

Imagine at the John Radcliffe

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY345412
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Inspector	Nikki Whinton
Setting Address	John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Headington, OXFORD, OX3 9DU
Telephone number	01865 762402
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Registered person	The Midcounties Co-Operative Limited
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Imagine at the John Radcliffe opened in 2007. It is one of six provisions run by Midcounties Co-operative Society. The nursery has five main rooms where children play and it operates from the ground floor of the new children's hospital on the John Radcliffe site. A maximum of 96 children may attend the provision at any one time. The nursery is open on weekdays, from 07.00 until 18.00 all year around. There is an enclosed garden area for outdoor play. The setting provides places for families employed by the hospital trust, the staff of the John Radcliffe hospital and members of the public.

There are currently 92 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff to work directly with the children. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children lead a healthy lifestyle whilst in the provision. They have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise whilst playing within the provision's fully enclosed outside play area. Children are able to access an adequate range of age appropriate outdoor play equipment, although children within the Foundation Stage room do not have regularly planned opportunities to take part in targeted activities to help develop their large muscle skills. Children improve their fine motor control and coordination through learning to handle a variety of tools and utensils, such as water jugs, cutlery, pencils and paintbrushes.

Children enjoy a varied menu of healthy snacks and freshly cooked meals whilst in the provision. They are able to eat at their own pace and are encouraged to try new foods, thereby developing their appreciation of food tastes. Allergies or dietary issues are discussed with parents prior to a child commencing in the setting. These discussions are recorded, displayed in the base rooms for immediate staff reference and accommodated as required. Children within the 'Sharks and 'Turtles' rooms are able to help themselves to drinks at any time, whilst younger children are frequently offered fluids. This helps to ensure children are consuming liquids in sufficient quantities to meet their differing needs.

Children develop their understanding of good health practices as part of the daily routine. All children clean their teeth after meals, whilst older children know they must wash their hands prior to eating or after toileting. There is a range of measures to promote children's health. For example, all staff have a current first aid qualification, hygienic nappy changing procedures are followed, correct administrative procedures are in place should accidents occur or children require medication and written parental permission has been obtained to seek emergency treatment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are learning to share some responsibility for their own safety. Older children are encouraged to help tidy away resources, thus reducing trip hazards, whilst all children take part in planned emergency evacuation drills. There is a range of measures to promote children's safety. Daily written risk assessments are completed prior to children entering the provision, door guards are fitted to prevent children trapping their fingers, socket covers are fitted to exposed electric points and the premises are kept secured. However, staff are not always effectively deployed within the setting to promote children's safety, for example, when they are handling scissors. In addition, unvetted staff have unsupervised access to children. As a result, children's safety is at risk.

Children play and rest within a provision that is secure, clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. Suitable arrangements are in place to enable babies to have uninterrupted sleep. Older children are able to visit the toilet independently and thus build their self-care skills. Informative notice boards and displays of children's art work create a welcoming environment for parents. Children help themselves to a varied range of stimulating age appropriate resources that are stored on low-level units to encourage independent selection. Children benefit from the staff's awareness of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of equipment.

Children's welfare is promoted by staff that have a good understanding of child protection issues, confidentiality of information and the correct procedures to follow if concerned about a child. There are effective measures to ensure parents understand the provider's child protection responsibilities, prior to a child commencing in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally enter the provision willingly and start to explore the enticing age appropriate resources and activities that are available to them for self-selection. For example, some children decide to build towers with large wooden bricks, others decide to explore child sized musical instruments, whilst another group of children chooses to do observational paintings of paper flowers. Children have a positive relationship with the staff, younger children in particular approach the staff spontaneously for hugs and cuddles. However, staff are not always effectively deployed within the provision to help children settle or to support their care and development, especially at the beginning of the day. Children are gaining valuable self-care skills. For example, they are learning to wipe their own noses, to feed themselves at lunchtime, to independently find an apron if they want to paint a picture and to put their coats on their labelled pegs at the end of outside play. Through activities, such as the weekly 'share and tell' time or the daily completion of the nursery calendar and weather chart, older children have opportunities to speak in a familiar group and to concentrate whilst listening to others.

Younger children in the setting that have not yet started on the Foundation Stage curriculum take part in a planned programme of activities in line with the Birth to three matters framework. The key workers plan specific activities for their key children that are linked to their interests and differing stages of development. Staff take photographs of the children whilst engaged in activities and complete regular observations of them, and then use the gathered evidence in order to complete written assessments of the children's progress. These records are always available to parents.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff plan and provide a range of activities to promote children's educational progress towards the early learning goals. They undertake written observations and three monthly assessments of the children using the Oxfordshire Foundation Stage Child Profile system. Evidence obtained from assessment is then used, together with information from parents regarding children's interests, to plan for the children's next steps in their learning. However, there are gaps in some children's assessments and therefore a true picture of a child's actual stage of development cannot always be ascertained. In addition, staff are not always effectively deployed to enhance and extend children's learning. As a result, children's learning is not maximised.

