

1st Class Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY272250
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Inspector	Frank William Kelly
Setting Address	Toll Bar Cottage, High Lane, Burscough, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L40 7SN
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Registered person	Ruth Vrain
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

1st Class Nursery expanded to this site in 2004 and is one of two settings operated by an individual. It operates from three rooms in converted detached premises situated between Burscough and Ormskirk in West Lancashire. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area and garden area. The nursery serves children from the local area.

A maximum of 38 children may be cared for at any one time. There are currently 62 children from two to four years on role. Of these, 28 receive nursery funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week, 51 weeks a year. Sessions are from 08.00 until 17.45.

The owner/manager holds an early years teaching qualification and employs seven staff to work with the children. Of these, six hold early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification. Two of the qualified staff are currently working towards an additional qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and well-being is successfully promoted as staff ensure that the setting is kept clean and well organised. They use colour coded cloths for different purposes to help minimise cross infection. Low risk foods, such as toast are prepared on site and all main meals are delivered in sealed containers from the nearby under two's unit. Staff follow recommended food hazard analysis procedures, which includes checking the temperatures on arrival and before serving. Records are retained as required by the environmental health officer.

Policies and procedures relating to sick children, recording of accidents and medication administration are known by staff and shared with parents to help keep children healthy and further minimising the spread of infection. Staff help children learn about good personal hygiene through routines, such as washing their hands before baking activities or after visiting the toilet. However, there are some inconsistencies as during busy periods, staff do not always check that this has been done when children visit the bathroom independently.

Children's individual dietary needs are known and catered for very well. Alternatives are served to children and most staff are familiar with the children's likes and parental preferences. An interesting menu is served that is freshly prepared daily, using mainly fresh ingredients. The meals served include a range of tastes and textures, such as spaghetti bolognese and are eaten heartily by the children. Fruit and raw vegetables are included as part of the desserts and snacks served. Children contribute to the growing of their own seasonal organic vegetables and fruits. In the autumn, pumpkins, courgettes and leeks are harvested by the children to make warming home made soups. Water is available at all times and staff invite children to take drinks following vigorous exercise outdoors.

Children enjoy excellent opportunities for physical play and getting fresh air, as they have access to the garden twice a day. During outdoor play, they dig in the sand tray, roll back and forth on an exercise ball and run after each other whilst playing 'attach the tail'. Older children enjoy riding the large bicycles and trailers with their friends sat behind. They weave in and out of the other children and around the adults, demonstrating good spatial awareness. Good coordination and stamina are demonstrated as they use pedals efficiently to propel their bicycles forwards and backwards. All children enjoy opportunities to balance on the low level beams and tyres, walk along the log and climb and slide on a variety of activity frames.

Indoors they enjoy relaxing by sitting close to adults for a story or joining in action songs, such as 'When Santa got stuck up the chimney'. They fit jigsaws, build with a wide range of construction toys and roll pastry with their rolling pins when making mince pies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staffs' warm welcome to both the children and their parents promotes a safe and happy environment for the children to enter and parents to leave their child. The playrooms are exceptionally well organised to promote children's independent play and learning. Thoughtful use of furniture, equipment and children's art work enhances the magical feel for the children. There is an excellent range of resources and equipment which are well maintained, safe and

suitable for their purpose. They provide stimulus and challenge; helping to engage and interest children to independently further progress their learning and development.

Staff implement the safety procedures very well to help keep children safe. They monitor access to the setting vigilantly and record visitors presence immediately into the record book. Children are well supervised at all times and staff sit with them whilst they are resting. Risk assessments have been completed and are reviewed on a regular basis. Good action is taken for spontaneous risk assessments. For example, following the recent heavy rains, the staff have cordoned off the hill in the garden as it has become too muddy and slippery for the children to play on it safely. All areas of the setting are checked before the children arrive and staff check the garden prior to use on each occasion. Some fire safety signs are in place and staff regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure with children, helping them to understand what to do in the event of an emergency. Visitors have the evacuation procedures explained during their time at the setting to ensure that they also are familiar with what to do. However, the management is not fully familiar with the exact recommendations of the manufacturers with regard to the frequency of testing of the fire detection systems and the servicing of the extinguishers.

