



Yorkies Day Care

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146745
Inspection date	04 January 2006
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
Setting Address	York Road Nursery, York Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1XA
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Registered person	Yorkies Day Care
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Yorkies Day Care registered in March 2000. It operates from York Road Nursery School, which is situated in the town of Hitchin, and is run by a voluntary management committee.

This day care facility operates a breakfast club which runs term time only from 8.00 to 9.00. There is also an afternoon session from 12.00 to 18.00 term time only. A holiday club is in operation from 8.00 to 18.00, offering care for children aged from 3 to under 8 years. There are 2 main rooms used by the provision and children have access to a secure outside play area.

There are currently 40 children from 3 to 6 years on roll. Children attend a variety of the sessions that are available. The group supports children who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. This provision serves the local catchments area and extended community.

There is a staff team of 2 working full-time, each holds appropriate early years qualifications. Additional staff are available to work where numbers require.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because there are highly effective procedures and practices which promote their physical, dietary and health needs. Staff have an excellent knowledge of this area and their gentle support and guidance helps children gain a thorough understanding of hygiene and health issues. Children demonstrate high levels of independence in their personal care and understand the relevance of practices such as washing and drying their hands thoroughly, and putting their hands over their mouths before coughing in order to stop germs spreading.

Children are offered healthy and nutritious snacks which include a wide range of food types. They learn practical social skills as they sit in small groups to eat their snacks, discussing a variety of topics with each other and with staff members. They help themselves to food and drinks, during snack and lunchtime, tidying their plates and cups away afterwards. There is further scope to promote independence by providing access to drinking water throughout the session. Children's individual dietary needs are clearly recorded and staff have developed a practical system for checking all needs and allergies, ensuring that children's health is protected at all times. Children's families are kept fully informed of their nutritional intake through clear menus enabling their overall daily intake to be balanced across the whole day.

Children's physical health is consistently promoted as they are offered a broad range of activities. They explore, develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills and co-ordination as they participate in adult-led activities such as music and movement sessions and action rhymes. Children show skill and dexterity in the use of small tools and equipment, for example, young children competently and safely use scissors, small construction pieces and enjoy exploring the use of small items to pick up even smaller pieces such as grains of rice.

Children freely access the outdoor play area in all weathers where staff have paid meticulous attention to the design and provision of resources. Children have abundant opportunities to develop a love of physical activity, thereby promoting their health, as they thoroughly enjoy using the vast array of equipment. This includes slides, ride-on toys of varying size and design, a large climbing frame, an obstacle course and a 'willow' tunnel, a living structure which children observe growing throughout the seasons. Staff take every opportunity to promote physical activities in a range of innovative ways, for example, making the most of the garden and planting area. This includes a compost that children add to, with items brought from home,

and later use to 'feed' the garden. Children are encouraged to understand the links between feeding the soil to promote healthy growth of plants, and those links to their own nutrition and healthy growth.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given a very high priority and risks of accidental injury are minimised because staff are vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Policies, procedures and paperwork in this area are very well planned and reviewed. Staff carry out daily safety checks, repeating these throughout the sessions to ensure continuing safety, for example, checking that emergency exits are clear at all times. Children have a firm understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves, and others, safe as they fully participate in tidying away and take part in regular emergency drills. They are given explanations by staff and understand the importance of listening to instructions in order to prevent accidents.

Children are cared for in a welcoming setting where their work is creatively displayed and resources are extremely well organised and easily accessible, this is ensured through the 'Hightscope' approach implemented in the setting. Continuous monitoring of the environment and staff's constant attention to all details ensures that children's free access to play materials reaches a high standard of safety. This is further promoted by the provision of appropriate equipment such as correctly-sized slides, play houses and climbing frame.

Children's welfare is promoted to a high standard as staff have an excellent understanding of child protection procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns. Children enjoy the benefit of many outings locally and further afield, where they learn about the community or enjoy theatre experiences. They are protected through thorough risk assessments and planning. Children are protected at all times as there are robust procedures ensuring the recruitment and employment of suitable staff and their ongoing suitability whilst employed by the group. This does, however, require revisiting to ensure that procedures continue to comply with the reviewed National Standards.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, secure and settled. Children have good relationships with each other and with staff, confidently participating in discussions, making 'plans' together and initiating conversations. Children encompass new children readily into their play and eagerly 'make friends', talking about how they like to help each other and play together. Their personal development and self-esteem are promoted through sensitive support and interaction from experienced staff.

Children show high levels of independence as they choose resources and activities throughout the sessions. Assessment of their progress is completed and staff use

that information to feed into planning so that all children are offered challenging opportunities and activities helping to ensure that they are able to realise their full potential. Children are given every opportunity to develop, and are supported in their choices, which leads to them being confident and initiating their own learning. They are offered additional exciting experiences such as printing, using real fish, exploring natural events of the weather such as snow and floods in the garden, and making 'flour ghosts' at Halloween to experiment with natural materials and enjoy first hand experiences.

