

Warrington Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY285467 |
| Inspection date | 10 March 2008 |
| Inspector | Janice Shaw |
| Setting Address | C/o David Lloyd Leisure Club, Sankey Way, Cromwell Avenue South, Great Sankey, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 1HH |
| Telephone number | 01925 418175 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Asquith Court Nurseries 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 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?

Warrington Day Nursery is one of a chain of nurseries run by Asquith Court Nurseries Limited. It was registered in 1998 and operates from purpose built facilities within the David Lloyd Leisure Club in Warrington, Cheshire. Children come from a wide catchment area as parents attend the leisure club or travel to work in Warrington.

The nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 109 children at one time and places are available to members of the general public. There are currently 102 children on roll, of whom 31 receive nursery funding. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and physical disabilities.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, all year round with the exception of one week for Christmas holidays. Opening times are 07.30 until 18.00 Monday to Friday and from 10.00 until 12.00 on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays.

There are 25 staff who care for the children, 18 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the benefits of healthy eating in daily activities. They enjoy a nutritious and balanced diet in the nursery, with menus carefully planned and displayed each day for parents. Special dietary needs are effectively met as required. Meal times are social occasions where staff and children happily sit together chatting about recent events. Snack time is a flexible arrangement where children's independence and choice are well fostered as they happily help themselves to pieces of fruit and enjoy a drink of water at a time that is convenient to their play. Toddlers learn to use a spoon and fork and to drink from an open cup, whilst babies enjoy feeding themselves with their fingers or a spoon as they experiment with different textures and tastes. Children are encouraged to drink more fluids in hot weather or after energetic play and they are reminded about the benefits of drinking plenty of water for a healthy lifestyle.

Every child enjoys regular opportunities to explore and develop their physical skills in the indoor and outdoor environments. Babies happily develop and practise their skills as they grasp interesting objects and eagerly test out their balance when they use furniture to pull themselves up. Children gain confidence as they learn to move with control and use their bodies in many different ways. Younger children enjoy running on the soft play surface or learning to negotiate the climbing apparatus with guidance and support from staff, whilst the pre-school children confidently climb up, over and through the large equipment with increasing skill.

Children develop good independence skills because they are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own health and hygiene as they follow good routines and guidelines from an early age. Staff ensure that children continue to learn and make progress in their self-help skills as they offer discreet support with lots of praise, gentle prompts and reminders. Younger children are skilfully guided through their personal care and offered many opportunities to become more independent. For example, children wipe their hands and faces after they have eaten and gentle prompts remind them to find a tissue to blow their nose. Older children confidently manage their own personal care as they take themselves to the adjacent toilets and understand the purpose of hygiene routines. Consequently, children develop a strong sense of identity and self-confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and their families are warmly welcomed into the bright environment where informative notice boards within the building keep them informed and staff are readily available to offer support. Colourful mobiles, photographs and displays of children's own artwork further enhance the environment. A wide range of good quality, suitable resources are available for children to choose from throughout the setting and high safety standards are maintained. However, the home play areas do not provide children with sufficient challenge. Natural materials and everyday objects are in daily use, for example, wooden furniture, numerous treasure baskets and low-level sand and water trays.

Staff regularly explain and skilfully reinforce safety issues in a way that is appropriate for each child's level of understanding and maturity. This enables older children to accept responsibility for their own safety within the nursery because they recognise potential hazards and have a good understanding of the possible consequences of their actions. For example, a toddler is

reminded they may fall and bump their head if they do not sit down on the slide and older children know which way to hold scissors safely. Older children also know they should not go too near the food trolley as the containers are hot.

Children benefit enormously from the secure outdoor play area where an interesting range of equipment and resources is available. They are kept safe and secure in the nursery where staff vigilantly follow good procedures to protect every child. A secure entry system ensures that visitors are clearly identified and children are protected. Children are protected and safeguarded from harm because staff have a secure knowledge of child protection issues and know how to implement appropriate procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have fun and enjoy being together in the lively, friendly nursery. Babies happily explore and investigate a wide range of sensory opportunities, such as playing with treasure baskets independently or with the whole group in the baby room. They learn about taste, textures, smells and sound in a variety of different ways and gain confidence as they practise and rehearse recently formed skills and achievements in a supportive environment. Toddlers and young children eagerly choose where to play and learn to make decisions. They enjoy a wide range of activities to help them acquire new skills and knowledge and have time to practise and consolidate their learning. They particularly enjoy baking and excitedly tell a visitor that they are making cakes as they hold up the bun trays, later they proudly take them home.