The children demonstrate an understanding of keeping themselves safe. For example, they wait before climbing the stairs and hold onto the hand rails whilst doing so. They know not to run inside and to be careful not to run over toes when outside on the bicycles.

The children's welfare is further protected as staff have a secure awareness of child protection issues. Some staff have completed training which they have shared with the rest of the team. The staff are familiar with the procedures in place and the steps to be taken should they need to report concerns. The policies and procedures are easy to follow and reflect those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enter eagerly into this setting and are at ease with the adults that care for them. They benefit from the staffs thoughtful planning of activities and how they enhance familiar experiences with small changes, which help retain interest and keep them exciting for the children. For example, the staff put glitter and other shiny materials in the water. This provides children with tactile and visual interest, enticing two-year-olds to spend long periods of time swirling the silver strands round and round, making sparkly patterns in the water. The well planned environment and opportunities for free play means that children can see what is available and make lots of extra personal choices. They follow their own interests, as they paint at the easel with lolly sticks, pour sand through funnels and push the dolls around the room in the buggy.

Staff know the individual children well, they are able to confidently talk about individual children's preferences, for example, they know that some children enjoy the dressing up clothes, have firm favourites and predict that they will be wearing several skirts one on top of the other. They identify good unplanned learning opportunities which are prompted by the children's lead. For example, one child talks about the images displayed within the nativity jigsaw. The member of staff suggests that they look at a book about the story of the nativity and reads it to the child, who enjoys talking about the characters with the adult. Staff use observations of the children to help them plan to help children practise and extend their learning. For instance, they noticed that one of the children caught a ball competently. The following week they

introduced more balls and catching activities throughout the week to help him practise and further improve his coordination.

Children are busy and eager learners. They willingly join staff to see what they are doing and engage visitors in conversation to show their achievements. For example, an older two-year-old proudly points to a cut and stick 'Santa list' explaining that the picture of a lamp is a present for mummy and daddy. Children enjoy singing songs in a group and often spontaneously burst into solo renditions of songs, such as 'Jingle Bells'. They demonstrate a sense of community as they talk about their friend who is not in nursery today because she is sick and share news about new furniture in their homes and their forthcoming birthdays.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children benefit from quality first hand play and learning experiences. The staff plan activities that are linked to the current seasonal experiences, using unusual equipment, such as tree decorations for a sorting game, or what the children show interest in. They use unplanned events, for example, the arrival of a hedgehog in the garden to help children extend a variety of their skills and understanding. For example, they help children learn about animals needing care and respect. They learn about where the animals live and what they like to eat. Children are encouraged to look at books about the hedgehog and to draw and paint what they see.

The adult role is effective in support of the children's play and learning. Staff interact with children asking questions at appropriate times to check children's understanding or to encourage them to talk about what they know and think. For instance, whilst building cars in the construction area, a discussion takes place with two children about the axle. The member of staff does not name the axle but asks children what do they think it is and what does it do? One of the children thinks about this and then suggests that it is the 'stabilisers'. Another member of staff encourages the children to sort out the pink letters and count how many they have. The child correctly counts one to seven.

Staff use these and planned observations to help them plan the future play and learning experiences linked to the children's individual next steps. The planning systems are clearly understood by the staff who confidently explain them to visitors and how children's progress is monitored.

The children are confident and eager learners in this exciting environment. They are busy all the time and relish their time during both free play and adult led activities. They excitedly engage visitors in discussion as they arrive, explaining that they are making mincemeat to make pies. They are confident to express their needs and wishes at any point during their day. When they arrive they ask where their friends are, can we bake again, or play shops. They demonstrate independence of skills, such as putting their own coats on or swapping their shoes and slippers after outdoor play. They recognise their own bodies and ask to go in when they are cold or visit the toilet independently. They are learning to share and take turns as they play together or wait patiently for their turn on the computer.

