

Shaping Futures

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221824
Inspection date	26 November 2007
Inspector	Judith Rayner
Setting Address	Mansfield I Centre, Hamilton Way, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BR
Telephone number	01623 600638
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Registered person	Shaping Futures 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?

Shaping Futures Day Nursery opened in spring 2002. It operates from the Mansfield I Centre at Oakham business park in Mansfield, North Nottinghamshire. The nursery is a purpose built unit on one level. It serves the local and surrounding areas. There are four group rooms where children attend. They also have access to toilets. There are two outdoor play areas which are fully enclosed and secure.

There are currently 57 children from six weeks to under eight years on roll. This includes seven funded three and four-year-olds. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also children and families who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 07:30 to 18:00. It is closed for all public bank holidays. Children attend a variety of sessions throughout the week. The 'Shaping Futures Bus' takes children on small trips and takes and picks children up from local schools.

There are 13 staff who work with the children. Nine staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. There are three staff currently 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 good.

Children are cared for in an environment where good hygiene procedures are put into practice. For example, staff wipe the tables with anti bacterial spray before and after children have their snacks and main meals, and follow thorough cleaning and nappy changing routines. Children's health is further protected because staff ensure that their procedures are robust in the prevention of cross-infection. For example, children do not attend if they have any infectious illness and parents are informed of such admission policies. Children's immediate medical needs are met sufficiently, as there are adequate staff who hold a current first aid certificate and are fully aware of what procedures to take should a child require treatment. Children learn to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene. For example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and dry their hands with paper towels, wipe their noses and put the tissues in the bin.

Children learn about healthy foods through topics as well as having healthy snacks and drinks such as fruit, milk and water. Main meals are nutritious and sufficient in quantity. Snack and lunch time is a sociable time. Children enjoy and have conversations with one another. For example, they talk about the different sandwich filling and make up unusual fillings such as chocolate moose. Children's and babies individual dietary needs are met well. Staff discuss these needs with the parents and carers and any changes are adhered to. Babies are held in the arms of staff whilst they have their bottles. Children make choices and learn about their own needs such as being thirsty and recognise that this is an individual need when they require a drink. They access their own water bottles or help themselves to cups of water.

Children enjoy outdoor activities on a daily basis enabling them to develop good co-ordination and develop their large muscles. They spend time outside every day because staff plan this into their daily routine. Children freely run around playing imaginatively in small groups and ride bikes around the new road markings on the ground.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure and well-maintained environment where potential hazards are identified and minimised both indoors and during outdoor activities to help keep children safe. This is because the staff are vigilant in undertaking risk assessments before children arrive at the setting and before they go outside to play. The setting is welcoming to children, parents and carers. There is a suitable range of colourful displays around the nursery of children's art work, photographs, information about the setting, varied child care issues, routines of the day and play plans. Rooms for all children and babies are organised well.

Toys and equipment are all good quality and provide a comfortable, fun environment enabling children to meet their development needs. Activities are attractively presented thus encouraging children's curiosity and interests in their play. Children initiate their own play. This is because the staff organise the resources, toys and equipment to ensure children and babies independently access them. For example, staff put out toys on the floor for babies so they can reach them when they crawl, toddle and walk. The toys are stored at low-level, and tables and chairs are at child height, thus supporting children to use them appropriately.

Children are supervised well. This is because staff are mindful of the differing ages and abilities of each child and the activities they are playing with. For example, babies are provided with good support from staff. They sit cuddling the babies, hold on to them when they are riding on trundle toys, when they attempt walking around the room, and check the safety of the toys and equipment as babies put more things in their mouths. Both the outdoor area and the playrooms are secure preventing children from leaving the premises unaccompanied or unauthorised adults gaining access. This is because there is a robust security system in place so adults are unable to gain entry unless agreed by a staff member, and there are several key code doors to get through before reaching the children's rooms. Children learn about their own safety. For example, one child said 'you must not play about with the knives and forks at the dinner table, it might poke you in the eye'.

