

Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY358317 |
| Inspection date | 16 April 2008 |
| Inspector | Anne Daly |
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| Registered person | Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery Ltd |
| 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?

Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery is one of two privately owned nurseries run by Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery Limited. It opened in 2007 and operates from seven rooms within a purpose built demountable building in the grounds of Mayflower High School in Billericay. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting opens on five weekdays from 07:00 until 19:00 all year round, with the exception of Bank Holidays. All children share access to enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 103 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as a second language.

The nursery employs 20 staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications and six are working towards early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Essex Day Nursery Association (EDNA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is being well supported through staff taking positive steps to promote their good health, including encouraging them to begin to take responsibility for meeting their own health needs. Older children are independent in their personal care through understanding the need to wash their hands to prevent illness from germs, especially before handling food and after using the toilet. They are being actively reminded of such good practices through posters in the bathroom. Children understand that they must put their hands over their mouths when coughing to prevent them spreading their germs to their friends. Babies and younger children are being protected from cross-infection during nappy changing by staff following good procedures such as wearing disposable gloves and disinfecting the changing mat after each child. Dental hygiene practices are being introduced to children through some bringing their toothbrushes from home to clean their teeth to prevent the risk of early tooth decay. All children are benefiting from staff ensuring the maintenance of a clean environment by following detailed and well-maintained routines such as cleaning surfaces with antibacterial liquids before children eating their meals.

The majority of staff hold current first aid qualifications to enable them to manage children's accidental injuries well. Children's needs are being considered through appropriate confidential accident records being shared with parents or carers to ensure that they are kept fully informed. Children are being well safeguarded if they require medications during their stay at the setting by staff following effective procedures to support individual children's medical needs, including only administering medication following pre-authorisation by parents or carers. The possible risk of cross-infection of children is being reduced through information being displayed for parents and carers regarding children's health such as exclusion times for sickness and diarrhoea. They are well informed if children have infectious diseases, for example, by a notice by the entrance door informing them that there is a case of chickenpox.

Children are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating through staff providing them with regular drinks and nutritious food complying with their dietary requirements. Different weekly menus ensure that children enjoy a very varied range of 'home cooked' food freshly prepared on the premises. Children's individual dietary needs are well met through the nursery cook liaising with some parents and carers. They review the menus, informing the cook of what their children can eat each week and sometimes providing additional suggestions for individual children. Children are given good opportunities by staff to learn about healthy options, for example, discussing different fruits at snack time such as pineapple slices and bananas. Children aged two plus take responsibility for the implementation of rules by knowing that they must wash their plates and beakers after snack time.

Babies are thriving through both their nutritional and emotional needs being well met by staff. Staff consider their feeding times and individual needs, following discussing and respecting parents' or carers' wishes as to how they would like the weaning phase to be handled. Babies and toddlers are given opportunities to enjoy their food and to become independent in feeding themselves when using fingers and spoons.

Children's individual needs, care and welfare are given good consideration by staff, for example, by allowing them to rest or sleep if tired at any time. Older children have a very cosy book area

with large bean bags to ensure their comfort at circle time, when playing quietly and when looking at books.

Children learn about healthy living through participating in a very varied range of activities provided by staff. They are able to exercise both inside and outside, participating enthusiastically and clearly enjoying the challenges being presented to them, for example, sack races. They are developing an understanding of how their bodies work through staff discussing changes to bodies after physical exercise, for example, how their hearts beat faster after jumping in the sacks. Babies and toddlers are sometimes taken out for walks in buggies to benefit from the fresh air and to stimulate their minds and bodies. Children benefit greatly from the sensory room, becoming increasingly independent by acquiring control over their bodies and by learning new physical skills such as pulling themselves up or climbing into the ball pool.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

All children benefit from a well-organised learning environment, in which they are provided with a worthwhile range of age-appropriate resources and equipment. Children's toys and resources are maintained to a good standard, with staff monitoring and immediately removing any broken toys or equipment to fully safeguard them. Children have good accessible storage to encourage them to become independent by choosing their play provision and helping them to extend their play and learning at their own pace. They know where their resources are kept and can confidently put away toys at 'tidy up' time. All toys within the reach of the under twos are safe for 'exploring' by using their hands and mouths.

Children play in a very child-friendly, stimulating environment, where they are able to see colourful and interesting images and displays all around them to promote their conversation and ultimately their learning. Their artwork is attractively displayed to effectively promote their good self-esteem by showing them that staff members value their efforts. Children use a wide range of suitably designed and safe equipment, which is well maintained in good condition and conforming to safety standards. They are provided with different sized tables and chairs to enable them to participate together in activities and to ensure that meal times are social occasions for everyone.

Children are cared for and kept safe in secure and suitable for purpose premises. Their safety and security are priorities and they are protected from unknown persons entering the setting by the use of a coded key-padded door and the careful monitoring of all visitors before being allowed into the premises. Staff ensure that the environment allows children to have good access to a worthwhile range of toys and equipment to successfully promote their development. They undertake annual, weekly and daily written checks to ensure that the premises and equipment remain safe for children's use. However, risks remain from some doors and blind cords which may potentially compromise children's safety.