All staff make use of open questions, taking every opportunity to extend children's learning. An example of this is when talking about train trips and one child's recall of a wedding, the child was able to accommodate personal experience into the play and conversations, practising his use of language, using recall and placing events into order using past, present and future experiences.

Children settle quickly due to the staff's care, understanding and planning. They ensure that they have all necessary information about children, including their likes and dislikes. They use this information to help children settle, for example, ensuring that favourite toys are out for their first weeks and being guided by parents to plan the initial period to adapt to children's needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed and are offered a wealth of opportunities and learning experiences. This is underpinned by highly appropriate support from staff to ensure that all are able to participate and develop to their maximum. Children are respected at all times and play a full and active part in the group because staff value their individuality and the family context for each child.

Children are offered a multitude of creative play opportunities and activities which promote their understanding of society and their local community, and increase their awareness of other cultures and ways of life. These include visits to local facilities such as churches and the library, meeting and making links with all members of the local community, and experiencing the arts through theatre.

Children who have special needs have their requirements clearly identified and consistently met as there is a detailed, practical policy relating to this and staff ensure that this is consistently implemented. They have attended additional training and have much experience of working with children who have varying needs. Children have individual plans which clearly relate to their needs and are supported by additional methods of communication such as Makaton signing and picture timelines for daily routines. Children are showing that they have great sensitivity and acknowledge each other as individuals, for example, when playing they understand how some children can follow instruction whilst others find that difficult, they relate well to each other accepting differences and accommodating them into their play to the satisfaction of all. Staff demonstrate great skill and sensitivity in this area, working with individual children and parents to make sure that all are included in activities and daily routines.

Children's behaviour is exemplary throughout the sessions as they confidently choose their activities and competently organise turn-taking and sharing. Staff are highly skilled in managing children's behaviour, setting consistent boundaries and always offering clear explanations so that children are able to take responsibility for their own actions. They act as excellent role models, always remaining calm, polite and attentive to all. Children are encouraged to think about the feelings of others at all times, for example, during play one child clearly recognise the time taken by another to set up the train track and, although he had moved onto another activity, asked him if he minded that he play with it. Both children showed consideration for each other's feelings.

Children's welfare is consistently promoted to a high standard because of staff's excellent relationship with parents and carers. Staff show a great commitment to involving parents fully in the setting and in their children's learning. A comprehensive parent's induction process ensures that they are fully aware of all policies and procedures, enabling them to feel confident in the staff, and in turn, passing this confidence on to their children. Children's progress is updated with parents through daily communication, newsletters, open days and meetings with staff. There are highly informative notice boards containing a wealth of information about topics such as the current, care issues for young children, benefits advice, healthy eating, snacks and menus, health and safety. This group also offer information and training evenings to parents covering aspects of care, development, and health and safety issues. This positive attitude contributed to them being given a Community Schools award in 2005 and demonstrates clearly that parents' views are valued, standards are maintained and high quality care can be provided for each child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The high quality of the provision means that the group meets the needs of the range of children who attend well. Children benefit from the care provided by experienced and skilled staff. Their daily comfort and enjoyment is greatly enhanced by the quality of organisation and the attention to all details relating to their care and well-being.

Children's varying needs are consistently met and they are offered an extensive range of activities and play opportunities due to the clear use of space both indoors, in the extended building and outside. The setting is divided into areas of learning and children are able to move safely and independently from one area to another, confidently initiating their own play and learning.

Children's welfare and safety are promoted through the setting's up-to-date policies and procedures and the staff's practical knowledge and daily implementation of these. There is, however, a need to review some procedures to ensure that the National Standards continue to be met in line with recently updated information.

There is an excellent induction process for new staff, providing information and support. This continues through the staff assessment and appraisal system, which ensures that all training needs are identified and staff are able to work appropriately with all children.

Children's overall welfare is promoted by the dedication that the staff have in their role and responsibilities. They act as excellent role models and are highly motivated, acquiring vocational qualifications and regularly attending additional training. All daily sessions, both during term-time and holidays, are very well planned, with a balanced range of opportunities throughout the day. Staff pay attention to what children are doing and ensure that they are always given sufficient time and resources to complete their activities and tasks. Staff meet regularly to plan future work, and thereby ensure that the needs of individual children are met, the development of all children is promoted and the setting continues to provide good quality care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the group assess their use of an identified room in the setting, and make amendments to policies to ensure that Ofsted were notified of all significant events.

Since that time the group have listed specific uses for the identified room, ensuring that they comply with the National Standards, and reviewed and amended procedures to ensure that they are in line with requirements. Both actions ensure continued safety for children attending the provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made since the last inspection. 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.

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children have free access to fresh drinking water at all times
- review and update organisational procedures in line with regulations and the National Standards to continue effective care and protection for children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk