

Cottage Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY355293
Inspection date	07 July 2008
Inspector	Michele Anne Villiers
Setting Address	Smithy Cottage, Cuckoo Lane, LIVERPOOL, L25 3PL
Telephone number	01514289419
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Registered person	Cottage Day Nursery 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?

The Cottage Day Nursery was registered under new management in 2007. It is privately run and operates from four rooms in a Grade II listed building in Woolton, Liverpool. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 throughout the year.

There are currently 56 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 members of staff to work directly with the children. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Staff receive support from Sure Start Services of Liverpool Children's Services and an early years teacher advisor. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally protected from cross infection and their health promoted as staff take satisfactory steps to maintain a hygienic environment. Tables and surfaces are cleaned and staff wear protective clothing when changing nappies. Most staff are trained in first aid, and follow appropriate health and safety policies and procedures. Medication is administered with parental consent. However, records do not clearly state the time the medication was last administered at home, or explain the reason for the medication. Children learn about basic personal hygiene through the daily routine, such as regular hand washing.

A good balance of nutritional food is provided throughout the day, and children learn about healthy choices. They enjoy home made meals, such as savoury minced meat with vegetables, and have snacks of sandwiches and sliced fruit. The written menu includes different cultural dishes, and the children's individual dietary requirements are met. Fresh drinking water is made freely available, and juice is also offered at meal times.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise. Outdoor play is incorporated into the routine and children access a suitable range of wheeled toys and climbing apparatus to promote their stamina, strength, coordination and balance. Indoors, children develop spatial awareness as they freely move around, and enjoy music and movement. Babies and toddlers have a good amount of space in which to learn to crawl and walk, gaining body control. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for sleep and relaxation.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure environment. Visitors are closely monitored, and surveillance cameras operate at the entrance to the premises and in the playrooms. The environment is welcoming and children access a range of suitable toys and resources. Safety measures are in place and staff conduct regular risk assessments to identify any potential hazards and minimise accidents.

Children learn about safety as staff remind them to be careful when running around and playing outside. Safety measures are put in place on outings to help protect children should they become lost. For example, they wear badges and t-shirts displaying the nursery name. Children also become aware of people who help us when dressing up as fire fighters, police, doctors and nurses.

Staff have a suitable understanding of child protection and follow written guidelines on safeguarding children. There is a designated staff member. However, they have not accessed recent training in order to keep fully up to date on current child protection issues. Sleeping babies and young children are regularly monitored by staff and there is a surveillance monitor with a sound system in the separate sleeping room.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle to activities and relate well to staff. Babies and young children play with a variety of sensory and interactive toys. They enjoy playing in the ball pool, and become competent learners as they build using different size blocks, and sort shapes for the posting box. Children explore a variety of media, such as sand, paint, play dough and water. They enjoy art and craft activities and have several opportunities to mark-make and draw.

Staff sit with babies and young children to motivate their interests. They foster the children's communication skills using repetitive language, voice intonation and facial expressions. Babies copy and imitate sounds. Young children enjoy looking at books and singing simple songs. However, sometimes children sit for long periods during adult directed activities, such as group singing and story time. This results in children becoming bored and fractious. Staff use planning to provide different activities and have a flexible daily routine. They use observation to monitor the children's progress and development, and record findings using the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children are making suitable progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan activities and topical themes based on the children's interests. The playroom is suitably arranged into specific areas for play. However, some areas are not well organised. The role play area is not creatively organised with toys and resources, resulting in children showing little interest. During free play children may choose from the activities made available to them. However, these are sometimes limited and toys are not always easily accessible to fully promote the children's independence.

Staff are enthusiastic in their approach and support the children well during play. They use good questioning to promote the children's communication and language skills. Children are encouraged to use appropriate language to express themselves and they talk about past and future events during group discussion. Children learn to recognise their written names, and become familiar with the alphabet. They access a good range of books for enjoyment and reference. Throughout play and during practical activities children learn to count, calculate and recognise written numerals. Older children are challenged as they discuss how many chairs are needed for the number of children attending at lunch time. They use their fingers to represent their age and then point to the corresponding number on the 'washing line'.

Children become aware of their environment and learn about plants and living things. Outside they feed the birds, and use magnifying glasses to examine bugs and 'mini beasts'. They take photographs, and staff use supporting materials, such as picture books to help reinforce the children's learning and understanding. During art and craft, children use their imagination to paint pictures of ladybirds, mixing the paint, exploring colour and using different size paint brushes. Staff use observation to monitor and record the children's progress, and use the information for the future planning of activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a sense of belonging and the staff key-worker system helps to meet their individual needs. Children learn about diversity and staff promote equality of opportunity.

Children celebrate different cultural festivals and access a wide range of multi-cultural toys and resources that reflect positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. The pre-school children have a particularly good range of books on diversity, such as 'All kinds of beliefs', 'All kinds of homes', 'Dealing with racism', and 'Children from around the world'.

Children learn suitable social skills and are generally well behaved, although they sometimes become disruptive when sitting for long periods during adult directed activities. Children learn to share, take turns and be kind to one another. Staff use constant praise and encouragement to reinforce the children's good behaviour. Older, more able children are given the role of responsibility, such as helping to pour drinks and set tables for lunch, fostering their confidence and self-esteem. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are welcomed into the nursery at any time and staff provide time to informally chat and share information. A good range of written information is displayed in the entrance, and on the notice board in the children's cloakroom area. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date on current issues and there is a suggestion box for parents to contribute their views and ideas. The partnership with the parents of educationally funded children is satisfactory. There is a home link system in place for the sharing of information about specific activities and the Foundation Stage learning programme. Parents may access their child's progress reports at any time, and informally meet with staff on request. However, there is not a formalised system in place to help ensure that all parents have adequate opportunities to meet with key workers.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are settled and suitably cared for by qualified staff who have specific roles of responsibility. Regular staff meetings identify any training needs, and new staff receive appropriate induction training. Satisfactory minimum staffing ratios are maintained and suitable contingency arrangements cover staff absence, this includes the use of agency staff. Regulatory documentation and policies and procedures are in place, although the operational plan is not being effectively used as a working document. It does not include updated information about staffing, their training, deployment or information about changes to the provision. There is a daily register to identify the number of children attending. Parents are asked to sign children in and out with accurate arrival and departure times. However, many parents forget to sign in. This consequently results in staff not having an accurate arrival and departure time to identify the number of children attending at any one time.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager demonstrates a keen commitment to improving her own knowledge and skills. She has accessed several training courses in order to keep up to date with current issues and further enhance the care for children. The manager monitors the care and education provided through observation and scrutiny of activity plans. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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.

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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):

- update medical records to include the reason why medication is being given and the time the last dose was administered
- ensure the designated staff member who is responsible for child protection issues keeps up to date on training in safeguarding children
- reduce the length of time children sit for adult directed activities, when linked to meal times, in order to minimise children becoming bored and fractious
- further develop the operational plan and use as a working document
- ensure the daily register clearly identifies the arrival and departure times of all children.

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):

- provide opportunities for parents to formally meet with key workers in order to discuss and contribute to their children's progress and developmental records
- create a more stimulating role play area, and allow children a greater choice of play opportunities during free play.

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