

# See Saws Day Nursery and Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	228931
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Myra Lewis
<b>Setting Address</b>	30 Walmley Ash Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B76 1JA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 351 7000
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<b>Registered person</b>	Seesaws Day Nurseries Ltd
<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 satisfactory. 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?

Seesaws Day Nursery is one of seven privately owned day care and out of school facilities and was opened in 2000. It operates from a large detached house situated on the outskirts of Sutton Coldfield, to the north of the city of Birmingham. The accommodation is on two levels, the first floor providing facilities for the under two's and the ground floor for the two to five year olds. All children share access to a secure enclosed garden. There is a car park to the front of the building.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 65 children at any one time. There are currently 102 children on roll from birth to five years. Of these, 18 receive funding for nursery education. The setting can support children with learning disabilities and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The group serves the local and surrounding areas.

The group opens Monday to Friday for 52 weeks a year, excluding Christmas and Boxing day holidays. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:15. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 18 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, 11 hold suitable early years qualifications. There are seven staff working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is appropriately supported within the setting. Staff take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection by observing the established daily routines in place. Children are encouraged to be independent and develop their self-care skills appropriately. They learn the importance of washing their hands before eating and after toileting. Satisfactory nappy changing routines are in place which have regard to children's personal care requirements. They are provided with paper towels and liquid soap to wash their hands and staff wear protective clothing when changing nappies. Therefore, the risks of cross-infection are minimised.

Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children are provided with clean bed linen each day. Their individual sleep patterns are discussed and agreed with parents. Staff monitor children asleep and keep a record which is shared with parents. However, the sleep areas used are often over-crowded which potentially compromises children's well-being.

Children's health is protected because staff hold relevant first aid qualifications and act in the best interests of children if they are ill. Satisfactory accident and medication records are maintained and a suitable first aid box is available, the contents of which are checked at regular intervals.

Children have access to physical resources both in and outdoors. They enjoy physical exercise and move confidently within their environment. They have access to a suitable selection of wheeled toys and staff ensure physical play activities are incorporated in planned activities. Whilst older children play outside each day, opportunities for the younger children are limited. Therefore, younger children do not benefit from being outside in the fresh air.

Children's meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day and promote healthy food choices. They have access to drinking water and are provided with healthy, nutritious snacks at regular intervals throughout the day. Their individual portion sizes are good and second helpings are readily available. Children sit together and enjoy sociable mealtimes. All aspects of children's individual dietary needs are discussed and agreed with parents. Staff are made aware of children's likes, dislikes and preferences.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a wide range of toys and resources, which are safe, suitable for their purpose and meet safety standards. Staff carry out routine maintenance checks for all toys and resources and ensure these are regularly cleaned. Children are beginning to understand the necessary boundaries in place to keep them safe through discussion and gentle reminders from staff. They are encouraged to help tidy away toys to avoid accidents. Satisfactory fire evacuation plans are in place and practised with the children on a monthly basis and an appropriate record

is maintained. Children's daily attendance is monitored and recorded appropriately to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children is maintained.

Children's safety is protected as the staff have taken appropriate action to identify and minimise hazards through risk assessment of all areas of the setting. Written policies and procedures ensure staff are made fully aware of their individual roles and responsibilities. Any repairs are dealt with promptly by the designated handy person employed by the setting. Children are cared for in age-appropriate groups where they are able to move freely and independently around the play rooms. However, available space within the setting is not fully utilised to maximise children's free play opportunities.

