

Springfields Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY286822
Inspection date	22 February 2008
Inspector	Olwen Pulker
Setting Address	Beacon Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7BJ
Telephone number	01543 253333
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Registered person	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
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?

Springfields Day Nursery is one of 112 national nurseries run by Asquith Court Nurseries Limited. It opened in 1989 and operates from six rooms within a converted school building. It is situated within a residential location in Lichfield, Staffordshire. The nursery merged with Rockland, its sister nursery, in January 2008. A maximum of 134 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 174 children under five years on roll. Of these 32 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 33 staff who work with the children. Of these, 29 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within a clean and hygienic environment. Their medical needs are met through the use of accident and medication procedures that are clear and understood by staff. There is written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment in place for all children. This consent is available on site so staff have ease of access to it if required. Good procedures are in place for sick and infectious children which help prevent the spread of infection and help to keep children healthy. Children requiring a daytime sleep are provided with freshly laundered sheets and blankets. Outdoor shoes are not worn in the baby room, ensuring that the children are able to play and explore on clean flooring. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through their daily routines and wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after messy play and are provided with soap and a plentiful supply of paper towels and warm air driers. At the time of inspection the nappy changing procedures and hand washing routines were not sufficiently robust to protect all children from the risk of cross-contamination. Not all staff wore disposable aprons when changing children's nappies and toddlers shared a bowl of water when washing their hands before snack time.

Children benefit from a nutritionally-balanced diet where fresh meat and vegetables play a significant part in promoting their growth and development. Babies receive foods in suitable consistencies to support good weaning processes. Clear arrangements ensure any specific dietary requirements or food allergies are known to all staff so that children are served food that meets their individual needs. Children and babies enjoy the meals provided and are supported by staff in gaining good skills as most use cutlery successfully to eat their meals. They enjoy a variety of healthy snacks between meals, including fresh and dried fruit. Drinks of water are readily accessible for children to have when they require. Children learn about healthy diets and bodies through discussions and related activities.

Children have regular opportunities for physical play outdoors. They thoroughly enjoy being outside in the playground where the use of physical play equipment and the enthusiastic participation in outdoor games promotes their physical development. Their coordination and spatial awareness develops well as they ride on the wheeled toys and play ball games. Pre-school children have excellent opportunities to extend their balancing and climbing skills as they use the interesting range of fixed structures.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment. The main entrance door is fitted with an intercom and callers are clearly visible to staff ensuring no unauthorised persons can gain access. Rooms are well ventilated and numerous windows provide good levels of natural lighting. Work is in progress, following the construction and reorganisation of rooms, to decorate the walls with colourful displays of children's work and photographs thus contributing to children's sense of belonging and informing parents their children's activities and learning.

Children use a varied range of safe, good quality, age-appropriate resources. Toys and play equipment are kept in low-level storage units where they are clearly visible and allow children to access items of their choice.

There are effective procedures in place to evacuate babies, evacuation procedures are posted in every room and fire drills are practised regularly so that staff and children know what to do in the event of evacuation. Timely reminders and explanations from staff about appropriate behaviour and use of equipment help develop children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm.

Children's welfare is maintained because staff have undertaken training in safeguarding children. They are aware of the procedures to follow and who to contact should there be any concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the group confidently and enjoy their time in the setting. An effective key person system ensures that they are cared for by consistent staff, whenever possible. Children receive lots of cuddles and enjoy the positive interaction with staff which increases their sense of trust and well-being. Babies benefit from routines which are similar to their experiences at home and staff are attentive to their needs. They enjoy the textures of natural materials and the colours and sounds of manufactured toys, which they explore with interest. Staff plan a wide range of interesting experiences and activities to help children learn through their play.

Older children have positive relationships with staff and receive comfort and attention when they need support. They play happily together and with adults, using resources such as puzzles and role-play equipment. Musical activities include singing and action rhymes which contribute to children's developing communication skills. They show an interest in books and happily settle independently to look at the pictures or with staff who sit and read to them. Exploration with paint, dough, 'gloop' and sand helps children represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making clear progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of how children learn and use the stepping stones to clearly identify children's achievements. Observations are used to assess children's progress and complete stepping stones profile. Children's progress records, combined with key person's knowledge of individual children, are used effectively to plan the next steps in learning for each child. Staff engage in children's play and challenge children by good use of questioning to extend children's learning. Behaviour is managed well which results in a calm and caring environment for children. The room is well organised and offers a stimulating environment to promote children's learning. Staff are enthusiastic and keen to extend multicultural resources, introduce name cards and a self-registration board and further develop maths in all areas to enable children to progress further in their learning.

Children are excited and motivated to learn, they enjoy new experiences with enthusiasm. They form good relationships with staff and their peers which promotes their sense of well-being. Children are developing their independence through participation in routine activities such as setting the tables for lunch, serving their food, pouring their own drinks, tidying up and putting on their coats before going out to play. Toys and activities are mostly kept in drawers and storage boxes identified by computer-generated text labels and photographs. This method of labelling fully informs all children of what is available and therefore promotes their choice. They initiate and continue conversations with others at mealtimes and during their play. They

talk about their families and eagerly tell staff about events from their home lives. Most children enjoy listening to stories of their choice and sing their favourite songs and rhymes with confidence. They are beginning to link sounds to letters and point to the first letter of their names on the alphabet frieze. However, they do not yet have name cards to use on a daily basis to reinforce their recognition of their names. Some of the older children are able to write their names neatly using well-formed letters. Paper and pencils are easily accessible for children to use during role play in the home corner.

