

Fisherfield Farm Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	503234
Inspection date	05 March 2008
Inspector	Annette Stanger
Setting Address	34 Bagslate Moor Road, Norden, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL11 5XT
Telephone number	01706 352 000
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Registered person	Fisherfield Farm Nursery Ltd
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?

Fisherfield Farm Nursery Limited, The Gables Nursery, is one of six privately owned nurseries. The company also operates two settings that provide out of school care in the form of before and after school care and a holiday club. These are located throughout the Rochdale and Bury areas and opened in 2001. The nursery operates from a converted bungalow with four main play rooms and is situated in the Bamford area of Rochdale. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 49 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00, closing for all bank holidays and a week at Christmas. There are currently 78 children aged from three months to five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area as well as within the locality. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs 16 members of staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification. There is also an area manager and a quality manager who visits the nursery once a week.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

High priority is given to young children's health, physical and emotional well-being, in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of the children's capabilities. They take time to regularly observe children and this means they are able to provide excellent levels of support for children to actively explore their immediate environment and gradually develop their physical strength and skill. The excellent range of toys and equipment encourage children to develop their coordination as they manipulate a range of objects involving them pulling, twisting, squeezing, pressing and pushing. These are skilfully positioned by staff to encourage young children to stretch, reach, crawl and be physically active. Children are encouraged to develop their sense of touch and explore the sensory items attached to the fencing in the outdoor area. Gloves filled with sand and rubber textured ice cube trays, all encourage children to explore a range of textures, as well as an array of sensory and natural resources that are accessible indoors. Exceptional attention is paid to making the very best of the outdoor facilities. Staff plan for this in advance to ensure children of all ages regularly experience outdoor play, get plenty of fresh air and use a wide range of equipment to develop their physical skills. As a result they make excellent progress in their physical development. They enjoy using tools to dig and containers to fill and pour from during sand and water play and digging and planting activities. They build with large plastic construction bricks and do so with purpose to make different items, such as, a house. There is a wealth of opportunities for children to climb and balance on climbing equipment, crates and tyres. They do so with excellent coordination, skilfully using their arms out-stretched to balance themselves as they walk both in a straight line, as well as manoeuvring their bodies to turn corners. Children skilfully manoeuvre a range of wheeled toys and equipment including pushchairs, scooters and tricycles. They steer and negotiate the space well to successfully avoid crashing into their peers and many are also able to pedal both forwards and backwards. Children also learn to move in a range of imaginative ways and coordinate their bodies to music as they dance during planned movement sessions and as they spin round, jump, hop and crouch down low as they dance and sing to themselves.

Staff promote children's health superbly by taking a range of positive actions. Children thrive because they are cared for in an exceptionally clean and hygienically maintained environment. The utmost attention is paid to ensuring precautions are taken to successfully avoid cross-contamination, with hygienic procedures for nappy changing and hand washing. Feeding and nappy changing takes place in accordance with the child's individual needs to ensure children are comfortable, their individual items are kept separate and only used for that named child. The key person system in operation also ensures that children have a named carer and this minimises the number of carers and helps to develop a bond and a reassuring familiarity.

Staff give exceptional levels of support and guidance in encouraging children to gain an excellent understanding of health and hygiene. Discussions with children about germs, and posters displayed at their level, raise awareness of why it is important to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet, and why such practices keep them healthy. This raises their awareness of germs and that such practises keep them healthy. Children demonstrate this level of knowledge as they explain washing their hands, rids them of germs and makes them clean. Staff actively encourage children to think for themselves and to make decisions regarding their personal care. For example, staff position tissues within easy reach for them to independently attend to their own needs as they blow their noses and dispose of tissues hygienically in the

bin. Staff ask children questions to encourage them to consider how to dress correctly according to the weather conditions. For example, children know they need to wear their boots, and their coats, remembering to put their hoods up, when playing outdoors in the rain.

Arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet all requirements. Staff are trained in administering first aid and pay very good attention to continually updating this knowledge to protect children's health. Staff are also trained in procedures to support children with specific health needs and this gives opportunities for a wider range of children to experience day care. Staff actively seek information regarding children's health and dietary needs, and any allergies or cultural preferences. This information is shared effectively to ensure staff are aware and remain vigilant in ensuring that the children's health is continually safeguarded in line with their individual requirements.