Staff have secure knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use it successfully when planning for younger children. Clear learning outcomes are identified and plans promote flexibility to meet children's interests and preferences. This progress is used to inform future planning and is recorded in children's individual records. Children relate warmly to staff and other children and are able to indicate to staff when they need help or support. They begin to display responsible behaviour, such as helping to tidy up, taking turns and sharing.

Communication is given a high priority throughout the setting as staff listen and respond appropriately to children's speech and babies' babbling. Signs, gestures and facial expressions are used to reinforce meaning and provide visual cues. For example, a six month old baby moves in rhythm with the background music, clearly enjoying the experience and laughs when staff join in with him. Children enjoy sitting in a cosy group to share familiar stories. They listen and watch attentively as they excitedly contribute and point to favourite characters in the books. Children happily sing action songs and rhymes from memory and eagerly join in the lively singing sessions. They have lots of fun as they explore the properties of gloop and water by pouring and using a variety of containers. Toddlers carefully collect the gloop in their hands, squeezing it hard so that the water runs out and then place the rest in containers and start all over again, clearly enjoying the experience. Whilst playing in the water a toddler keenly follows the flow of the water through the waterwheel, looking surprised when it has disappeared. She continually repeats this activity until she understands where the water goes. Throughout the activity she is very well supported by a member of staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make consistent progress in all areas of learning because staff have very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and have a clear understanding of the underlying principles of early years education. Planning is

imaginatively based on children's interests and is sufficiently flexible to meet individual children's needs. Staff know the children well and provide rich and stimulating play opportunities. Consequently, children are involved in challenging play and learning activities on a daily basis, many of which are organised and improvised spontaneously to respond to individual children's learning needs and interests. A new system of observing and recording details of each child's achievements and developmental progress is in place and is recorded in their 'individual learning journey' files. Observations are skilfully used to identify what each child already knows and can do and includes their next steps for learning. This is a colourful ongoing record with photographs, examples of work and informative observations. However, for those children not yet involved in the new system it is not clear how their progress relates to the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Children eagerly and enthusiastically become engrossed in their play and are highly motivated and inquisitive learners. They have fun exploring their environment with great interest, which skilfully arouses their natural curiosity. Children benefit from the challenging learning opportunities that are imaginatively presented in stimulating practical activities. Staff have high expectations and, subsequently, children are strongly motivated as they experiment and make connections with other areas of learning and experiences. For example, children mix their own paints and watch keenly as the colours change when they mix some together. They enthusiastically explain to a member of staff how they have made purple and that they are now going to do hand prints. The staff then support this spontaneous activity sensitively, allowing the children to direct the process. Children's interest in the natural world is fostered through interesting resources and activities. For example, they have large pieces of tree trunks in the water play and the children observe how they look when wet, and they dig and plant in the small soil beds outside.

A very good balance of adult-led activities runs alongside child-initiated activities creating a purposeful learning environment for the children. Children happily access activities at their own level because opportunities are flexibly extended and adapted to suit individual needs. Children's independent learning is successfully promoted as they are encouraged to develop their own ideas and initiate their own games. Consequently, children confidently plan and make their own decisions. For example, at one point a small group of children decided that they wanted to sing and dance and then they organised another part of the room to accommodate this. Staff were recruited by the children to help move some of the furniture and to switch the CD player on. The children then took charge of their own activity and sang and moved around to the music with the leadership of the game changing amicably as children offered other ideas for the actions.