Children are protected from possible abuse and neglect because the settings policy follows the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. All staff are made aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection through induction and the importance of sharing and recording any concerns with relevant senior managers to initiate the procedures in place. Therefore, children's welfare is promoted.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle easily into their surroundings and play happily. They participate in a variety of suitable activities to promote play and learning appropriately. Children enjoy opportunities to build and construct using a variety of construction resources, manipulate and explore textures such as play dough and sand, complete simple jigsaw puzzles, and develop their imagination through various role play activities such as dressing up. Babies receive individual attention from staff who spend their time holding, talking and playing with them and meet their individual needs appropriately. Their early physical skills are encouraged as they begin to roll, crawl, stand and take their first steps. Children interact positively with staff who get to know them well and support their play effectively. Staff use praise and encouragement consistently to build children's confidence and self-esteem. Activities for the younger children are planned using the 'Birth to three matters' Framework. Children enjoy regular visits from the 'music man' where they eagerly join in singing songs and action rhymes that they have learnt.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and have close and trusting relationships with the children. Planning is thorough, activities stimulate children's interests and learning intentions clearly identified. They are provided with a well-planned programme of interesting activities linked to all areas of learning. The pre-school co-ordinator supports older, more able children's learning through small group activities to ensure they have more challenging learning opportunities. Staff know the children well and identify their individual learning needs. Although there are no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities there are good systems in place to provide appropriate support. Staff evaluate activities and monitor children's progress through ongoing observation and assessment. Whilst parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children's learning, children's starting point is not clearly identified or agreed with parents. Therefore, this impacts on some aspects of their learning.

Children are well-motivated to learn and keen to participate in the activities provided. They are confident in all aspects of their play. They know the routines well, staff actively ask children what they would like to play with. However, opportunities for children to self-select toys and

resources for themselves are limited. Their language development is good, they engage easily in conversations with staff and other children. Staff listen to what they have to say and give them sufficient time to respond to their questions in order for them to make their needs known. Staff promote children's thinking and listening skills through positive interaction and effective use of questions. Some children can recognise and links sounds to letters to spell their names, while other children do this with the support of staff. Children practise their early writing skills as they are playing and have easy access to a variety of different writing materials. Children use and handle small tools such as, scissors, paint brushes, glue spreaders and pencils with increasing control and skill. Children have access to a computer and learn to use the 'mouse' appropriately to navigate the programme. Children can sort, match and talk about shapes and sizes in their environment. Younger children are learning to count with appropriate support from staff. Whilst older, more able children can count up to 10 and beyond, they are beginning to use their fingers to help them count. Staff talk to them about how many one more or less makes to support their understanding of addition and subtraction through everyday activities.

Children learn about their own and other cultures as they celebrate different festivals throughout the year. They learn about other countries through activities and discussion with staff. Children are encouraged to learn simple words and numbers in French. There are daily opportunities for them to play outside and physical activities are incorporated in weekly plans. Children learn to manoeuvre wheeled toys and practise their control and co-ordination skills as they take part in ballet sessions. Plans reflect a wide variety of creative activities that promote children's self-expression. For example, children work successfully in pairs to draw self-portraits of each other. They are well supported by staff who praise the children for their achievements. Children enjoy music, singing and taking part in action rhymes. They listen to stories attentively and use and handle books appropriately.

Therefore, children's overall learning is positively supported.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, sociable and settled in their surroundings. Staff provide a friendly welcoming environment for children and their parents. All children are treated with equal concern regardless of their ability, gender or background and have equal access to all activities provided. Their individual needs are met appropriately because all aspects of their care are discussed and agreed with their parents. Any specific requirements or information is shared through daily verbal contact to ensure the specific needs of children are recognised and met sensitively. When difficulties arise appropriate strategies are discussed and agreed to ensure children's needs are met appropriately.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning to play in co-operation with others by sharing and turn taking. They learn about the wider environment through planned activities throughout the year, they express their feelings and manage their personal care needs effectively. Staff act as good role models and use positive strategies to manage children's behaviour. Children know what is expected of them, they respond well to praise and encouragement from staff and their behaviour is good. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with promptly, therefore, children begin to understand the difference between right from wrong.

