

The Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307771
Inspection date	30 June 2008
Inspector	Anna Davies
Setting Address	32 - 34 Priestgate, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 1JL
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Registered person	The Day Nursery Peterborough
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?

The Day Nursery opened in 2005 and is situated in the middle of Peterborough city centre. A maximum of 57 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 91 children aged from three months to under five years on the roll. Of these, 33 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel in to work in the city centre. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications and nine are working towards a qualification or further qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good hygiene routines throughout the nursery contribute towards children's good health. For example, nappy changing procedures ensure that the risk of cross-contamination is minimised, children wash their hands before they eat and wipe their faces afterwards on individual flannels and shoes are removed before entering younger children's rooms so that the areas that they crawl around are clean and hygienic. Comprehensive information is shared with parents about the care of sick children; exclusion periods are detailed and information regarding specific cases of illnesses in the nursery are clearly displayed. Staff are able to respond effectively in the event of an emergency to ensure that children's well-being and good health is protected and most have current first aid certificates which ensures that they can give children appropriate care if a child has an accident. Procedures for administering medication are clear and generally well documented to ensure that parents give consent for and acknowledge any medicines given to their children.

All children benefit from regular opportunities throughout the day to enjoy fresh air in the outdoor area which has a good range of equipment and activities to support children's physical skills and development. For example, older children confidently use the climbing frame and balance across a line of balance blocks, moving their body carefully through a hoop at the end. They join in games of 'Hokey Cokey', co-ordinating their body to actions such as standing on one leg and shaking parts of their body. Younger children enjoy rocking on the seesaw and bouncing on the small trampoline. Babies have space in their base rooms to crawl and pull themselves to standing at low-level furniture. Their individual routines for sleeping and eating are respected which promotes their physical and emotional well-being. Young toddlers have free access to a ball pool which helps them learn a sense of balance and movement as they stand on the edge, jump in and move through the balls to get out again. Children's fine motor skills develop well through activities involving small equipment such as scissors and hole punches, or as they co-ordinate the use of a knife and fork at mealtimes.

All food served to the children is prepared by a cook on site. Consideration is given to healthy, balanced and nutritious meals, taking into account any dietary or cultural requirements. This ensures that children's dietary needs are met and promotes all children's growth and development. Children help to grow their own fruit and vegetables such as strawberries, parsnips, tomatoes and carrots, which they are then able to help prepare, ready for eating. This ensures that children enjoy food and learn about healthy eating. There are systems in each room to enable all children to freely access drinks when they wish which ensures that they remain well hydrated throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery is bright and welcoming for parents and children; many examples and displays of children's work, as well as a wealth of relevant information for parents, adorns the walls throughout. The nursery gives all aged children access to a good range of facilities to meet their needs. For example, a designated sleep room is provided if parents wish children to sleep in cots or individual sleep mats are set up within the rooms. A good range of equipment and resources are used to ensure that children are well cared for. These are checked regularly to ensure that they are safe for use and remain in good condition.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place as well as daily safety checks completed and documented by staff in each room. This ensures that most risks to children's safety are identified and minimised. However, wall heaters situated in the Pre-school room and Aqua room pose a potential risk to children's safety when they are operated during the colder months. Written notices warn people that these get hot and must not be touched. However, nothing prevents children touching them or falling into them when they are on. The premises are very secure as parents use a Finger Biometric system to gain entry. This ensures that unauthorised visitors are unable to access the premises. The nursery office monitors the provision continuously via a web camera which further enhances children and staff's safety. Children are supervised well. For example, when children free-flow into different rooms, staff are alert and move with them. In the event of a fire, there are clear procedures in place to ensure all children's safety and extra consideration has been given to those children situated on the first floor. An independent fire safety risk assessment is carried out annually to ensure that children's safety in the event of a fire remains a priority. All staff are knowledgeable about procedures and regular drills are practised with the children each month. Extra safety considerations are in place for younger children such as monitoring them whilst they sleep, using appropriate restraints in highchairs and supervising them at all times as they lie on the changing unit. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as they watch a fire safety video, are reminded to use furniture and resources appropriately and are encouraged to jump carefully into the ball pool to avoid hurting others.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. Staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care and have all relevant documentation in place to support them. A written policy is in place which outlines to parents the nursery's responsibility towards protecting children from harm and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. They leave their parents and carers confidently and settle to the interesting activities on offer to them. Staff are warm and caring towards the children. They know them well and have built good relationships with them. Staff caring for the younger children have a good understanding of the types of activities that help to promote their development. For example, a lot of sensory activities are offered such as 'custard' and 'instant whip' play which the children thoroughly enjoy as they watch it run through their hands, tasting and splashing the mixtures. Toddlers squeal 'again, again' in delight as staff blow bubbles from their hands and splash during water play. A good range of resources are stored at low-level so that children can independently access them. This enables them to follow their own interests as they play, promoting their enjoyment. Younger children have access to a sensory room and enjoy the subtle lighting and calming music played in there as they access treasure baskets of filled bottles, materials and wooden items, promoting exploration. Staff are enthusiastic during activities, for example as they encourage children to take part in a Makaton singing song time or read stories to them, encouraging them to get involved by opening the flaps on the pages. Children's progress is documented through regular observations made as the children play and develop. These are entered into their 'celebration of achievement' files and information regarding children's interests is used to inform the types of activities provided. However, staff do not consistently identify children's next steps of learning or use this information to influence the activities provided or how these are delivered to ensure that children's individual learning is effectively promoted.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff working with pre-school children have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They work well as a team,