They enjoy stories and singing songs in rhyme and staff help them to understand print has meaning as they draw their attention to the list of ingredients when baking. Children are eager to write and use the well resourced writing area and the other mark making materials, such as pens and clip board in the role play and chalks outside. They write Christmas cards, labels for

presents and during discussion with staff are supported to write numerals when addressing an envelope. Children count up and down when singing songs and use positional language including, underneath, on, behind, and up, when using the construction materials.

Children demonstrate a clear understanding of technology and how it operates. Whilst playing shops, a child uses the plastic card and swipes it along the till whilst taking payment for the goods. Older children use the computer with skill and accuracy. They place the cursor over the areas of the screen to help make decisions about whether they want to stop or continue. They then click the mouse appropriately. Children learn about other cultures and experiences through adult planned activities linked to celebrations and learn about their natural world through trips to the local recreational grounds, or bug hunting in the garden.

Creativity is greatly valued and promoted within this setting. Every day children have access to a range of experiences and mediums to explore. Children are confident and proud of their pictures. They spend long periods of time painting pictures of their smiling mummy, gifts they want from Santa or exploring the glittery paint. They make models from recycled materials, use pine branches to make patterns with. They relish their role play which moves around the room. They use props, such as bunny ears as they hop across the room. Small world play and construction is freely available and widely used. For example, children use the chunky wooden blocks to build a fire station, they put a roof on it using flat boards and then seek the toy fire engines to extend their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Very good systems are in place to help staff establish children's individual needs prior to starting at nursery. Thus, staff and management are able to plan with an informed knowledge about what the child's preferences and specific needs are. This ensures that children are treated with equal concern and that they settle quickly.

The effective key worker system has a positive effect on the quality of the relationships developed between the staff and the individual child. Consequently the children are very relaxed and at ease. They enjoy instigating contact, secure in the knowledge that they will be responded to positively. For instance, during a sorting activity a child moved closer to the member of staff so she could sit on her lap whilst they chatted and continued to discuss which shape and colour went where.

Staff have formed strong professional relationships with other early year's professionals to enable them to implement the local strategies and procedures for supporting children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The named member of staff appointed to coordinate such care is well informed and shares information between staff and parents to enable the child's needs to be met and promote their learning and development.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about helping others through fundraising events, such as a sponsored 'learning a poem' to raise funds for the National Society for the Protection from Cruelty to Children. Staff help children understand why they are doing this by inviting visitors from the charity to talk about, in simple terms, how they help children less fortunate than themselves.

Staff manage the children's behaviour very well and give good consideration to the children's stage of development and maturity. Staff have introduced a pair of puppets who regularly visit

the children to tell their stories, which helps children learn about how their actions may be affecting others without them feeling singled out. The management is proactive and effectively ensures that all staff are clear about how children's behaviour is to be encouraged through consistent approaches. Thus, children are quickly engaged or distracted in a calm and positive manner. Staff present positive role models by using appropriate manners and remaining calm and courteous at all times. This is clearly evident in practice as children are beginning to mirror their good manners. For example, whilst in a small group discussion about cars, one child joins the discussion by addressing the adult present with 'excuse me'.

Older children show a mature consideration for each other. On most occasions they share well, take turns using the equipment and are beginning to learn to negotiate independently. For example, when using the bicycles outside they understand that they may have to wait. They take turns with their partner on who will be driving and who will sit behind. They count to see how many are playing in the sand or water and understand the rules of no more than three at a time.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Those parents who took the time to share their thoughts with Ofsted spoke highly of the nursery management and staff. Information is detailed, regularly updated and shared both verbally and through printed materials. Information about the setting is available within an information pack and regulatory information, including the registration certificate and the current Ofsted report is displayed on the notice board.

