 555 6361
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Registered person	Rare Wood Limited (4628605)
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Victoria House Neighbourhood Nursery opened in 2004 and is situated in a large converted school building in Smethwick, West Midlands. There are three rooms in which children are based depending on their age: babies, toddlers and pre-school. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 55 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. The group serves children and families from all sections of the local community. There are no children currently attending the nursery who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language, however, there are effective systems in place to offer support.

The nursery employs 16 staff, 11 of the staff, including the managers 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 gain a considerable understanding of good hygiene routines because staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. For example, hand washing after using the toilet, before meals and snacks, and after messy activities, such as painting. Clear procedures for sick and infectious children are used to help prevent the spread of infection and keep children healthy. Parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is in place. Most of the staff have completed first aid training to help them respond to accidents appropriately, however, some entries in the medication record lack parental signatures, which does not clearly demonstrate how information is shared with parents. The impact in the delay of relaying information has the potential to compromise children's health and well-being.

Children are given snacks and drinks at set times and are able to freely access drinking water as required during the day. Snacks provided are healthy, such as a selection of fruit, crackers or breadsticks. Main meals are freshly prepared on site and are of good quantity and quality. The setting has recently received an award from the local authority for their promotion of healthy eating. Children are further helped to become aware of healthy eating through planned activities, discussions and literature available for parents.

Children enjoy being active and are able to be energetic in the well-organised outside play space. Staff have a good understanding of each child's stage of development which means younger children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment. They learn to move in different ways and use equipment, including the climbing frame, slide, bikes and cars. Their hand and eye co-ordination is developed through using tools, implements and cutlery with dexterity. All children know when they need a drink or a rest and are developing a positive attitude to exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment in which to play and learn. Security of the premises is good and there are effective procedures for the collection of children to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded. Staff are vigilant about children's safety and ensure this by the effective implementation of thorough daily risk assessments and suitably detailed health and safety policies and procedures across the provision. For example, emergency evacuation is practised on a regular basis.

Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. All toys and equipment are thoroughly checked and cleaned to ensure they meet safety standards. Resources are well organised with the children's needs in mind. For example, babies freely and safely crawl outdoors pulling themselves up to access sand and water play. Comfortable furniture in the baby rooms is advantageous for staff when feeding and comforting babies. All children have equal access to resources which are not restricted.

Children are well protected because practitioners have an in-depth knowledge of child protection issues, recognise their roles and responsibilities and know how to implement their own and

local child protection procedures. The recording of all staff, children and visitors to and from the nursery, detailed policies for the collection and non-collection of children and arrangements for recording pre-existing injuries contribute to ensuring children are safeguarded from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery happily and enjoy their time at the setting. Babies receive lots of positive interaction from staff who spend time talking to, holding and playing with them. Lots of cuddles and eye contact help to promote their well-being. They benefit from routines which are similar with their experiences at home. Babies and young children explore their surroundings, finding out how musical toys make different noises. Children enjoy joining in with stories and rhymes. Staff implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework well. They make observations and assessments of the children and use these to inform their plans for children's next steps in learning. This ensures younger children are making progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. The nursery's planning covers all six areas of learning; it provides clear links to the early learning goals for focus activities and demonstrates an understanding of the need to differentiate activities, however, it does not allow for the range of abilities of the children present, for example, extending activities for more able children to fully promote their independence. All staff interact very well with the children and are actively involved in the activities alongside them. They ask the children appropriate open-ended questions to confirm their understanding and prompt them to move on in their thinking, for example, when talking about their 'babies' when bathing them.

Children's development is observed and assessed thoroughly during daily activities. Notes are recorded centrally and then transferred to each child's record of achievement towards the early learning goals. By observing children and their achievements throughout the day and not only in particular activities, staff ensure that they know where each child's development is at any given time. There is a clear link between the assessment records and planning which shows how they are continuing to meet the children's developmental needs at all times and help them take the next steps. There are currently no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities attending the nursery, although there are effective systems in place to provide good support and inclusion. Children who speak English as an additional language are given support by the bi-lingual staff who are employed at the nursery.

Behaviour is well managed and this results in a calm and caring environment for children. They organise the routine to include structured activities and free play time with children using a time line to understand what is going to happen next. Children work well together, showing care and consideration for each other and staff. They manage their self-care well; they are encouraged to go to the bathroom independently and to help tidy away the toys. Relationships with staff are positive and their self-esteem is encouraged well through praise and the use of stickers.