Children regularly practise fire drills so that they know what to do in an emergency. They are developing an increasing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and are learning self-control in order to avoid hurting others. Children of two years plus know that, after collecting their cutlery, they must walk to the tables holding their knives, forks and spoons pointing downwards to safeguard all from potential accidents.

Children go on outings with staff to Lake Meadows to extend their learning and knowledge with their parents' or carers' written permission. Staff follow the setting's outings policy, always

ensuring that they take a first aid kit and a mobile phone to enable them to act in children's best interests in an emergency.

Children are protected and safeguarded through staff being aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and of the correct procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Staff share the setting's child protection procedures with parents or carers to ensure that they know what actions will be taken to fully safeguard their children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs well met and they are developing a worthwhile range of knowledge and skills through staff planning and providing a good range of stimulating activities and play opportunities to help them to achieve in all areas.

Children show great interest in what they do and have good opportunities to non-verbally express themselves through staff providing worthwhile opportunities to encourage thoughts, ideas and feelings through a varied range of expressive forms such as body movement, art, dance and singing. Babies and toddlers enjoy listening to and experiencing a wide range of background music throughout the day. Toddlers thoroughly enjoy feeling mediums, such as paints, beans and pasta. They have opportunities to explore with their whole bodies, for example, when feeling with fingers, walking and sitting in wet paint on sheets of paper on the floor. They develop confidence and self-esteem to try new things through staff praising them to encourage them to experiment. Children acquire new knowledge and skills, for example, when pressing the buttons on the sensory bubble tube and observing the changing colours and different movements of the bubbles.

Children respond to challenges through staff planning activities such as blowing bubbles, to excite toddlers' curiosity. They make positive relationships with staff, who are providing good opportunities for them to respond to the world of imagination, to try out ideas and to extend their language. They enjoy playing with objects such as telephones, to provide a link with home and to encourage them to become confident and competent language users. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of younger children and provide them with appropriate activities and resources to support their physical and emotional development. Toddlers and babies have many opportunities to find comfortable ways of grasping, holding and using things they wish to use when exploring 'treasure baskets'.

Children are learning to distinguish right from wrong, while forming very positive relationships with their peers through staff setting consistent boundaries and appropriately supporting them to develop their skills. They are encouraged to take turns and to say that they are sorry if they accidentally hurt another child.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The management and senior staff teams have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. All staff plan a good, varied range of both indoor and outdoor activities to ensure the delivery of a curriculum focusing on the stepping stones in all six areas of learning. They complete assessments with parents and carers to ensure that they are aware of children's starting points. Parents and carers are encouraged to continue to contribute to their children's assessment records.

The focus activity includes a learning intention, but it is not always linked to other areas of learning or what the activity involves such as key questions. However, at the beginning of each day, staff discuss how the focus activity is to be delivered, how it can consolidate some children's learning and extend other children's learning. Staff evaluate the activity, but do not always consider what individual children have learnt and what they next need to learn. Therefore, if activities are not being evaluated in terms of what individual children have learnt, staff may have insufficient information to inform the future planning for such children.

Staff have good relationships with children to encourage them to become involved and to persevere with tasks. A variety of effective teaching methods help children to make good progress in all areas of learning, for example, staff reading the story of the 'Hungry Caterpillar' to children before offering them a selection of learning activities linked to the story. Children are encouraged to try new experiences, while staff's interaction with them enables staff to assess their understanding of what they are doing.

There are secure procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children are well behaved and staff help them to respond to set boundaries of behaviour, for example, they must stop what they are doing if staff ring the bell. Children are beginning to understand the need for self-discipline and consideration for others, for example, knowing how many of them can play at certain activities at any one time. Staff successfully use the resources and accommodation to promote all children's learning and to enable them to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The management team is consistently monitoring staff's performances to enhance their professional development and to improve their teaching and learning for the benefit of all children.

Children are making good progress in personal, social and emotional development to underpin their learning in all areas. They use initiative and are able to be self-sufficient within their learning by choosing their activities from the freely accessible resources. They fully participate in adult-directed activities as well as enjoying developing their own ideas and play through self-selection, such as 'going on a bus to Turkey'.

Children are developing through having plenty of opportunities to practise the elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing. They are able to recognise their names when self-registering and are being helped to understand familiar words on labels within the environment. They have opportunities to practise early writing skills, for example, all confidently mark-making to identify their creative work. More able children can confidently write their names and correctly form letters. They enjoy linking sounds to letters and are able to hear an initial sound and to link it to words, for example, 'e' for elephant. More able children can also confidently look at books, turning the pages and retelling the story in their own words to younger children.