respecting each others areas of interest, for example enjoyment of the outdoors, and use these individual skills and interests to benefit the children's learning. Key staff are skilled in naturally challenging children's thinking during spontaneous and planned activities. For example, they ask children how many legs a snake has or pretend not to know the colours of toys so that children can demonstrate what they know. This challenges their thinking and promotes learning. Plans take account of children's interests and next steps of learning and cover the six areas of learning. This ensures that there is a balance of activities and that activities are meaningful to the children. However, plans do not show how activities can be adapted and delivered to children of different ages and abilities. As a result, some staff miss opportunities to challenge children in their individual learning. Regular observations are made on the children and transferred to their Records of Achievement files. Progress towards the early learning goals is monitored. However, this is not a clear system and as such is not effective in informing parents or other users of the progress being made. Staff interact well with the children and promote lots of discussion opportunities. Activities are well organised and staff make good use of props, such as pictures from the internet, to support activities. This enhances children's understanding. Good behaviour is promoted by staff who encourage children to be considerate towards each other and share resources. A 'Behaviour Rainbow' enables children to move their 'aeroplane' over the rainbow towards the reward at the end when they display good behaviour. This boosts self-esteem and encourages positive behaviour. Sessions are organised well with activities set out in the main room and messy play room. This gives children lots of space to enjoy the many activities on offer. Good use is made of the outdoor area and a wide variety of activities are offered every day in the outdoor environment or in the large outdoor playhouse.

Children are able to sit attentively as they watch a short video or listen for their names as the register is called. Children new to the nursery display confidence as they show an interest in activities such as painting and are keen to take part. Children exclaim 'Yeh, I've done it' as they proudly show staff their completed jigsaw puzzle. They work well together constructing road tracks for their vehicles or tidying up before going outside to play. They are developing strong friendships and make it clear which friends they wish to sit next to at mealtimes. Children are developing some independence as they select their own resources and choose which activities they wish to do. However, the organisation of meal times and snack times does not make use of opportunities to further promote children's independence and sense of responsibility. For example, staff set the table and serve children's first course, puddings and snacks.

Children are developing their competencies well across the four aspects of communication, speaking and listening, reading and writing. Children ask each other questions such as 'What's that?' to further their own learning and understanding. They organise their thoughts and use speech to confidently express their ideas. They experiment with difficult vocabulary such as 'abracadabra'. They are beginning to understand about linking sounds to letters, for example as they try to guess what pudding begins with the letter 'j'. Children are beginning to recognise familiar words such as their names and the written names of some resources labelled on their boxes or trays. They enjoy familiar stories such as 'Going on a bear hunt' and are able to recite the repeated refrains. Children have lots of opportunities to mark-make, for example on sticky notelets as they pretend to write out parking tickets for staff and visitors, or 'write' about their swimming and diving experiences of the weekend.

Children use number language as they play, talking about the number of tickets they need to give to the driver and how many legs toy animals have. They are learning early calculation skills as they compare groups of cubes and work out the total number they have. They are exploring the properties of shapes such as triangles as they discuss its three sides whilst painting. Children

are learning about height and weight comparisons as they measure their sunflowers with their hands and weigh out cubes with scales.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. For example, they name a spider in the garden 'Ninkeydink' and explore why, when it falls from their hand, it is still seemingly attached. They design and create, attaching different materials such as paper and sticky tape to make their own creations. Children are beginning to gain an understanding about information technology through the use of suitable programmes on a laptop and other electronic toys. They are gaining an understanding of time and are able to put situations into context as they explain that their baby is 'in mummy's tummy until after Santa Claus has been'. A wide variety of festivals and multicultural events are celebrated which ensures that children are developing an appreciation of different cultures and faiths.

Children are able to be creative, expressing their own ideas and thoughts through art, music and imaginative play. They have opportunities to explore texture and form, for example as they play with custard and jelly mix, describing what they feel. A range of music is provided to broaden children's appreciation of different styles. They use their senses and imaginations to create their own work from freely accessible tools and materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Teams of staff working with children in each room are consistent and the key-worker system which ensures that staff know the children well. This enables them to meet their individual needs. Information is gathered at the beginning of their time at nursery to ensure that their needs and parents' wishes are respected. Many staff speak different languages and are on hand to communicate with parents which ensures that important information can be shared in order to benefit the care given to the children. Children are familiar and comfortable with nursery routines which promotes their confidence and sense of security. Staff ensure that all children get turns when, for example, opening flaps in the book. They give consideration to the organisation of activities to ensure that all children benefit. For example, key activities such as messy play are offered both during morning and afternoon sessions so that all children have opportunities to enjoy these experiences, whenever they attend nursery. Children celebrate a wide variety of festivals and religious events within the nursery which ensures that they are developing an awareness of their own and others cultures and traditions. Many resources used by children reflect diversity and positive images are displayed throughout the nursery. This ensures that they receive consistent messages with regard to differences and similarities in people.