Regular activities are used to develop children's awareness of simple number operations. Children count items into shopping baskets when playing shops or the number of 'cakes' they make. They count the number of plates, knives and forks required on each table at lunch time. Children use simple subtraction during mealtimes and recognise that when they eat one of the two potatoes on the plate there is one left. They show an interest in shape and patterns as they find matching pairs on the computer and use construction bricks to build a colour sequence. Children's understanding of the world is promoted through good use of posters and display tables. They competently use technology such as 'tills' and 'swipe cards' in their play and learn to care for living creatures when feeding the fish, African snails and guinea pigs.

Children move confidently with control and coordination. They successfully negotiate pathways when riding on wheeled toys or play ball games in the outdoor play area. They have access to large play equipment and a newly installed climbing wall to extend their climbing and balancing skills. Most handle a range of tools and small equipment, such as pencils, spreaders, scissors and cutlery well. Children have freedom to express themselves creatively and explore many different textures. They mix flour and water to make dough which they form into small 'cakes' and then decorate with lentils, marrowfat peas and coffee. Children's imagination is well developed as they take part in role play which often extends and evolves, for example, they begin to dig and build structures in the sand tray and progress to adding water to create 'cement' which they use to join together a row of wooden bricks to build a wall. Groups of children play well together in the home corner; they line up in a queue to buy 'groceries' from the 'shopkeeper' or go to visit the 'doctor' to have 'a poorly leg' made better.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. The interaction between staff and children is warm and caring. Children work and play well together, they are learning to show care and concern for others as they use their manners frequently. All children are valued and respected as individuals. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed by staff with good use of praise and encouragement.

Children are beginning to learn about other cultures through access to play materials such as books, musical instruments and puzzles. Staff are committed to celebrating other cultures and festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year when they occur, in order to introduce children to diversity and help them develop a positive attitude to others. There are good arrangements in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or children who speak English as an additional language and staff ensure they work closely with parents and other professionals to meet each child's needs.

Most children behave well as staff are clear and consistent in their expectations. They are learning to share and take turns with equipment, for example, when playing with wheeled toys in the outdoor play area. They take turns in speaking to the rest of the group at mealtimes

when recalling earlier activities and listen well when others are speaking. Children willingly share the task of tidying up when it's time to put toys away. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff are developing with parents and carers. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through information contained in the prospectus and discussion with a key person at the induction visits. Children's individual needs and routines are discussed with parents and recorded on enrolment forms. This helps children to settle quickly and enables staff to meet their needs. Parents receive regular newsletters and invitations to attend parents' evenings where they can talk to their key persons about their children's achievements and progress. Daily verbal and written feedback is given by staff to ensure parents are informed about what their children have been doing whilst attending and their activities and progress are recorded in 'learning journey' folders which are shared with parents. The partnership with parents and carers who receive nursery education funding is good. They receive information on the educational programme provided for their children and are kept informed about their children's progress as staff give them verbal reports daily and key persons share developmental records with them on request. Parents have free access to written details of key persons observations and assessments of the children's daily activities. They are invited to use these to extend children's learning and share information about what their children do at home. Parents said they are very happy with the care their children receive and the information given about their children's activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Systems are in place to ensure that staff are aware of current good practice guidelines and can develop and extend their experience, for example, through training and access to childcare publications. Staff appraisals, regular supervision, team meetings and a clear management structure all help to ensure that staff remain committed to providing an exciting, happy and comfortable environment for the children in their care and work well together as a team.

The majority of staff working with children have appropriate childcare qualifications and have a commitment to accessing ongoing training. Good child to staff ratios mean that children have individual attention where required and this helps them to develop well. Good procedures are in place for ensuring that children are cared for by staff who have had appropriate experience, enjoy working with children and have completed appropriate checks.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. Records relating directly to children are stored confidentially and in line with requirements. There are effective systems in place for recording accidents, medication and attendance. Policies and procedures are in place to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare and staff act promptly to rectify any weaknesses identified in their practices.

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 setting was asked to ensure that children's personal hygiene needs are met at all times to prevent the spread of infection. Each care room now has a supply of

tissues which are used by staff or children to wipe runny noses which helps prevent cross-infection. However, reference is made in this report to some children's hygiene needs not being fully met with regards to arrangements for nappy changing and hand washing facilities and a similar recommendation has been raised following this inspection.

The setting was also asked to improve opportunities for children to explore and investigate from a range of additional resources during their play. New toys and resources have been purchased and are accessed directly by the children. For instance, babies are able to explore an exciting range of wooden toys, treasure baskets and different textiles. Certain areas within the rooms have been resourced with natural materials, such as, pasta, dried peas and rice which children explore and use during their play.

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):

- ensure all staff adhere to good hygiene practice with regard to nappy changing procedures and children's hand washing routines in order to prevent the spread of infection.

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 increase the opportunities for children to develop their early reading, writing and mathematical skills.

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