Children are developing their mathematical skills through a wide variety of enjoyable, practical activities, including songs, puzzles, water and sand play. They enjoy mathematical learning because staff ensure that it is purposeful, for example, using positional language when arranging furniture in the dolls house. Staff also make good use of opportunities to talk 'mathematically' when children are taking part in normal daily activities, for example, talking about floating and sinking when children playing in the water tray. Children talk about big and little circles when cutting them out to enable the creation of caterpillars. At circle time, children are encouraged to count up to the date of the month, before recognising the numbers which will make 16.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first-hand experiences. They have daily opportunities to find out about and to use everyday technology, for example, when using pretend telephones, tills and scanners. The computer is always switched on to enable children to use the mouse to click on different icons to cause different things to happen on a paint programme. Children are able to talk about significant things that happen to them such as how old they are and what age they will be next birthday. They show great interest in celebrating their birthdays, enjoying joining in with the dancing when staff organising 'little parties' for them. Children have opportunities to talk about changes to ingredients when mixing them together during cooking activities.

Children have time to explore and experiment with ideas, for example, when creating pictures using a variety of different materials and textures. They enjoy choosing their favourite songs from illustrated pictures. Some children who have English as a second language join in with their favourite songs by linking the sounds to movements, for example, by clapping hands or stamping feet.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities to help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination, with their confidence and self-esteem growing when they very successfully use scissors to cut out very small circles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting with confidence and feel a good sense of belonging. They have their own coat pegs on which to hang their personal possessions, while younger children have their own baskets. They are able to settle quickly into nursery life through the provision of good procedures to support them when moving from their home environment. Children and their parents or carers can visit to familiarise themselves with staff and the environment before starting at the setting. Children are treated as individuals and are settled into the Nursery in line with their individual requirements. Staff keep detailed records of their sleeping times, nappy changes and food intake to be shared with parents or carers. Key persons are available at the beginning and end of the day to ensure that parents or carers are able to discuss their children's day with them.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They can confidently speak and relate to staff, visitors and other children. Topics and projects about other cultures provide many opportunities for children to develop respect for each other. They sample a variety of cultural foods, design 'rangoli' patterns and dance to Indian music when celebrating Diwali. Children are developing a good sense of belonging by seeing some of their own work and photographs of themselves and their families being displayed on walls. Staff seek information from parents and carers such as about cultures and home languages, to specifically meet children's individual needs. Children are able to reflect and to have tranquil moments while looking at books. During the majority of the day, pre-school aged children are able to make choices and decisions, for example, when deciding with what they will play and when they will have their snacks. This freedom of choice enables them to complete their chosen activities. Staff are ensuring that children understand simple, good manners such as by encouraging them to say 'excuse me' when wishing to squeeze past someone.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are greatly valued, respected and fully integrated into the setting. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has a good understanding

of her role and liaises well with parents or carers and other agencies to ensure that she effectively meets children's individual needs.

Children understand responsible behaviour when playing happily together. Staff encourage younger children to be kind to one another and to take turns. They set clear and consistent boundaries to help children to learn to negotiate with others and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Praise is freely given to children to ensure that they develop their confidence and self-esteem through understanding when they have done well.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early years education is good. Staff clearly value parents' and carers' suggestions and respect their views as to how they can become more involved in their children's learning. Parents and carers receive clear information about the setting through a prospectus and newsletters, while the notice board informs them of their children's weekly planned activities. They are well informed of their children's achievements through formal open evenings. This ongoing contact with them ensures that staff can share any relevant information about their children's achievements and progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are supported by a caring and qualified staff team. They are protected and their welfare promoted through rigorous systems to ensure that all adults working with them are suitable to do so. Regular staff appraisals and observations ensure that the management team remains aware of the skills and particular interests of individual staff members. Staff are motivated to attend both external and 'in house' trainings to help them to meet the needs of all children.

Children are grouped appropriately to enable them to feel secure and confident with the adults looking after them. Children aged under two years are cared for in small base rooms, with no more than six children in each room. Children aged between two and under five years have free-flow play for the majority of the core day, independently choosing their area of learning to explore through play either indoors or outdoors. All children are greatly benefiting from the indoor sensory room and the sensory garden.

The required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management of the Nursery and to promote children's welfare, although the risk assessments require review to ensure that their safety is not being compromised. There is an operational plan, but it has not yet been effectively collated and lacks some of the necessary aspects to help to explain the operation of the setting. The management team is currently updating the written policies and procedures to ensure that they are consistent in their recording in both the operational plan and the staff handbook.

The leadership and management is good. The registered provider and the management team have a clear vision for the Nursery to ensure the provision of the best possible outcomes for children. They monitor and develop the setting to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. There is a strong commitment to improvement and to the training and professional development of their staff team. They know their staff's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that they act on their evaluations to improve their performance for the benefit of children. They ensure that all children are being well supported to achieve their potential, including working with parents or carers to encourage their children's progress.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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.

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):

- take reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised (this refers to the blind cords and the doors)
- review and update the operational plan to ensure that it effectively explains how the setting runs.

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 focus activity plans to include sufficient details to show the learning intentions and what the activities involve, evaluated in terms of what children have learnt, to enable evaluations to inform future planning.

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