

# Oak House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY304261
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jean Otter
<b>Setting Address</b>	127 Station Road, Mickleover, Derby, Derbyshire, DE3 9FN
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Oak House Nursery Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Oak House Nursery opened in 2005. It operates from a converted detached property in Mickleover, a suburb of Derby. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas. A maximum of 39 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 17.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 61 children under eight years on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The owner of the nursery is a qualified nursery teacher.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted because staff effectively put into practice the setting's comprehensive health and hygiene policies. Children learn the importance of good hygiene through their daily routines, verbal and visual reminders when using the bathroom and during their activities, for example the dental nurse visited the nursery with a giant toothbrush and large teeth to demonstrate to the children correct dental hygiene. Older children take personal responsibility for hygiene as they independently wash their hands after using the toilet. Staff take appropriate action to control the spread of infection, for example, by wearing protective gloves and aprons as necessary. Children are fully protected if they have an accident or become ill because staff are knowledgeable in first aid and parental permission is sought to seek emergency medical treatment. Clear and effective procedures for the administration of medication ensures children's health needs are met and the comprehensive sickness policy informs parents of exclusion periods and procedures, which minimises cross-infection.

Children benefit from a balanced diet which includes plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. They are able to independently access fresh water during the sessions, which ensures they remain hydrated. Children's specific health and dietary needs are catered for, a robust policy for allergies is in place and the nursery operates a policy of 'no nuts'. The preparation and storage of food takes place in an environment that is clean and hygienic. All children eat their lunch together except for the babies. This means that lunchtime is a busy time and staff tend to attend to tasks. Sometimes best practice is lost amongst the tasks that need doing, for example children do not have sufficient opportunities to show their independence at lunchtime and the arrangements for serving food sometimes obstructs the children from seeing what the selection is. Snack time however, is a relaxed and social occasion where children have more opportunities to be independent, for example they can pour their own drinks.

Children's emotional well-being, growth and development are well promoted through the close, warm and supportive relationships that are formed with the staff that care for them. They feel safe to express their feelings in the supportive environment. Regular and well-planned outdoor play offers children a varied and interesting range of opportunities to be active and to develop their physical skills. Fine motor skills are well supported with suitable tools available for different ages.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly welcomed into the friendly, child-focused setting. The premises are homely, comfortable, well maintained and children settle quickly to their play as they have easy access to an extensive range of stimulating toys and resources. Children are cared for in an environment where risks are limited through very good safety and security procedures. For example, safety gates prevent access to certain areas and all external doors are kept locked. All visitors to the setting are required to sign in and staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children. Comprehensive risk assessments and daily checks on the premises and equipment are completed to ensure children are kept safe. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in each area and are practised regularly, which ensures children are familiar with the procedures and can help to keep themselves safe in an emergency. A fire officer assessment has been completed for the baby nursery on the first floor and rigorous evacuation procedures are in

place to ensure the youngest children are protected in an emergency. Children learn about safety and how to avoid accidental injury through discussions, routines and activities implemented by the staff team. New staff are made aware of health and safety matters during their induction and it is a regular feature in staff meetings.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of safeguarding children issues. Staff have received training in this area and as a result are aware of signs of possible abuse and the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child. A policy is in place which has recently been updated and which reflects good practice.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in a setting where the balance of care and learning is effectively accomplished. Daily routines ensure children feel secure and at the same time support good levels of activity and interest. The babies are provided with particularly good sensory opportunities via different textures, such as jelly or shaving foam, and sound and colour. They sing, dance and play musical instruments. All children are very well supported by a staff team who are warm and gentle in their approach and provide a calm and caring environment, conducive to building children's self-confidence and where effective learning can take place. Good communication skills are used by staff throughout the nursery. Key staff take the time to find out about each individual child's interests and their developmental needs which ensures that their welfare and development is monitored effectively. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used to plan and provide younger children with a broad range of activities that effectively promote their all round development. All base rooms in the nursery are beginning to use the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage in their observation, assessment and planning. Differentiation is used well throughout the nursery to ensure activities meet the needs of all ages and stages of development. Children are developing independence and self-confidence as they access resources for themselves, use their own initiative and take responsibility for their own play. Children of all ages learn good social skills, such as being caring towards each other and sharing their toys and resources.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the stepping stones. Learning takes place through play which has been carefully planned and is well delivered. The well-balanced curriculum details all areas of learning. Staff are aware of children's starting points on entry, which helps to effectively support their progress. Ongoing observations and assessments demonstrate that children's learning needs are considered, however it is difficult to ascertain from the plans in pre-school the next steps in learning for individual children. A variety of appropriate teaching methods are used to support children's learning and intensify their experiences, for example staff help children to consolidate their learning by repeating the facets of an activity. Staff use effective communication skills which supports good levels of challenge for the children and they provide good role models throughout, which supports a calm and considerate environment.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Children form good relationships with staff and their peers, which helps to promote a sense of belonging and they are eager and motivated to learn. They are encouraged to be independent and enjoy the responsibility of helping staff in small tasks, such as tidying away. They make decisions during free play, choosing

