

Imagine Co-operative Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY277886
Inspection date	01 July 2008
Inspector	Tracy Bartholomew
Setting Address	The Oval, Ashurst Way, Rosehill, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX4 4UY
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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 satisfactory. The registered person meets 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 Co-operative Childcare opened in 2004 and is one of three childcare settings in the Oxfordshire area owned by Mid-counties Co-operative limited. The nursery is situated in the Rosehill area of Oxford and serves the local and surrounding areas. It operates from four playrooms with integrated bathroom facilities and an additional communal area in a purpose-built single storey premises. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area with an integrated sandpit and grass, paved and impact absorbent surfaces.

A maximum of 61 children under five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 100 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is open each week day from 08.00 until 18.00 all year round, apart from bank holidays. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The Co-operative employs 21 staff to work with the children and a cook. Of these 16 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to level 2 and 3, with 19 staff holding an appropriate first aid training. The manager holds the National Nursery Examination Board qualification and a

management qualification to Level 5. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and has close links with the local Children's Centre and Rose Hill playgroup.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises and equipment are clean, well maintained and in good order through suitable cleaning routines undertaken by staff. This promotes children's health and minimises the spread of infection. Staff protect the children from cross contamination through wearing aprons and gloves for meal times, sun cream application and nappy changing. Most of the children are learning simple health and hygiene practices through encouragement from staff in relation to nose blowing and hand washing, however inconsistencies of staff not washing their hands and children playing with toys between the meal serving poses a risk to the children health and wellbeing at meal times.

Children are learning to take care of their personal care needs generally well, they have accessible soap and towels to aid their independence at toileting time. In addition they use flannels to wash their face and a named toothbrush at lunch time to brush their teeth. This promotes the children's understanding of being healthy and promotes their emotional well being. Staff ensure that the children's interests are paramount when they become ill or require medication. This is assisted through the implementation of the setting's robust health and safety policies and procedures. Accidents are effectively dealt with as staff have appropriate first aid skills, the first aid boxes are accessible and well stocked. The policy for recording of accidents is clear, however not all records are shared with the parents, which poses a risk to the children's health.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a healthy and nutritious balance of freshly cooked food on a four week rota basis. Meal times are a social occasion and children are encouraged to serve themselves where applicable although meal times can be disrupting. Children have access to fresh drinking water at all times to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Children rest and relax according to their needs and all children enjoy the access to the outside area, where they enjoy playing in the sandpit, playing on riding on vehicles and carrying out activities. The children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their fitness and large muscle control as they practise running, parachute games and learning to negotiate their bodies in a variety of ways through the use of obstacle courses. Indoors, children enjoy water play, creative play and dancing to music. Regular activities are available which include threading, cutting and small construction play which demonstrates that children are able to develop their small muscle skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children benefit from premises which are safe, secure and suitable for the purpose. They have ample of space to allow the children to relax and to play which effectively promotes their development. The setting is welcoming and friendly for the children and parents, with clearly designated quiet and role play areas, all furniture is age appropriate and clearly labelled child height storage units enable the children to access the well-maintained resources freely for themselves. Children have a sense of belonging at the setting, as they have their own personalised hooks and draws to place their personal items in. In addition to this they feel

valued as the staff display the creative masterpieces throughout the setting to promote a warm and child friendly environment.

Children's safety and security is given maximum priority through the use of the buzzer entry system and keypad operation on internal doors, in addition to this staff complete rigorous health and safety checks which ensures children's safety is paramount. Staff are vigilant and supervise the children well within the setting, however registers do not always reflect the correct number of children attending in each room, and staff knowledge is not consistent with the number of children in their room. This poses a potential danger to the children's safety.

Children's welfare is well protected because staff demonstrate sound awareness of their roles and responsibilities. Good policies and procedure are in place for people collecting children not known to staff, which includes the use of passwords and photographs. Emergency fire drills are practised regularly to ensure that the staff and children understand the procedures to follow in the event of a real emergency. Children benefit from the sound and generally good awareness that the staff have in regards to the signs of child abuse. Most staff have completed child protection training. There are effective policies and procedures in place and the staff are coherent with the routes for referral that are required to protect children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. They are confident, motivated and self-assured. They achieve well because staff are skilled and use their understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and the key person approach to provide sound quality care. Children have loving relationships with most staff and are confident to seek staff for support when they are playing with the range of activities available. All activities provided encourage a variety of skills which in turn supports the children's ongoing development, such as playing with the kitchen items, shapes eggs, shredded paper, prams and construction.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff cover the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage effectively, however this is not effectively maintained on a day to day basis. As a result children are not challenged appropriately and most play is aimless, with insufficient adult support. When staffing is consistent the children receive good support, this enables the children to make progress and thrive within a stimulating educational programme. When the staffing is in place the planning is closely monitored and is effective in ensuring most aspects are covered. It covers all of the six areas of learning to ensure children develop quickly across these. However, continued work is needed to ensure evaluations are used to plan for all children's next stages of learning. This will ensure that all activities are tailored to the children's individual needs. Development records are maintained for all children, with staff making regular observations of what children can do.