Children are safeguarded through the staff's suitable knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. Staff are confident to deal with situations should they be concerned with the safety of a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy. They engage in the activities with confidence and interest. Babies are cared for in an environment which is calm and relaxing. Soft music plays whilst they explore the toys on the floor or stored at low-level. Babies giggle, laugh and smile as they play with staff and the pop-up toy. They press the buttons to release the characters and become excited as they keep pressing them in anticipation for the characters to keep popping up; they are having fun. Babies have good opportunities to explore their surroundings with curiosity and excitement. Staff extend this further because they support babies by physically holding and encouraging them verbally. For example, a baby sits on the trundle toy pony, laughing and smiling as she is supported by a member of staff who pushes the trundle toy around the room. Also babies are praised with claps and cheers from staff when they complete stacking boxes. Staff in the baby room have a very clear understanding of the importance of planning play. They have good knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are effective in implementing this into the child's day. Each child has their individual plan from the observations, assessments and records undertaken by staff. Therefore, they make good progress in all areas of their development.

Toddlers are happy and engaged in their play. They are familiar with the routine of the setting. For example, they know when they have finished their snack they can go and choose which activities they would like to play with. Children develop their independence skills through self-selecting toys of their choice. They have good access to a range of toys that enhance their all round development. Children enjoy exploring new textures such as shaving foam. They have fun clapping their hands full of the foam and watching it lift into the air and land on themselves and the staff. Time outside is planned into the child's everyday activities. They particularly enjoy threading ribbons through the railings of the fence and initiating their own games with their friends. For example, they play 'tug of war', pulling and stretching on the ribbons as they laugh and tell each other how strong they are. Staff link in sufficiently with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Observations and assessments are undertaken and records are made of children's achievements. This supports staff to plan play to help children develop their next steps of learning.

Older children build on their relationships with their peers. They have great fun talking about and describing a range of different foods they eat. For example, two children talk about having

fish cakes, they then change the word to 'fist' cake and punch the air as they repeatedly say the word laughing at each other. Other children talk about different fillings for sandwiches. They enjoy story time and listen intently to several books that staff read. Children are confident and approach visitors showing curiosity by wanting to know what they are doing. Play is planned well to ensure all children have time outside. Children really enjoy this time and eagerly jump at the chance to spend time riding bikes and run around in the fresh air. Children self-select toys and activities of their choice. They do not get bored because the staff provide a suitable range of interesting activities. However, there are less opportunities for children to develop their independence skills through daily tasks and activities. Older children who attend the after school club access a suitable range of activities that encourage them to develop their all round skills. However, there are less activities available or easily accessible that are challenging. Therefore, the potential for older children to become bored is greater.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are interested, motivated and make good links in their learning. Children have opportunities to access a curriculum that incorporates the six areas of learning. Pre-school staff have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. They plan the play together to ensure children move progressively through the stepping stones. However, when the pre-school staff are not present, covering staff are not as knowledgeable or confident. Therefore, some aspects of children's learning is not as effectively promoted. Focused activities are very well planned to meet the individual learning needs of children. These are then evaluated to identify the next steps of learning for each child. As a result, children are motivated and interested in their play. Staff work effectively as a team and are supported well by senior managers. They organise the day appropriately which benefits children's learning through a wide range of activities and experiences both inside and outdoors.

Children are confident and well behaved. They are excited by new activities and eagerly try them out and share their experiences with their peers. For example, one child excitedly describes how to complete the painting activity with another child. She explains how to put the string in the paint pot and put it over the paper to make patterns. The other child listens intently and then attempts to do the activity. Both children then fold the paper and open it up to produce an end product including lots of smiles, happiness and a sense of achievement. Children are polite and courteous to one another and adults, often using words such as 'excuse me', 'please' and 'thank you'. The self-esteem of children is good. Children enjoy story time and are fully involved in choosing stories to read. They recognise that print has meaning and know where to find the title on the front cover of a book. They hold good conversations with their peers and adults and carry out simple instructions. Children have good opportunities to mark make such as at the drawing table or writing with their fingers in the shaving foam.

Children use numbers in every day activities. They spend time counting construction blocks when building objects, learn aspects of prepositions as they acknowledge that they are first in line waiting to wash their hands, and use words to describe the differing measurements of the amount of sand in the jug. The learning opportunities for children to discover nature is good. They make bird seed cases and hang them up to watch the birds feed and look through magnifying glasses at twigs and branches. They go on planned walks through the local nature trail collecting bugs, sticks and leaves and also visit the local bird sanctuary. Children learn about differing cultures and religions through planned topic work such as making and decorating 'Diva' lamps for Diawli.

The physical skills of children are developing well, they move around the nursery with ease and confidence rarely bumping in to one another. A good range of activities provides opportunities for children to develop their small and large muscle skills such as writing with pencils, threading beads and turning pages in a book to riding bikes with stabilizers and successfully manoeuvre them around obstacles. Children explore a range of resources that enhance their sensory skills and feelings such as pasta, shaving foam, sand, water and paint. The play co-operatively outside initiating their own games. For example, four children play imaginatively in the play house. They call it the 'Transformer house' and others can only access the house if they are a 'Power ranger'. They run outside chasing others whilst having fun. Children enjoy singing time. They confidently sing a range of action and nursery rhymes. They particularly enjoy 'I'm a dingle dangle scarecrow' which is deemed a favourite. They pretend to be asleep at first and sing quietly then all jump up singing loudly as they move their bodies to the song and words. This entuses children to sing more songs as they shout out saying they would like to choose one.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well and staff aim to consistently meet these during the child's time at the setting. Children's confidence and self-esteem is good. Staff are kind and sensitive to meeting individual needs of the children and help them settle in to the nursery. Children bring their comforts in and have them at the time when they need them most such as when they are tired or when they do not feel well. Staff provide a positive environment where children have suitable opportunities to learn about the world around them and the people in it. A sufficient range of resources and play activities help children understand the differences between cultures and religious faiths. Parents' wishes are taken in to consideration and respected. This enables the staff to work effectively with them to enhance meeting each child's individual needs. For example, discussions are held and information recorded with regard to the sleeping and eating routines of babies. All children are included. Staff are proactive in promoting an inclusive environment. They adapt activities and discuss differences between children and adults in a positive and sensitive way. For example, one child attended the opticians to discover that they needed to wear glasses. Staff discussed their plans with the parents. They collect glasses from various opticians and change the home corner area into an opticians. Children have the opportunity to relate to what it would be like to wear glasses and how this can help their eyes if they need some help to see. There are good systems in place to support children and their families with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children's behaviour is generally good. They develop an understanding of what is expected of them during their time at the setting. This is because the staff positively promote an environment with consistent and clear messages. For example, two children tapped each other lightly and a staff member reacted straight away. She raised the children's awareness to what is acceptable and how it is important to be kind. The children independently said, 'sorry' to one another and the situation was resolved. Children are praised at many opportunities and staff use positive words such as 'well done', 'that's brilliant' and 'you are sitting nicely'. Children feel valued and respected. Babies are given lots of positive eye contact, cuddles and staff use soft tones to reassure babies and encourage them to feel secure. All children's self-esteem is developing well. Therefore, the provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A good range of information is displayed throughout the nursery. This enables parents and carers to access information associated with their child. For example, children who are under three years of age attend rooms where information is displayed referring to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children benefit well from their first-hand experience of positive partnership

between the staff and their parents. Relationships with parents and carers are both friendly and professional. Information is exchanged in a variety of ways that ensures all those involved in the care of the child is up to date with what the child needs.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers of nursery education children is satisfactory. Staff discuss with parents and carers their children's achievements and how they are developing through the stepping stones. This is further supported by the records in each child's file and added information on the display boards regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, there is less involvement for parents and carers to support their child's learning at home. This has the potential to sometimes restrict children's development, progress and experiences through the stepping stones.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected because the recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and thorough. There are good recruitment procedures in place as well as an induction procedure. Staff are suitable to care for children and have sufficient experience and appropriate child care qualifications. Regular appraisals help identify staff strengths and weakness and training is provided to support staff to develop their own skills and knowledge. Children benefit from this because staff improve the service they offer and promote a positive care, learning and play environment for children.