Children have a good range of vocabulary and use language confidently when talking to staff or peers. They are learning to recognise familiar words in print through meaningful activities, such as self registering at snack time, finding their named place mats at meal times or placing their coats on their named coat pegs. Children listen attentively during whole group story times and when staff are available in the book corner, they enjoy sharing books spontaneously. Children have opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills, such as when labelling their cress pots, writing on a giant white board or whilst engaged in role-play. However, staff have a tendency to label children's art work, which prevents them from having a valuable opportunity to write for a purpose. Children have opportunities to count and to recognise

numbers as labels as part of the daily routine. For example, they take turns to count the crockery and cutlery they will need whilst laying the lunch table and work out which number symbol needs to be placed on the daily calendar. Through practical activities, such as completing puzzles of varying complexity, exploring sand or experimenting with water, children are gaining an awareness of shape, space and measure.

Children take part in a range of local outings, such as to the Goldfish Bowl pet shop, the play park within the hospital grounds, Buryknowle Park or by bus to a pantomime. Such opportunities enable children to gain an awareness of their local environment. However, apart from the Wiggly Road Show visiting the setting, children have had no other recent opportunities to welcome meaningful visitors to the group, to enable them to gain an awareness of the wider world. Children have opportunities to learn about patterns and change in nature through the current topic where children are planting and tending a variety of beans and seeds. They have the chance to use binoculars to study and record the bird life that visits the nursery's garden. However, children have very few opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their daily play. Children are learning a growing repertoire of songs that they sing from memory and have opportunities to explore a range of musical instruments. Children have the chance to use their own creative ideas during art activities or whilst exploring dough. They enjoy using their imagination whilst engaged in role-play, although such play experiences are not fully extended since staff are not routinely deployed to support and enhance children's imaginary play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the senior staff knowing them well and from them having a good awareness of their likes and dislikes. Support offered to children within the provision with additional needs is appropriate to support their care and development. Children are able to access a wide range of stimulating, age appropriate resources, such as books, dolls, puzzles, dressing up clothes and small world toys to help them gain an awareness of diversity.

Children behave well as appropriate for their age and stage of development. Children's behaviour is supported by staff that act as good role models and use effective, positive strategies to promote children's appropriate behaviour. Children start to develop their awareness of right and wrong whilst in the provision.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children within the Foundation Stage 'Sharks' room are confident, independent and have good self-esteem. They are gaining social skills as they learn to share resources, such as during role play, and to take turns. Through practical activities, such as food sampling at Chinese New Year, making lanterns during a topic on Diwali or listening to relevant poems during Hanukah, children are gaining an awareness of a range of cultures and festivals.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are given good quality written information about the provision and its policies and procedures, prior to a child commencing in the setting. They are kept up to date with forthcoming events and planned topics through regular newsletters, the parents' notice boards and informal discussion with staff at the beginning or end of the day. Parents are made aware of how to access their child's assessment records and through events, such as open days, have the chance to review and discuss their child's academic profile with staff. However, parents are not encouraged to regularly share with staff what they know about their child's educational progress to aid either initial or ongoing Foundation Stage

assessments. In addition, there are limited opportunities for them to become involved in their child's learning, either within the group or at home.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The staffing team is caring, enthusiastic, suitably qualified and experienced. However, staff are not always effectively or appropriately deployed within the setting to support children's care, welfare or developmental needs.

All legally required documentation is in place and securely stored. For example, detailed records clearly indicate the daily arrival and departure times of children, staff and visitors. Children's personal details sheets are immediately available to support their care, such as in an emergency.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The Foundation Stage staff meet together to plan the educational provision and evaluate its effectiveness in promoting children's learning. However, the management does not currently monitor the children's assessment profiles and is not aware of the current gaps in the profiles. The group has a commitment to improvement. Staff regularly welcome Oxfordshire early years advisors to the setting to help them in developing the quality of care and education offered to the children.

Overall, the setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last combined inspection, the group was given actions in order to aid the improvement of the setting. The care report required the implementation of thorough risk assessments and that the group address potential hazards to ensure children's safety. The group was required to ensure Ofsted is informed of significant events promptly and to ensure parents receive written information about the complaints procedure. The education report required the provision to develop staff's understanding of how to interact effectively to support children's learning through play and to develop an effective method to record children's progress and achievements, which is then used to plan children's next steps in learning and shared with parents. The group was also required to review daily planning to ensure older children receive a programme more suited to their ages and abilities and to improve the quality of information provided to parents about the educational curriculum.

The group has now implemented detailed risk assessments and has addressed identified hazards to children's safety. The group is now fully aware of the need to advise Ofsted of significant incidents and parents receive information about the complaints procedure as part of their registration pack. The planned programme of daily activities is appropriate to support children's learning and there are now suitable systems in place to record children's progress and achievements, which are used to plan for children's next steps and shared with parents.

Parents are provided with regular information about the educational provision. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care and education offered to the children. However, there are gaps in some of the children's Foundation Stage assessment profiles and staff do not consistently interact effectively with the children to support their learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted, which 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 records may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure adults having unsupervised access to children are suitable to do so
- ensure staff are organised effectively to meet children's care, welfare and developmental needs

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- develop the planning and monitoring of the educational provision, to ensure that regular observations and assessments are completed on children across all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Use information obtained from assessments to plan activities to promote individual children's future learning
- develop the partnership with parents to ensure that parents have regularly planned opportunities to share with staff what they know about their child's academic achievements to aid staff's initial and ongoing Foundation Stage assessments. Increase opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning, both at home and within the setting.

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