Although there are currently no children attending who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, staff demonstrate an awareness and positivity about strategies to ensure that inclusion for all children is promoted. They are willing to work with parents and outside agencies to consider how children's needs can be met and some staff have prior experience in this area. Children behave well at the nursery. This is in response to a stimulating environment where staff spend time talking to them and listening to their views and opinions. Children are encouraged to use manners, to respect one another and to conduct themselves appropriately when, for example, they are moving from their rooms to the bathroom or outdoor area. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents comment that they are very happy with the care offered and find staff very approachable and willing to help and advise, particularly at developmentally difficult times for their children such as during temper tantrum stages. Staff make time to speak to parents about their child's day informally at the beginning or end of the day and parents of younger children also receive written information. The nursery have just had their first parents evening and written progress report to formally share with parents about their children's progress. Parents are made aware of the activities on offer at the nursery through regular newsletters and the many information notice boards. The setting has a good understanding of complaints procedures and a log of complaints is available for parents to see upon request. Posters depicting Ofsted's contact number are displayed in numerous places so that parents are able to make contact if they are unhappy with how a complaint has been dealt with. Parents are frequently invited to contribute their feedback about the setting via a suggestion box or questionnaires. This ensures that their views are listened to and that action can be taken to ensure the provision meets their needs and wishes.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive good amounts of information about the Foundation Stage to ensure that they are well informed of the provision of education at the nursery. Written progress reports and parents evenings have just been introduced to enable staff to formally share information about children's progress with parents. Parents are welcome to visit the nursery at any time and some become involved in their children's learning by sharing their skills and job roles during organised visits to the nursery. The children's Records of Achievement files are available to be viewed by parents at any time and are shared at parents evenings. Some parents speak to staff about their own observations of what their children know and can do. However, there is not a clear system for encouraging this from all parents or recording this information so that it can be used when planning children's next steps of learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Robust vetting procedures are in place to ensure that all staff working with the children are suitable to do so and a generally regular system of staff appraisals ensure that staff suitability is monitored on a continuous basis. The nursery has a high proportion of Level 3 qualified staff and the younger children specifically, are cared for in very small groups with high ratios maintained. This ensures that children receive good levels of adult attention and support. Cover is provided over the lunchtime periods and periods of staff sickness or annual leave to ensure that children continue to receive good levels of care. The organisation of the day, resources and the environment promotes positive outcomes for children with further consideration required to the safety of the wall heaters when they are used during certain months of the year.

All required records and documentation are in place, well organised and stored confidentially. A good range of policies are in place, shared with parents and underpin the good level of care offered at the nursery. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The nursery owner is committed towards ensuring the best possible outcomes for all children attending the nursery. She is passionate about the care and education provided and about moving the nursery forwards. Both herself and the manager have good systems in place for monitoring the nursery education provision and working with the local authority to make any further changes that benefit the

children's learning. They are committed to staff training and respectful of staff members individual knowledge and expertise in their particular areas. As a result, staff work well together as a team and are enthusiastic in their approach.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that room leaders meet the qualification requirements and that qualified staff are deployed effectively within the setting. This has now been achieved; all room leaders either hold or are working towards a further Level 3 qualification. Qualified staff are deployed effectively throughout the nursery which ensures that they receive good levels of care. The provider was also asked to reduce the spread of germs with regard to children's drinking cups and bottles. These are now all clearly labelled and stored appropriately to promote good hygiene.

At a monitoring visit, two recommendations were raised to promote good practice. These related to having sufficient staff remaining on the premises over the lunch time period to ensure the safety of children in the event of an emergency and ensuring that Ofsted is re-informed of the change to the person in charge. Sufficient cover is provided over the lunchtime period to ensure that ratios are maintained at all times. This promotes the safety of all children. Ofsted are now aware of the change of manager and have conducted all relevant checks to ensure their suitability for the position held.

This is the nursery's first inspection for nursery education so no previous recommendations have been raised.

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.

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):

- minimise the risks to children in the Aqua and Pre-school rooms, this relates to the safety of the wall heaters

- use information from observations to detail children's individual next steps of learning and use these to influence the activities provided.

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):

- consider the organisation of meal times and snack times and how these routine activities can be used to further promote children's independence and sense of responsibility
- show how activities can be adapted and delivered to children of different ages and abilities so that opportunities to effectively support and challenge children's learning are not missed. Implement a clear system for demonstrating the progress children are making towards the early learning goals
- develop on-going opportunities for parents to share their own knowledge and observations about what their children know and can do so that this information can be used effectively by staff when planning children's next steps of learning.

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