Children are making progress in all areas of learning. They are happy to attend the setting and enter the nursery confidently. Children are encouraged to be independent in the nursery. They self select their own drinks during the day and hang up their own coats and bags. Children develop good relationships in the group and have respect for others' opinions. For example when making real baby feeds for their dolls, they respect each others' views and suggestions by listening to each other and discussing the outcomes. Children are mostly praised warmly for their achievements. They play well together in small groups when using the parachute, taking

turns to be in the centre for the washing machine game and running under the chute when lifted.

Children begin to mark-make and many can write their names clearly. Staff mostly create good opportunities for children to use their emerging writing skills in meaningful ways, such as writing their names on their art work. Children have a good awareness of numbers of personal significance. They know how old they are and how old they will be at their next birthday. Children confidently use a range of creative materials, such as paints, cornflower, crayons and paper to represent their feelings, thoughts and ideas. However the painted pictures are not always removed off the easel; which as a result prevents some children from taking part, however other children have regard for the completed masterpiece and will not paint on others' work. Children enjoy music and join in singing songs throughout the day. Children are confident of everyday technology because they have continued access to the computer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel valued and receive a warm-hearted welcome in this setting. Staff are skilful at meeting the children's individual needs and dedicate their time to support these. Staff help children to feel good about themselves as they always praise or thank them for their contributions. They gain a sound awareness of the wider society and benefit from the activities and resources that are well included to enable them to value diversity. For example, they celebrate festivals throughout the cultures and religions where they experience food from around the world and take an active part in carnival time as they dress up and take on appropriate roles. The setting fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Children are generally well behaved and most respond appropriately to staff instruction. Boundaries are clear, however, these are not consistently maintained throughout the setting by all staff to ensure a consistent approach. Explanations are given but these are infrequent, which does not ensure all children manage their behaviour expectations consistently.

The partnership with parents and carers of children funded for nursery education is satisfactory. Parents and carers receive a good range of information about the setting and Foundation Stage, through the effectiveness of notice boards, parental packs, individual daily diary and informal daily discussion at the beginning and end of session. This ensures that the parents have up to date information and feel part of their children's development. Parents value the professionalism of most staff and comment warmly on how they can approach and communicate effectively to them.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is run very efficiently as the manager provides clear leadership to the staff team. The children benefit from a good balance of qualified and experienced staff and agency staff are used to cover staff holidays and sickness. However no time is given to induct the covering staff to ensure the routine is followed, this has an adverse effect on the learning and development of the children. Overall the deployment of staff does hamper the children's learning and development within the three to five years room which has an impact on many activities. Children are happy and relaxed when deployment of staff meets their individual needs, as this is when the staff work effectively as a team and follow their key person approach successfully.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well being is in place. However, the daily attendance register does not reflect the number of children in the room.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are good and ensures children are cared for by suitable staff with relevant skills and experience. Induction procedures are comprehensive, the staff follow a 26 week programme which clearly outlines the policies and procedures of the setting and ensures the staff fully comprehend these in practice. The staff feel well supported by the manager and use regular meeting to enhance the care they offer to the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory.

The management and most of the staff are secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage, when the usual staff are working within the room, there is a calm and effective partnership, the staff work well together and provide a sound range of teaching methods used. The teaching motivates the children to learn and children are making sound progress throughout. However this is not consistent when these staff are absent, as most covering staff are uncertain about what children are to learn from activities and most children are being occupied rather than engaged in learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting where set four recommendations to support the children's care and development. These related to ensuring that key staff are available a lunch time period to meet the children's individual learning; to increase staff awareness of the Birth to three matters framework, ensure that every day technology is available and to take positive steps to raise children's awareness of good hygiene practices. The staff and setting have worked well to address most of these issues to ensure children's learning and development is maintained, however further recommendations have been made following this inspection in relation to children's hygiene practices.

The last nursery education inspection was inadequate and the setting where set three actions to improve their practice. These related to increasing staffs knowledge of the Foundation Stage to enable them to plan a stimulating curriculum; Devising a system for the observation and assessment of children's progress and to improve systems for monitoring the quality of the nursery education provision whilst evaluating its impact. The setting have addressed these issues and put the majority of the actions in practice, although further work is required to ensure these are effective.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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 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 positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection in relation to hand washing
- ensure that all accidents forms are signed by parents
- ensure that attendance records accurately demonstrate when children have been present in the building
- ensure staff are affectively deployed to meet the needs of the children attending, especially at lunch time and in the three to five years room

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 demonstrate how observations and evaluations are used to plan for each child's next stage of learning
- ensure that all staff covering the room have a suitable knowledge of the Foundation Stage to support the emotional and educational needs of the children
- continue to improve systems for monitoring the quality of the nursery education provision and evaluating its impact

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