Children are all actively involved in small group sessions where they listen intently to lively stories and eagerly participate as they are discreetly encouraged to count, recognise and understand numbers or basic calculations. This interest in books helps them gain an understanding that print carries meaning. Staff support this understanding by writing labels on their picture displays. However, these labels do not always support children's understanding of correct grammar. All children are confident and articulate. They communicate very effectively as they eagerly engage in lively conversations with their friends and staff members throughout the day. They respond to and learn from adults in the setting because staff are very skilled in talking and listening to them.

Staff facilitate and extend play and learning as they recognise children's interest, for example, when a four year old showed an interest in travel, staff helped him to make a travel agents shop, complete a sign and make tickets and an identification badge. Then a small group of

children joined this child and the game was extended by the children who were excitedly stapling tickets together, discussing holidays and acting out transactions with the agent. To link in with the children's interest, the member of staff sensitively introduced new words, gently questioned them and hinted at ways they could extend the game. All this was done without distracting the children from the main theme of their play.

Children accurately and spontaneously use numbers, names and mathematical language in their play. They talk about shapes as they recognise simple two dimensional shapes, such as a circle and triangle. Concepts of number and basic calculations are informally reinforced in practical activities or during action songs. For example, children concentrate hard as they count fingers to show a visitor that they are three and will soon be four. In the card matching game, a three year old successfully compares the cards, correctly identifying all the similarities and differences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well and are learning right from wrong because the staff are consistent in the way they actively promote positive behaviour throughout the nursery. They listen to what children say and staff act as good role models as they say please and thank you to the children. Children develop respect for others because the sensitive staff encourage children to understand that their behaviour may have an impact on others. They gain an understanding about their own and other's beliefs, needs and differences, during stories, festival celebrations and topic work. For example, a current display helps children understand about St Patrick and the history associated with him. However, resources to support all aspects of diversity are not sufficient. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Every child is actively involved in an inclusive environment. Individual needs and preferences are identified and acknowledged, and activities are adapted to ensure that children with additional needs are supported to achieve their potential. Staff work in partnership with parents and relevant support agencies to promote good continuity of care for children.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Information is shared with parents before children join the nursery and good settling in procedures are in place. Notices and newsletters keep parents up to date with current topics and nursery events. Parents are invited to quarterly play sessions which enables them to experience first hand the activities and experiences that their children have during the day. This also provides a very good opportunity for the children's development to be discussed. Parents and carers speak positively of the provision and particularly comment on the relaxed, safe and friendly atmosphere.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The management team demonstrate a strong commitment to continually improving the quality of care and education provided. They provide a clear direction for the nursery's work, which is very successfully shared with all staff so that there is a willingness to adopt new ideas to improve children's learning. The nursery has very good systems for checking the quality of children's experiences and ensuring that all are making good progress.

Rigorous recruitment and employment systems are in place to ensure that children are protected. A comprehensive induction programme is in place for new staff. There is a very stable staff

team in place, the majority of whom are well qualified. All staff are committed to their own professional development and attend both in-house and external training courses on a regular basis. They have clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work well together as a strong and very happy team. Communication between the staff team is very good and they work well with each other and have a positive sense of worth because they feel valued and involved in the nursery organisation. This creates a very happy, homely and supportive atmosphere for children and their families.

Children progress happily and confidently through the different age groups in the homely atmosphere where everyone knows each other very well. Policies and procedures are available to both staff and parents. All the required documentation is in place to effectively support the care of children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were two recommendations made. The nursery was required to ensure that effective systems were in place to link observations, assessments and planning to provide information on children's progress and to predict next steps for children. They were also asked to ensure that staff were effectively deployed with clearly defined roles in the play areas. The nursery has recently introduced a new system of observations, assessment and planning. Where this is in place, children's next steps for learning are appropriately in place. All staff are now appropriately deployed.

Complaints since the last inspection

On 21 February 2007 Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 2: Organisation and National Standard 6: Safety. The Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team contacted the provision. The provision provided an investigation response regarding the concerns raised. Ofsted is satisfied the provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- improve the resources and arrangement for domestic type imaginary play (also applies to nursery education)

- increase resources that promote children's understanding of the wider world (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- continue to develop the observation and recording systems ensuring that clear links are made to the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage curriculum
- ensure that children are appropriately supported in the understanding of the correct use of grammar.

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