

Yellow Brick House (Earley)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148634
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	Chalfont Park Pavilion, Chalfont Way, Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 5HQ
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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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Yellow Brick House (Earley) nursery is part of the Yellow Brick House chain and is privately owned. There are two other nurseries in Woosehill and Twyford. The nursery has been open since 1994 and operates from Chalfont Pavilion in Lower Earley.

The hall is very large with smaller rooms also being used. There is a fenced outdoor area for the children to use. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. The nursery is open from 08:30-17:00 Monday to Friday term time only. Children can attend all day or for morning/afternoon sessions, which are 09:05 - 12:05 or 12:30 - 15:15. Younger children have the opportunity to attend an afternoon session from 13.10 - 15.15.

A maximum of 52 children can attend at any one time. There are currently 123 children on roll, 75 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff. The majority of staff have relevant teaching and childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are protected from the risk of infection because the nursery has excellent hygiene procedures in place. Children use liquid soap and disposable paper towels when washing their hands, which limits the risk of cross infection. They carefully follow the photographic prompts on the wall to ensure they wash their hands properly and give each other gentle reminders to remember to wash hands before preparing the snack. Children are becoming very competent at managing their own self-care tasks, such as toileting, and know to protect each other from germs, by using tissues to keep their noses clean, promptly disposing of them in the bin. All regulatory accident and medication policies and procedures are in place and maintained to a very high standard. Staff are very committed to ensuring that children's individual health needs are recognised and catered for in the nursery. Children are able to rest comfortably if unwell or tired, and staff act promptly and appropriately if they have a concern about a child's health.

Children are developing healthy eating habits as they choose from an appetising range of fresh fruit, raw vegetables or wholemeal toast. They eagerly participate in preparing the snack for their peers, carefully cutting the fruit and toast into small pieces, taking pride in the presentation of their hard work. Children further develop their independence as they pour their own drinks from the jugs of water or milk. They enjoy helping staff wash up after snack time, skilfully rinsing their cups in soapy water or wiping down the tables. They have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy foods during discussions with staff and through topic work, for example sampling a rice dish prepared by a visiting parent. Their healthy growth and development is further fostered, as staff show an excellent understanding of children's individual dietary requirements and fully include any children with additional dietary requirements.

Children thrive as they enjoy an extensive range of physical activities and regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Children have the opportunity to access the highly developed and innovatively designed outdoor area at any time in their session. This free flow system gives the children rich and varied opportunities to develop their overall physical skills and to further develop their confidence in all areas of learning. They enthusiastically engage in digging for worms in the garden or skilfully plan a system of ropes and pulleys to make the buckets of sand rise and fall. Children demonstrate good spatial awareness as they manoeuvre cars skilfully to prevent collisions and to find clear open spaces to run, hop and jump when pretending to be dinosaurs. Children also have excellent opportunities to play physically indoors, as they join in enthusiastically with action songs and very well planned musical activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive as they have access to a welcoming, colourful and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Children develop their independence as they move freely and safely around the rooms because activities are set out attractively and organised effectively. Resources are well organised to create an accessible and stimulating setting where children can make their own choices about their play. Staff ensure that they follow the children's interests and choices closely. They acquire fossils on loan from a local museum to extend and capture children's learning about stones and dinosaurs. They encourage children to explore sand and water play further by increasing the selection of equipment in the garden, for example providing them

with ropes and pulleys. Staff to child ratios are high and they are well deployed to ensure all areas of the provision are well supervised and children's learning is well supported.

Children are protected as staff place a high emphasis on safety. Daily and weekly risk assessments are undertaken to ensure all areas of the setting have been checked and assessed. Children enjoy many outings with the nursery and children are kept safe during these trips because staff plan them well. They assess potential hazards before taking children out and identify how to minimise the risks. For example, they increase adult ratios by inviting parents to accompany them on a trip to the post box. Children display an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They describe with clarity how they must not run too fast outside when pulling the red cart in case they hurt their friends, or how they must not throw the soil inside in case it gets into their eyes. They act promptly and independently should they identify a possible safety concern, for example sweeping up soil on the floor in case their friends slip. Children develop this strong sense of responsibility from an early age in response to skilful safety reminders from staff who make safety a priority in the nursery.

Children's welfare is given very high priority as staff have an excellent understanding of child protection issues. There are comprehensive procedures in place as well as additional reference materials to support them in carrying out their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and settled within the pre-school environment and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of activities available. They enjoy making independent choices in their play, for example when moving freely between the indoor and outdoor environment. They respond well to the familiar daily routines that provide a structure within which they can access interesting resources, develop friendships and enjoy the company of adults. Children enjoy their time in the nursery as they delight in making decisions and choices about their play, for example making playdough cakes and baking them in the pretend ovens to share with their friends. Staff are highly skilled and use their considerable understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters, to support and encourage children in all areas of learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff know the children very well and plan interesting and challenging activities that support their progress along the stepping stones in each of the six areas of learning. They make very good use of the premises to provide an attractive learning environment with well presented resources to enhance children's play experiences. Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Their flexible approach to planning ensures that children very much lead the topics of interest in the group and there is an excellent mix of child-led and adult-led activities on offer.