Partnership with parents for nursery education is good. Children benefit from the positive relationships and informal contact between their parents and staff who are available to talk

with parents at any time. Information on the early learning goals is made available to all parents. Staff encourage parents to actively support themes and topics and there are regular newsletters and notice board displays. In addition there are more formal parent meetings held and six monthly questionnaires to seek parent's views on the service provided. Therefore, children's learning and progress is promoted and shared openly with their parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, friendly environment and play happily. They develop positive relationships with staff and develop a sense of belonging because they are comfortable and at ease within the setting. Activities are planned using the 'Birth to three matters' Framework and the Foundation Stage Curriculum to support children's learning. Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures are followed to ensure children are cared for by suitably vetted staff. The staff team is newly established and beginning to work cohesively together in meeting the needs of the children in attendance. All necessary records, policies and procedures required to promote the welfare, care and learning of children in attendance are in place and stored securely.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The registered person has appointed a pre-school co-ordinator who works with pre-school staff in each of the settings to ensure an effective nursery education programme is provided. As a result children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Plans are clearly linked to the six areas of learning and provide a good variety of stimulating activities for children. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss and evaluate children's progress. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training and in-house development workshops. Therefore, children's ongoing learning and development is appropriately supported.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

### **Care**

At the last inspection the provider was required to: request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, ensure a written record of all complaints is maintained and to review and improve risk assessments to minimise identified hazards on the premises, and ensure all staff are aware of the procedures.

In response to the recommendations made the provider has taken appropriate action to ensure written consent from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment is in place; established an up to date record of any complaints and reviewed and updated the risk assessment procedures.

### **Nursery Education**

At the last inspection of nursery education the provider was required to plan suitable activities for all children, particularly those more able children and develop practical activities for all children to practice and consolidate their mathematical learning and understanding of subtraction.

In response to the key issues raised the provider has reviewed and improved the planning systems used and a pre-school co-ordinator has been given the overall responsibility to plan

in consultation with pre-school staff. Plans are linked to the early learning stepping stones and children's progress is monitored through observations and evaluation of activities. Plans show that children's understanding of mathematical learning is promoted on a daily basis and staff encourage children to count objects as they play. The older, more able children's learning is supported through small group activities that are adapted to offer them more challenging learning opportunities.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been three complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection that required the provider to take further action to meet the National Standards.

In July 2005 concerns were raised regarding inappropriate staffing ratios and members of staff's knowledge and training of the care of babies. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation and National Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the setting and inspectors identified that the registered provider was in breach of the conditions of registration by providing care for more children than stated on the registration certificate. A Compliance Notice was issued. There were three actions raised; to provide a copy of the policy and procedure of how the registered person ensures that registered numbers are adhered to and maintained at all times, to ensure that Ofsted is notified of all persons caring for the children on the premises and to ensure room registers are an accurate record of children and staff present. A further visit to the setting was carried out and Ofsted were satisfied that the compliance notice had been met. The provider remained qualified for registration.

In 14 February 2006 concerns were raised regarding ratios and general standards of care within the setting. These concerns relate to National Standard 1: Suitable Person and National Standard 2: Organisation. An unannounced visit was carried out and the setting were found to be meeting the correct ratios on that day. However, on investigation of the registers for three particular dates it was found that the setting had not met minimum staffing ratios. An action was raised; to ensure staff to child ratios were met at all times. The action response was received and reviewed by an Inspection Team Manager who was satisfied that the response meets the National Standards. The provider remained qualified for registration.

In September 2006 concerns were raised regarding safety within the setting and the lack of hot water. These concerns relate to National Standard 4: Physical environment, National Standard 6: Safety and National Standard 7: Health. An unannounced visit was carried out and two actions and one recommendation were made; to ensure cots or other appropriate furniture are provided for children to rest or sleep; to ensure that positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting with regard to upstairs windows and to ensure children have access to appropriate hand washing facilities including hot water in the toilet area. The action response was received and reviewed by a Inspection Team Manager who was satisfied that the response meets the National Standards. The provider remained qualified for registration.

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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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):

- maximise the use of available space to support children's learning and ensure all children have access to outside play
- ensure the required space standards are met during sleep times

#### 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 more opportunities for children to self-select toys and resources for themselves
- make sure children's starting point of learning is fully discussed and agreed with parents.

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)