An excellent variety of healthy balanced meals and snacks are provided for the children and the setting is committed in its approach to healthy eating. The staff ensure they keep up to date with the latest guidance in order to maintain high standards. The nursery has also achieved an award for their healthy meals and snacks and their proactive approach to providing a healthy balance for the children in their care. Food is all freshly prepared and includes local produce. Children enjoy fruit snacks and vegetables accompany main meals. They are given a choice of dessert and choice cards are used by the children to indicate whether they want the pudding from the menu or a fruit option. Both are shown to the children so they can make an informed choice. Children also learn about portion size as they serve themselves and this helps them to develop a greater understanding of their own needs. Menus are carefully planned and are shared with parents to keep them well informed about meal choices. Children have regular access to water so they can easily accommodate their thirst; water dispensers ensure drinking water is always available.

Staff talk to children about the benefits on the body by eating and drinking healthily. Innovative projects are planned around healthy living and these ensure the children are knowledgeable about the importance of looking after their bodies and protecting their teeth. Children learn about healthy bones through planned topics on growth, a visiting nutritionist talks to the children about healthy eating and the children prepare healthy pitta bread vegetable faces. Other visitors have come to talk to the children about dental hygiene and the importance of looking after their teeth, using puppets as aids.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit greatly from the excellent organisation of the space and resources in a vibrant child-centred environment, which encourages them to be truly independent, curious and imaginative learners. They have access to a superb variety of age-appropriate toys, furniture and resources. These are clean, well maintained and are systematically checked for safety. These are presented in clearly defined areas for play, and areas of continuous provision are used to enhance children's learning and provide a balance of stimulating practical experiences. Children's work and creativity is highly valued and is attractively displayed for children to refer to. This actively promotes and builds on children's self-esteem as they take pride in their achievements.

Robust safety measures are in place. A high ratio of staff to children and effective deployment ensures that children are well supervised and supported in all areas of the provision. Thorough risk assessments are regularly undertaken to minimise any hazards to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors. Staff continuously risk assess the setting taking into account children's

increasing capabilities. Accident records are used effectively to inform risk assessments and identify any possible areas for improvement to continuously improve safety. Staff are extremely vigilant and continuously risk-assess to maintain a safe environment where all children are able to move around safely and freely and initiate their own play and learning. Excellent security measures are in place and these ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and there can be no unauthorised access to children. There are clear procedures to ensure children are collected by authorised people as detailed on entry documentation completed with parents.

All fire safety precautions are in place and children learn about emergency evacuations because they are regularly practised and recorded to highlight any potential problems. During fire practises the position of the fire is varied so staff are knowledgeable of all evacuation routes and are therefore better equipped to deal with an emergency evacuation. Staff are constantly alert to teaching children about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. They use clear explanations to help them understand the possible consequences of their actions and are reminded of the safety rules for using certain equipment, such as scissors. Children also learn about road safety during their play, they talk about how they know when it is safe to cross the road and of the need to look and listen. Parents also have the opportunity to borrow resources to raise children's awareness of road safety. For example, parents borrow the road safety resource bag, which includes stories and an audio compact disk with songs about road safety, available in a variety of languages. This raises children's awareness of safety and encourages them to share some responsibility for their own well-being. The nursery also has very good links with the police community support officers, who have visited the nursery and talked to the children about safety.

Staff are extremely knowledgeable of their role in safeguarding and on the reporting procedures. They are vigilant and have a very good awareness of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. All have attended relevant training and have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Children's welfare is strongly promoted by staff, who adhere to an extensive range of highly effective policies and procedures. Existing injuries are recorded and this ensures children are safeguarded and their welfare protected. These measures contribute to keeping children safe and mean that staff can act appropriately and in the child's best interest.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children in all age groups are confident and display high levels of self-esteem. This is largely due to the actions of the staff who evidently know the children well. An effective key person system is in place and this helps children to settle quickly and develop trusting bonds. It minimises the number of carers involved with the child and ensures that children have the opportunity to interact with a consistent adult at frequent intervals throughout the day. Interaction is effective and staff praise children regularly, listen to what they are saying and value their contributions. This results in good, warm and caring relationships and children that are very happy and settled. Children enter the setting confidently and quickly settle into the familiar routine. They use their initiative well, selecting their own resources and experiences as well as participating in planned activities. Children's independence is actively encouraged by staff. Resources are easily accessible for children to exercise choice and daily routines are mostly well managed, to encourage older children to become more self-sufficient. Although, on occasions too much time is spent with children lined up for long periods, particularly when

waiting to wash their hands before lunch and this results in some of the children becoming restless.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively to plan a good range of activities that further their development and enrich their learning experience. Babies and toddlers are welcomed into the nursery by warm, friendly staff that actively listen and respond enthusiastically to their sounds, body language and facial expressions. Children enjoy playing games of 'peek-a-boo' with staff and looking at their reflections in low-level mirrors and display this enjoyment by laughing and clapping. Young children's creative development is well supported and they enjoy a good range of sensory and exploratory experiences that also include the use of natural materials. Children of all ages enjoy a range of practical play experiences throughout the nursery and staff are skilled at ensuring the activities suit the developmental needs of the children. Children play with shaving foam containing glitter; they build tracks for their trains, dress up and explore their self-image as well as attempting fastenings on dressing up clothes. Focused activities have clear learning objectives; they include, for example, children sorting construction bricks into groups according to the colour and size, building towers and comparing their height.