The setting has an effective system for keeping parents informed and included when children move from room to room or from the baby unit which is based in another building. Key workers are introduced and children enjoy a series of planned visits to help them settle. All this is done with parental involvement and prior knowledge of when visits will take place and the exact date when children will move. Parents comment on their confidence in being able to approach the management and key workers over any queries or concerns relating to their child's care.

Parents have good access to their child's learning and development files and are kept well informed about the next steps for children. Regular newsletters and posters are made available to keep parents up-to-date about planned activities and forthcoming events. Much information is shared verbally on a daily basis during the arrival and collection times. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to the children's learning by being invited in to talk about what they do at work. For example, one parent visited with a tractor, whilst another styled the children's hair.

Parents of children in receipt of educational funding are kept well informed about the learning program and children's developmental progress. Evening events, which explain how the Foundation Stage is to be achieved, are held at the start of the educational year. This is complimented by regular written information about activities taking place and less informal update meetings towards the end of the educational year. Parents commented that they have access to their children's developmental records at any time they wished to view them.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is very well organised with the key point being the settings well planned, structured settling in and transition through the nursery procedure. This along with the key worker system, the steady development of relationships and building of children's familiarity within the setting, works effectively to keep children happy, secure and continue to develop their learning.

Secure systems are in place for the recruitment and selection of staff. Managers ensure that regular whole team and smaller room meetings take place. These help to address issues and establish clarity over roles and responsibilities, which contributes to the effectiveness of the staff team. A staggered induction plan and monitoring system means that, on most occasions, staff implement the policies and procedures in a confident and efficient manner. However, the management has not fully developed a monitoring system where by it takes time to focus on what staff are doing as they go about their daily business. This means that inconsistencies have not always been noticed or that routines, such as lunch times are not being maximised to their full potential. For example, the younger children miss opportunities to pour their own drinks or gain experiences of serving themselves.

The leadership and management of the Nursery Education program is outstanding. It is committed to improving, extending and enhancing the quality provision of the children's learning experiences. It has an effective self assessment system for looking at further development and understands the benefits from seeking and acting on advice from other professionals, such as the early years teacher advisors. Investment in the premises resources and staff training experiences are a priority. The result is that children benefit greatly from a rich and stimulating learning programme presented by motivated, informed, imaginative and enthusiastic adults.

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 two recommendations were made regarding the recording of accidents and medication and the provision of resources that reflect disability. Since then the setting has made good progress to address both recommendations. They promote the children's safety and well-being by ensuring that parents include the date on any accident records that they are required to sign.

Children's understanding of similarities and differences has been enhanced with the introduction of good quality toys and resources including books and posters. Children play with dolls that use a wheel chair and small world figures that represent those with visual impairment or use sticks to aid their mobility. To further enhance their experiences and understanding of their wider world, visitors with disabilities have been invited into the nursery to talk to the children about how their animals support their independent living.

At the last Nursery Education inspection no key issues were raised. However, two points for consideration were agreed regarding the systems for assessment and record keeping of the children's progress; the monitoring of the curriculum and the systems in place for sharing information with parents about the learning program.

Since then the setting has sought advice from the early year's teacher team and now implements an effective system for monitoring the children's progress and the quality of their learning experiences. Children benefit greatly from this system as staff effectively plan their next steps for learning. Parents receive information relating to activities and how the children are learning through regularly posted and detailed newsletters. Parents stated to Ofsted that useful additional information is made available to them on request, should they wish to compliment and expand their children's nursery experiences at home.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 complaint 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 outstanding.

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):

- update the risk assessment on fire safety procedures to ensure that detection systems and fire safety equipment is checked to the frequency specified by the manufacturers.
- revise the management monitoring systems to ensure that staff implement all policies and procedures in a consistent manner
- revise the daily routines, such as meal times to further encourage the younger children's independence.

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