Staff provide many opportunities for children to initiate their own play, in addition to the carefully structured adult-led activities that focus on clear learning objectives. Staff monitor children's learning regularly and use comprehensive documentation to record their achievements and progress towards the early learning goals. This information is used very effectively to plan children's next steps for learning.

Children relish their time in the setting. They have an excellent attitude to learning and are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. They enthusiastically explore and investigate their outdoor area and show high levels of curiosity as they observe the worms in the soil in the garden. Behaviour is excellent. Children are confident, self assured and self disciplined, working and playing effectively on their own or with others. They negotiate with others and take responsibility for their actions. They have an excellent awareness of right and wrong in line with their stage of development.

Children are confident and inquisitive, approaching new activities with great enthusiasm and excitement; for example they talk animatedly with staff while learning to peel satsumas or cut up toast for snack time. They concentrate well on their chosen tasks and persevere until they have completed them to their satisfaction, for example when making models out of junk modelling materials or when sweeping up the soil at tidy up time. They are developing a good understanding of number and enjoy counting how many plates or cups they need at snack time. More able children confidently calculate how many more are needed when there are not enough. They also enjoy learning new concepts, such as identifying which objects are heavy or light and using their pulley system in the garden to weigh buckets of sand.

Children are developing an excellent awareness of their local and the wider environment. Themed activities support them in learning about the changing seasons and features of the natural world. They have many opportunities to visit places of interest, such as the local shop, a trip on a bus or a visit to a museum. Children use technology confidently, for example when using the computer to access a range of programs or using telephones in their role play.

Children are confident speakers and use language well to organise their thoughts and play. For example, they develop complex and imaginative role play by talking to each other, such as when they act out the role of good or bad knights or pretend to be dinosaurs in the garden. They enjoy looking at books on their own and in group story times and are developing a good awareness that print carries meaning. They enjoy mark making and use writing for different purposes, such as naming their work or creating Christmas letters to Santa.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are met very well by the team of staff who liaise closely with parents to ensure a smooth transition into nursery. Children learn about the local and wider community through themed activities and visits to areas of local interest, for example a trip to the museum on the bus, or a visit to the post box to post letters. They have excellent opportunities to learn about different cultures and traditions as they participate in exciting activities, for example painting patterns on their hands with henna. Children also regularly use resources, such as books and role play equipment, that reflect a diverse society. There are very clear procedures in place to support children with special needs and staff are skilled at adapting activities to ensure that all children can participate at their level of ability.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They respond well to regular praise and encouragement and reflect the respect and good manners role modelled by members of staff. Behaviour within the setting is consistently of a high standard as children of all ages have a mature understanding of right and wrong. They are well supported in developing negotiation skills to share resources, take turns and play co-operatively. Children frequently manage their own behavioural incidents with great success, for example sharing out the playdough so that everyone can be included fairly. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

Children benefit from the strong relationships developed between staff and their parents. A wealth of information is provided for parents to ensure they are familiar with the activities, policies and procedures of the group. Documentation and daily discussions are used effectively to ensure that staff are able to meet children's individual needs and care for them in accordance with their parents' wishes.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is outstanding. Parents are well informed about their children's achievements and are actively encouraged to participate in assessing and recording their children's progress. They are aware of their child's key worker and are confident in liaising and discussing aspects with them. They are invited to discuss their child's progress in detail and have access to their children's assessment records on a regular basis. Parents comment very positively about the nursery and feel well supported by the approachable staff who create a friendly and sociable atmosphere. Parents are also encouraged to be involved within the nursery as they are invited to participate in trips or come in to talk to the children about topics of current interest or religious festivals.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by the exceptional organisation. Excellent use is made of the indoor and outdoor environments to provide a bright, welcoming learning environment. Children are able to make independent choices from the excellent range of attractively presented resources within the nursery and sessions are very well organised. Staff work extremely well together to plan and deliver an interesting and challenging range of activities within a familiar, daily routine. Robust recruitment procedures are implemented effectively to ensure that children are cared for by appropriately vetted members of staff. All regulatory documentation is in place, organised effectively and used to underpin the group's outstanding practice.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The manager provides excellent guidance for the well-motivated staff team, who have a strong commitment to improvement. Comprehensive procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate delivery of the nursery education curriculum and to ensure that all children are making very good progress along the stepping stones. All staff participate in regular self-evaluation and continue to look at ways in which their service can be improved. Through regular staff meetings, planning evaluations and discussions about children's profile records, they ensure that the curriculum and teaching methods take full account of the children's individual needs and the diverse ways that children learn. The high-quality training programme is carefully planned to meet the individual and collective needs of staff. This ensures that staff are able to deliver a highly successful early education programme for all children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to ensure that when policies are reviewed the date is recorded and to maintain the security and access of unknown persons via the garden. The policies and procedures and operational manual are of a very high quality, comprehensive and the date is accurately recorded. Safety in the garden has been addressed by staff who fully risk assess the area before use. Visitors access the premises through the front door only and do not have access to the garden area at any time, further ensuring the safety and welfare of the children.

At the last nursery education inspection the nursery were asked to give consideration to improving less experienced staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff access a range of training opportunities, including degree courses and in house training, which ensures that they have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage which benefits children in their learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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