The good organisation of the rooms are well thought out and provides space for children to play in safety. Well organised resources and time ensure that children's needs are met well. Clear routines support children to settle along with guidelines of the daily routine displayed on the wall for staff to refer to. However, some staff are also skilled and confident to be flexible and change the routine to support meeting the needs of the children. For example, they recognise when children are not engaged in the play and therefore change the play and children go outside to 'let off steam'. The management team is pro-active in ensuring the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability. Managers spend time in the rooms offering support and guidance to less skilled and confident staff.

All records, policies and procedures which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are effective. These are held securely and regularly reviewed to ensure that they are accurate and up to date. The management team recognise the importance of maintaining records as they underpin the running of the setting and support meeting the needs of the children.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The manager has a very good understanding of her roles and responsibilities and has been extremely proactive in raising the nursery status to a higher standard. Children make good progress in all areas of their development because they are sufficiently challenged, engaged and stimulated within their play. However, the deployment of some staff due to their lack of confidence and skills has the potential to sometimes restrict learning opportunities for children in both nursery education and general care. Children benefit from being taught and cared for by staff who work well as a team and are supportive of one another. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Care inspection it was recommended that the setting improve the health and safety of children; the organisation of resources and space; the opportunities for children to value others differences and to improve the methods used to record children's achievements and development. The setting has made steady progress to improve in all areas. Staff have a clear understanding of the policies and procedures regarding the health and safety of children. Clear routines for cleaning equipment and resources are adhered to by staff. They are good role models in the prevention of cross-infection and provide and raise children's awareness to their personal hygiene such as washing hands and wiping noses. Staff are vigilant in the safety of children. They supervise children well and undertake risk assessments to minimise hazards to children. Therefore, children's health and safety is actively promoted and improved. Space and resources are organised well ensuring children can move freely and easily around the rooms enabling them to access a good range of toys and activities to enhance their all round development. Young children have rest areas with cushions and soft seating and sleep mats for when they are tired. Children have access to a range of resources and activities to enhance their awareness to the world around them and the people in it. They dress up, look at books and participate in activities acknowledging differing religious and cultural festivals. Records of children's achievements and development is recorded in their own individual development files. These are shared with parents and carers and are used to inform future planning for the next steps of learning for all children.

At the last Nursery Education inspection it was recommended that the setting improve staff and managements' knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and look at ways of monitoring the provisions education service; improve the organisation of groups times and the routine of the day and the planning to ensure all children's learning needs are identified. A new manager is in place who is knowledgeable of the Foundation Stage and has been successful in supporting most staff to undertake training and further increase their knowledge and implementation of the framework. However, some staff still lack confidence and skills and this has been carried forward within this inspection. Clearer routines of the day have been established and group times are more structured supporting children through the stepping stones. Very thorough and robust observations, assessments and planning clearly identify each child's learning needs. Therefore, children are sufficiently challenged and supported in their learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been five complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. These complaints related to National Standard 1: Suitability, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 14: Documentation and National Standard 6: Safety. Ofsted undertook three unannounced visits covering the five complaints on 28/11/2006, 16/01/2007 and 27/06/2007.

Ofsted found evidence to suggest staff are unable to call for help, ratios are not met at all times, a suitable deputy is not always in place, staff are not suitably qualified for their roles, unvetted staff are left alone with children and registers for staff and children are not accurately maintained.

Actions were raised and the provider remained qualified for registration. Further unannounced visits undertaken suggested that the setting was still not meeting the National Standards and Ofsted issued an enforcement notice relating to registers and ensuring a deputy is always in place. A notice of action to improve was also issued relating to ensuring unvetted staff are not left alone, meeting ratios and effective deployment of staff. The provider has since taken

appropriate action to meet the National Standards. The provider remains 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.

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):

- continue to improve the play opportunities for older children so they are more challenging
- continue to improve the opportunities for children to develop their independence skills through daily tasks and activities
- continue to improve the organisation of the deployment of staff and their skills.

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 improve the opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning from home
- continue to improve staff knowledge and confidence of the Foundation Stage curriculum ensuring that the quality of nursery education is promoted at all times.

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