Staff interact well with the children and talk, question, and extend their thinking and knowledge, actively encouraging learning through play. Planning is based on the children's own interests. Staff use the look, listen and note approach, which ensures that the activities and opportunities provided for the children are meaningful, to help them enjoy and achieve. Staff have a sound knowledge of how children learn and systematically identify next steps in children's learning to ensure that children are sufficiently challenged and make good progress in their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. This ensures that sessions are planned well and include a good balance of activities. Staff ensure that good levels of challenge are incorporated into the curriculum, based on observations of what the children know and can do. Staff are very skilled at communicating with children and use effective questioning techniques to successfully stimulate thinking, extend knowledge and encourage children's language skills. Children's progress is recorded in their individual assessment files. These contain information to show the progress each child is making through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, in each area of learning. They show how the child approaches learning, include written observations, dated examples of their work and creativity and a profile card. Children's next steps in their learning are clearly identified and this information is used successfully to inform future planning. This systematic approach to planning and assessment supports children to make good progress in all areas of learning.

Children enjoy activities which are based on their own interests. They enjoy self selecting their own experiences from the wide range of options available and this helps to develop their decision making skills. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor environments and staff respond well to the children as they listen to their ideas and suggestions and value their input. Children are highly motivated and eagerly participate in activities of their own choosing, such as construction, imaginative and creative activities. Behaviour is good; children are polite, well mannered and demonstrate a clear awareness of boundaries within the nursery.

Children's communication skills are developing well. They are confident in their interactions and they talk with enthusiasm about what they are doing and what they are going to do. They

are very proud of their achievements and seek out staff to share examples of their pictures and creations. Many of the children are confident speakers and have a developing vocabulary as they talk through their play experiences and recent events with good recall. For example, children talk to the inspector about 'Buster' the nursery bear and what they did when it was their turn to take him home. They share 'Buster's' diary log and confidently talk about the photographs, whilst other children join in and use language well to question, such as, who, where, when, and why. Planned activities on linking sounds and letters are also undertaken, using picture cards as aids, although, not all staff are clear of the learning objectives for such activities and how to use the picture cards correctly.

Children show an early appreciation of books and handle them correctly. Writing materials are included as part of the continuous provision and children make good use of these during their play situations. Children choose to label their own work and attempt to write their name and some do so forming recognisable letters. This maximises opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes in everyday play situations and develops their confidence.

Children count confidently and show increasing skill in using and recognising numbers in their play. Language is regularly used to describe position, capacity and size. They compare their height to others and talk about being bigger and smaller than one another. Outdoors they talk about going up the ladder and down the slide, and at snack about their cups being full or empty. Children also learn about shape and pattern and demonstrate this by identifying different shapes and talking about patterns on their clothing, such as stripes on their cardigan.

Children enjoy exploratory and sensory activities, such as playing with shaving foam and planting activities, which help them to learn more about the natural world. They construct with a purpose in mind and use their imaginations well in their creativity. They competently use a wide range of tools safely and skilfully for a range of purposes. For example, children make funny bone skeleton pictures; they use scissors safely to cut out shapes and to cut straws to different lengths before arranging them and gluing them to paper. They also demonstrate good physical skill and show increasing control over clothing and fastenings which develops their independence skills. Children have regular access to information and communication technology. When using the computer they do so with great skill and effectively manage the mouse to complete simple programmes independently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is good in response to the staff's positive and consistent approach to behaviour management. Staff regularly praise children and take time to acknowledge good behaviour. Consistent boundaries are set and staff support younger children in sharing and turn taking and techniques of distraction and diversion are used to good effect. Older children are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own behaviour. A song is played so children know that it is time to tidy up and they each help to put away the resources. They have discussed and decided upon their own set of rules and these are displayed for the children to refer to. Children have also learnt to negotiate and resolve their own disputes and they can be overheard encouraging one another to share resources and play nicely. As a result, children are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and show care for their environment, the resources and one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff promote an inclusive provision and all children are positively welcomed and their individual needs catered for. Children with learning difficulties are well supported through effective

partnerships with parents, individual care plans and good staffing arrangements, which are designed to meet the individual needs of the children. Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to value diversity. They learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities and accessing resources, which reflect diversity, disability and acknowledge cultural differences.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive detailed information about the setting through, for example, a welcome brochure and a welcoming and informative entrance area with information displayed about the staff and the provision itself. Previous inspection reports are accessible for parents and the complaints procedure is clearly displayed. Procedures for maintaining confidentiality are mostly effective, with the exception of current arrangements for sharing invoices with parents within children's drawers, when some drawers are being shared by two families.

Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before they start and on a regular basis throughout their time in the setting. For example, through the completion of entry records about children's, interests, likes and dislikes. Parental involvement in the nursery is actively encouraged and their feedback valued, through the use of questionnaires, comments book and a courtesy call system after their child has started at the nursery.

There is useful information on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation stage within the parents' resource pack, which is freely available within the entrance area. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with the latest developments at the provision. Day sheets, verbal feedback, information contained within children's individual files, progress reports and twice yearly parents' evenings keeps them well informed of the progress their child is making. Planning is displayed within each room and parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, with the opportunity to add their ideas and suggestions for up and coming themes. This two-way sharing of information and expertise allows staff to meet the children's ever-changing needs and keeps both parties well informed. Children clearly benefit from this successful partnership with parents, as it contributes significantly to their development and promotes continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The well organised and welcoming environment contributes to children's good levels of independence and actively increases their confidence as they initiate their own play and learning. The activities and equipment are presented in clearly defined areas and at a level which children can freely and safely select from. Effective deployment of staff ensures children receive good levels of support; staff know the children well and work very well as a team and in the children's best interests.

Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff with good knowledge and understanding of child development and a high regard for the well-being of the children. Induction procedures are thorough and ensure that staff have a good awareness of expected practice. Continuous professional development meetings are undertaken with staff and are used effectively to ascertain continued suitability and to identify training needs. All of the required documentation is in place and includes the necessary detail, policies and procedures are regularly reviewed as part of the nursery's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and development.

The leadership and management is good. There is a high level of commitment from staff and very successful working relationships. Management at all levels, support staff well and actively encourage them to attend ongoing training, which in turn benefits the children and the provision. All staff have a high regard for the well-being of the children and ensure that policies and procedures work well in practice. The provision is proactive in identifying their own areas for development through the use of parental questionnaires, seeking support from qualified teacher input, quality assurance schemes, regular consultation committee meetings with staff and using the self-evaluation form as a tool for improvement. The nursery chain also has a quality manager and area manager who provide ongoing support and guidance to maintain high standards. Staff work very well together as reflective practitioners and regularly evaluate their practice and the delivery of nursery education. This demonstrates a strong willingness to continually improve and has a positive impact on the care and nursery education provided. Recent changes have been made to the planning system and these are working well in practice in the interest of both the staff and children, as well as actively encouraging and valuing parental input. Monitoring systems are mostly effective and ensure that each area of learning is covered sufficiently over time, although this does not extend to ensuring that all aspects within these areas are being covered. This was included in the previous planning system but has not been fully considered to compliment the new planning system to further evaluate the nursery education.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to ensure that the fire exit restricted by highchairs was accessible at all times and to review the practice for the safe and hygienic storage of prepared foods in the corridor. Both issues have been fully addressed. Staff carefully consider where equipment is stored and play provision is positioned so that all fire exits remain clear and accessible and none are restricted in any way. Clear systems are in place for the safe and hygienic storage of prepared foods and staff are fully aware of these. An additional fridge has been purchased and staff work effectively with the nursery cook to ensure all measures are taken to ensure children's needs are met.

At the last nursery education inspection the nursery were asked to give consideration; to the organisation of whole group focused activities to ensure that all children are involved and that their interest is fully sustained and make sure that children's names are always written using appropriate upper and lower case letters. Both have been addressed. Staff have carefully considered the organisation of group activities and children's concentration levels are taken into account when planning activities. Staff consider timescales when planning activities and planning remains flexible to allow staff to gauge children's interest. Improvements have been made to the arrangements for registration so that children are not sat for long periods and children are now more actively involved in this daily routine as they self-register.

Since the last inspection discussion has taken place about making sure that children's names are always written using appropriate upper and lower case letters. Staff teach the children by example and gentle reminders are offered to children to raise their awareness about the use of a capital letter at the start of their name.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 how routines are managed for older children so they are not lined up for long periods, particularly when waiting to use the bathroom before lunch
- ensure arrangements for respecting confidentiality are maintained.

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):

- ensure all staff are knowledgeable of learning objectives of planned activities when teaching children about sounds and letters
- continue to implement monitoring systems to compliment the new planning system, evaluating the nursery education and monitoring that the aspects are covered sufficiently over time.

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