toys and play materials and using tools to enhance their work. Staff encourage children to use good manners and to have respect for their things and other people. Behaviour is well managed which results in a calm and caring environment. Children's achievements in speaking and listening are good, they engage easily in conversation using complex sentences and have opportunities to speak out in a familiar group which promotes their self-confidence. Children listen to stories and sing their favourite songs and rhymes, they enjoy making up their own stories and use language for thinking. They show good interest in books, and are beginning to recognise familiar words, they are learning that print carries meaning and have good opportunities to practise their emerging writing skills. Children see a range of print in the setting and are linking language to objects well. Children are beginning to recognise the shape of numbers through games, puzzles and the use of numbers displayed. Mathematical language is used during all kinds of activities, and concepts such as 'floating and sinking' and 'weight and measure' is introduced, for example via the scales and tape measure found in the 'baby clinic' activity. Positional language is also used in activities, such as 'in front' and 'behind'. Children explore and work with a wide range of materials and staff encourage free expression. Their imaginations are actively fostered through good opportunities for role play and imaginative equipment, and physical play is regularly planned to ensure that children benefit from this area. A wide and interesting range of outdoor equipment supports children to move confidently and to learn how to control their bodies. Children are learning the importance of being healthy, they wash their hands before they eat and staff talk to children about germs on their hands and wiping their nose with a tissue. They use small tools such as pencils and scissors with increasing control and have opportunities to use more advanced tools, such as trowels for planting and safe knives for peeling various vegetables. They develop skills in technology through equipment such as the computer and various manufactured toys. Children learn through achievement, for example they plant various vegetables and watch them grow. Through discussion they know that the plants need sunshine and water to help them grow. Children readily talk about their home lives and discuss past events, they are learning about the wider world through topics and discussion. Children are learning some information about different cultures and beliefs through activities and by celebrating various festivals. There are opportunities to see positive images of, and to learn about diversity during everyday activities.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a supportive and caring environment where they are valued as individuals. They feel a sense of belonging, for example they see their work and their own photographs displayed on the walls, which supports a welcoming and friendly environment. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the setting and staff are committed to the full inclusion of all children. The environment is calm, staff are quietly spoken and are skilled at gaining the children's attention and concentration before giving instructions. Boundaries for behaviour are developmentally-appropriate and do not restrict the children's natural curiosity. Staff work consistently, provide activities that are stimulating and help children to find solutions for conflict and as a result, children behave well. Children's self-esteem is developed by staff who value their contributions and use praise and encouragement for good work and behaviour. They are involved in making choices about their play and have free choice of toys, activities and resources which fosters their independence. They are learning to take turns and share their toys. Children's awareness of the wider society is introduced through a range of planned activities and a satisfactory selection of resources depict positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children settle well because staff work closely and effectively with parents to ensure their child's needs are met. Parents have access to comprehensive information about their child's developmental progress through regular reviews, and daily verbal and written feedback ensures they are informed about what their child has been doing whilst attending the setting. Comments received from a recent parents' questionnaire are respected and initiatives put in place where suggestions are viable. Regular newsletters inform parents of items such as staffing changes, forthcoming parents' meetings, themes, new ventures, and diary dates. The manager's surgery, where parents are invited to discuss any issues relating to the setting is appreciated and is indicative of the commitment by the nursery to 'shared care'. A complaints procedure is in place that informs parents of how to complain. The partnership with parents who receive nursery education funding is good. They receive information about the educational programme and are kept well informed of their child's progress. Curriculum planning is comprehensive and is available for parents. The setting encourages parents to share what they know about their child, which supports the planning for the next steps in children's learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience and qualifications and demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of all children to promote their well-being. All staff have been appropriately police checked and a robust recruitment procedure ensures staff working with the children are suitable to do so. Children benefit from a familiar routine and are confident to approach staff to ask questions and request support which is freely given. Space and resources are well organised to maximise children's play and learning and staff work well together to ensure the smooth running of the setting. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how to implement these in practice. They are readily making the transition to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Clear policies and procedures support the care, safety and welfare of the children. An accurate record is maintained of children's attendance.

Leadership and management is good. Staff are well motivated and provide an environment where children are valued and cared for exceptionally well. Staff work hard at the planning process which successfully underpins the good practice observed at this setting. The owner, who is also the manager, is very involved in the day to day running of the nursery, she is able to evaluate the provision, guide the staff team to make progress and make appropriate changes that ultimately benefit the children. She respects and actively seeks the opinions of the parents and implements strategies for effective communication throughout the nursery. She is committed to staff development through training and self-evaluation and creates opportunities for such discussion during the appraisal process. Observation and assessment systems inform the next steps in children's learning and the educational provision is monitored and evaluated to ensure the curriculum is being delivered effectively, which promotes the progress of the children. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and systems are in place which provide them with team direction and support such as regular staff meetings. The nursery owner has a clear vision of how to maintain high standards within the setting. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection four recommendations were made as follows; help children to understand right and wrong through planned activities, routines and discussions; offer more challenges

for children to listen, respond and use songs and rhymes and to link sounds to initial letters; clarify and review the emergency medical treatment and advice procedure and update the consent form; increase opportunities for children to find out about and identify features in the local community.

All of the recommendations have been addressed. Children have many opportunities to learn about features in the local community and to understand about right and wrong during planned and spontaneous activities, circle time and talk time. Learning intentions identify such issues. Children are observed to be very well behaved and staff are skilled at gaining the children's attention before giving them instructions, which supports their concentration skills. Children are linking sounds to initial letters well, staff support children with this activity consistently throughout play and during general conversation. Appropriate parental consent forms giving the nursery permission to seek emergency medical care and/or advice are in place.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standards 2: Organisation, 6: Safety, 11: Behaviour; 13: Child protection, and 14: Documentation. Concerns were raised over the procedures to follow in a child protection investigation. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the provision on 29/03/2007 to investigate. As a result the provider was given actions to update the child protection policy and procedures. A satisfactory response to the actions was received and the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed. 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):

- develop lunchtime arrangements to encourage a relaxed social occasion where children's independence is fostered.

#### **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 sheets in pre-school to include evidence of next steps in learning for individual children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)