

Workplace Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255159
Inspection date	05 November 2007
Inspector	Permjit Tanda
Setting Address	Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DG
Telephone number	0121 569 3165
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Registered person	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
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?

Workplace Nursery opened in 1991 and is sited in the basement of Sandwell Council House in Oldbury. It offers childcare placements to employees of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

Currently there are 47 children on roll. This includes one funded four-year-old and 15 funded three-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. There are effective systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those whom speak English as an additional language.

The facility operates between 07:30-18:00, Monday to Friday closing for bank holidays. It offers a range of full and part-time places. The nursery also offers after school care and escort from local schools. The setting receives support from the local authority. The nursery employs 12 staff of whom all hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a child-orientated and clean environment. Staff follow effective environmental health and hygiene procedures, meeting the children's physical and health needs and allowing them to thrive and flourish. Children gain a good understanding of personal hygiene because of the staff's exceptional support and guidance. Children understand how and why they should wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and engaging in cooking activities. These hygiene practices are incorporated within their daily routine and impact positively on their independence and health. All the required documentation and formats are in place for administering medication and recording accidents.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities and develop control over their bodies because staff effectively organise stimulating daily outdoor activities. This contributes well to their good health. Children thoroughly enjoy outdoor play which is made available daily. Children confidently and competently ride bikes and use the climbing frame with slide. Smaller equipment such as bean bags, hoops, bats and balls are equally used and enjoyed. All this contributes to their physical competence.

Children benefit from a healthy snack consisting of fresh fruits and receive a drink of milk daily. Fresh drinking water is made readily available through a water dispenser which is used independently by the older children. This ensures children keep well-hydrated throughout the day. Children enjoy a four weekly menu which is balanced and nutritious. Children learn about healthy living as they are encouraged to take an active role in learning about healthy foods through projects.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move safely and freely in a stimulating environment where risks of accidental injury are minimised because the staff are vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Staff supervise children well and therefore they can safely explore their environment at their own leisure. Children learn to keep themselves safe through their daily activities and have a clear understanding of the boundaries in place and the reasons for them, for example, children know not to go beyond the cones in the outdoor play area. They learn about the risk from fire and how to keep themselves safe, through taking part in weekly emergency evacuation drills.

Children have safe access to a broad range of good quality play resources and equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children are well-protected and safeguarded because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The consistent, warm and caring relationships developed by staff foster the children's sense of trust and sense of well-being. Children separate from their carer due to the very warm relationship with the staff which contributes to their sense of belonging. Children who are new and settling are cared for by staff that are attentive to their needs and help them settle through

giving them time and space they need, for example, an upset baby is encouraged to settle in arms rather than in the cot and an older child is reassured whilst on the lap of an adult. This gentle approach helps children build their confidence and allows them to initiate their own play, which they do with ease as they move around their play room selecting what they want to play with.

Babies are cared for in an inviting and well-resourced room. Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and close and caring relationships increases their sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self-esteem. They have the freedom to explore their environment because it is safe and resources are easily accessed, for example, babies lie on their front reaching for books and items in the treasure baskets, adults encourage them and aid as necessary. Babies physical development is considered through providing a varied range of wheeled toys and rockers for them to use daily. Adults help children develop and acquire new physical skills through giving them the space to sit, lie and crawl. Staff especially support the younger babies well and they feed, sleep and play according to their individual care needs. Staff plan a varied range of experiences but do not always effectively plan for the developmental needs of the more able babies, for example, they have few opportunities to use their senses to explore paint, dough, water and sand on a daily basis. Consequently, on occasion these babies do not always show a good interest in what is made available. Babies are confident and at ease in their environment, for example, a child confidently moves from one small sofa to another showing affection by hugging another child.

Children from 18 months to three years are cared for by staff that have a good understanding of child development and how to help children make progress. They skilfully use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide an inspiring range of experiences which capture the children's curiosity. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a wide range of exploratory and sensory experiences. They enjoy exploring the properties of water, sand, paint and dough. Children benefit from meaningful interactions with the staff, that are skilled and know when to sit back and observe and when to engage children. Staff reinforce early mathematical concepts well through practical experiences whilst children are playing and therefore learning is fun. Children make good use of what is available and show good levels of involvement in their chosen play. Children enjoy using the book corner and are often seen looking at books independently and with adults. However, whole group story sessions are not always successful and children do not always show good levels of interest. This is because staff do not effectively plan for the varying age and ability of the group.

Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy and choose from a good range of appropriate resources and activities. They have the confidence and abilities to initiate their own play and do so with ease as they move around the room. Children are inquisitive and curious whilst playing with bark in the water trough. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a wide range of exploratory and sensory experiences.

All children are eager to learn because of the stimulating environment provided for them. They sit patiently, listening intently during circle time whilst looking at similarities and difference through pictures. Staff maintain the children's interest through interesting questions and appropriate explanations and introduce new vocabulary well. Children confidently participate in group discussions and are keen to answer questions. They are able to recall events in their lives and details that interest them. Children play cooperatively in groups and are learning to

speak in turn and listen to others. Children show a fondness for books, for example, they freely select books, naming them by title and respond with enjoyment to story sessions.