Children's early communication skills are good. They speak clearly and with confidence to both their peers and staff. There are ample opportunities for children to learn that print carries meaning through seeing words in the environment. Books are available for children to access at all times, but they are not well presented and children did not select books independently

during the inspection. Most children are able to recognise their own names, for example, through the cards used for self-registration. Children are beginning to write their own name and link sounds to letters as they sound out the letters during 'Sally time' activities. They have opportunities to practise their growing writing skills in various ways, for example, when using the writing area or activities involving shaving foam or paint.

Children gain confidence and respond enthusiastically during number rhymes. They demonstrate that they are developing a sound sense of shape and size as they talk about the smallest and biggest when comparing sizes of dolls and clothing. Numbers are displayed around the room to encourage recognition, however, opportunities to extend their skills in early calculation and problem solving through daily routines, such as when lining up for outdoor play or laying the table for lunch are not encouraged. Children are introduced to a range of topics that help to develop their awareness of their environment and the world in which they live. They learn about the significance of different festivals and customs. They have enjoyed visits from the ambulance service and also the animal lady and her exotic pets. Children have regular opportunities to use information and communication technology through use of a computer and other technology resources such as the 'bee bop' who children guide on a variety of different journeys.

Children move confidently and are developing good co-ordination skills; they handle a range of tools and small equipment well, such as pencils, paste, spatulas and scissors. They are able to negotiate pathways when riding their bikes and practise their climbing and balancing skills on the climbing frame. Children use a variety of different materials, painting and printing techniques to develop their creativity. Most children can name a wide range of colours with success. They have regular opportunities to develop their musical skills, singing their favourite songs and using musical instruments. Their imagination is well developed as they play with the dolls house and develop different scenarios with the construction toys, sand, water and role play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from friendly relationships between staff and parents. Parents are invited to play an active role in the nursery, for example, through attending social activities and observing their children within the group. Staff value parental interest in the nursery and operate an open door policy which means parents are able to visit at any time. A good settling-in procedure is in place with children attending for short periods of time until fully integrated. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with English as an additional language can be fully included and supported because staff have a good understanding of inclusion for all. All individual routines and preferences are discussed, which means that staff are aware of all the children's care needs. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through an information document which contains policies and procedures and through regular newsletters.

Children are beginning to learn about different cultures through planned activities, for example, the celebration of festivals. Equipment provided creates a colourful environment where children can play with an exciting range of resources that promote most images of society positively, however, visual images of disability are limited which means children's understanding and knowledge of differing abilities is not fully promoted. Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and each other. They are valued and respected as individuals, their confidence and self-esteem is developed well by staff with use of praise and encouragement throughout the day. Children behave well; they take turns, share, help each other and remember to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Effective relationships allow parents and carers to work well with staff to meet all the children's developmental needs. Staff ensure parents and carers are well informed through an abundance of information about early years, the Foundation Stage, planning and general practices in the group. This is made available on the notice boards, parents' interest table and on the walls throughout the nursery. Practitioners give daily verbal feedback, and parents and carers are made aware they can see their children's development records at any time. Regular meetings with their key workers are also offered. Parents are given ideas to help with their child's learning at home, such as taking 'book bags' to encourage early reading skills or 'Flip the bear' who goes on his travels with the children and their family. Staff are open-minded and value parents' contributions to improve practice, which enhances all areas of the children's development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All required documentation, policies and procedures are in place and the required checks are completed for new members of staff. The group inducts new practitioners well and carries out appraisals regularly. Staff training is organised to meet individual needs as well as the needs of the group to continually improve the provision. Effective deployment of practitioners ensures that un-vetted persons are prevented from accessing the premises or having unsupervised contact with the children.

Children benefit from an effectively organised routine and varied programme of activities. They are happy, comfortable and settled in a warm and caring environment where their individual needs are met. Children spend their time purposefully and activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development opportunities for the children.

Leadership and management is good. The staff work well as a team and co-ordinate their roles to provide children with a range of beneficial learning experiences. The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and the stepping stones. This helps to ensure children make good progress in all areas of their learning. There are opportunities for staff to develop their knowledge through training. Staff observe and assess the children's progress and follow this through effectively by using the information to plan for the next stage of learning.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous care inspection the person in charge has made improvements to the vetting procedure for new staff. Only staff that have been suitably vetted are allowed unsupervised contact with children, including nappy changing. This ensures children remain safe within the setting.

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.

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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):

- improve the procedures for recording medication administered to ensure that all entries are countersigned, and shared with parents
- continue to increase the range of images and resources available to children that positively reflect disability.

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):

- continue to develop staff's understanding of how daily routine activities can be used as learning opportunities
- improve opportunities for more able children to initiate their own learning with particular regard to imaginative play, reading and writing.

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