Children enjoy mark-making to represent their ideas and some children are becoming confident in attempting to write their own names. Pencil control is developing well through children using chalk boards, painting and colouring. The writing area is well resourced, with clipboards, magnetic, capital and lower case letters, familiar words, various writing materials and feathers, however, children do not always make good use of the area because staff do not always effectively encourage the children.

Children count and are learning to recognise numerals to nine. Older children confidently use these skills with purpose in their play by counting objects and learning to recognise numerals, for example, whilst playing in the water a child quickly tells his play mate he has two pieces of bark. In the home corner a child identifies the numeral two. Children begin to show an interest in numbers, counting and problem solving when helping to set the table ready for lunch. Children are seen independently counting, making pairs and matching. These practical, enjoyable activities means children develop a positive approach to learning. They talk about length, height, compare shape, and make comparisons when rolling out shapes created with the play dough and building towers with construction toys. Daily routine and play is used effectively to extend children's mathematical vocabulary and skills to calculate and solve simple number problems. The computers are popular with the children, for example, a child jumps with excitement, whilst correctly fitting shapes on the game. They confidently use the computer with the key board and mouse. Staff incorporate it well to reinforce children's mathematical learning and literacy.

Staff do not make effective use the outdoor play area to maximise play opportunities for children. Children enjoy outdoor play and are keen to get outside, however, outdoor play is limited to once a day and this can sometimes lead to boisterous play indoors. Children use their senses well to explore and make comparisons using wet and dry items such as sand, rice and pasta. They are encouraged to explore, investigate and question why things happen, for example, they make corn- flour, add food colouring and mix paints. Children identify some features of living things and natural objects through using magnifying glasses, taking bark rubbings and using them in their play. Children are creative through their art work, music and movement and the use the role play area well.

Staff leading the educational programme have a good understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage; they work well as a team and support each other in order to benefit the children. They gather evidence of children's starting points from parents and are beginning to use their written and observation and assessments to assist in planning for the children's next steps. Children use an inviting and well-maintained environment and staff prepare and plan an extensive range of good resources, which support their learning across all of the six areas of learning. Staff organise adult-led, adult-supported and child-initiated play opportunities, however, because children choose what they want to invest their time with, some children may spend most of the session playing with their favourite toys and often miss out on some very valuable learning opportunities. Two-weekly focused activities are carried out by the staff and often the learning intention is met well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued, respected as individuals, and treated with equal concern as the staff have a thorough understanding of equality issues, as well as experience of working with children

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff ensure that all children's needs are met effectively. Children have many opportunities to learn about themselves and develop a healthy respect for the needs of others. Children learn about the wider community through planned activities, such as celebrating festivals and using resources reflecting positive images of culture, gender and disability. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children have time to play freely, be physical and come together as a group. They are often busy and kept occupied and enjoy their time at the nursery. Consequently, behaviour is good and they play with each other in harmony. Children have a good understanding about right and wrong which is reinforced by the staff's positive attitude towards their care and development.

Children respond to the staff's effective, clear behaviour boundaries. Staff praise children for positive behaviour by rewarding them with lots of praise and telling children when they do something well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. This contributes to children's well-being in the setting. Staff actively seek parent's views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing through regular parent's evenings and detailed developmental reports. Parents receive comprehensive information about the setting through the prospectus, notice board and regular written correspondence. Children benefit from the involvement of their parents in projects and celebrations which contribute to their good health, safety, development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A robust recruitment and selection procedure means that children are cared for by suitably qualified staff. Staff give good regard to the well-being of the children they care for and communicate well to ensure they all understand any child related issues. This good teamwork enhances children's care and learning. Children's care is enhanced by the staff's good organisational skills. Children are eager to attend and enjoy their time in a lively and safe setting, which puts them first. They feel welcome because the environment is organised with the children's needs in mind.

The management team work well together and are committed to improving the service provided and this is addressed through regular staff monitoring and training opportunities. Staff are positive about change and are keen to attend any additional training and implement new initiatives to improve the lives of children. The staff give good regard to the well-being of the children they care for and communicate well to meet their needs. Effective induction training is carried out with new staff, which ensures all staff are clear about their role and responsibilities. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and regularly reviewed.

The management team, skilled and qualified staff, who are highly motivated and committed, contribute to the day to day running of the setting and its continued improvement and development. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, one recommendation was made to improve the care of children and one to improve the education of children. Both have been successfully addressed. The rooms are maintained at an adequate temperature for children through staff regularly monitoring and maintaining comfortable temperatures. Children have use of a climbing frame to increase their skills in climbing and offer further challenge

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

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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):

- consider the organisation of story sessions in the toddler room to ensure staff meet the varying needs within the group
- plan more effectively for the developmental needs of the more able children in the baby room.

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):

- monitor and encourage children to make full use of the rich range of experiences made available to them
- make effective use of the outdoor play area to maximise play opportunities for children.

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