

Carlowen Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY355980
Inspection date	19 May 2008
Inspector	Julie Wright
Setting Address	Unit 4, The Square, Grampound Road, Truro, Cornwall, TR2 4DS
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Registered person	Sonya Macintosh
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?

Carlowen Day Nursery opened in 2000 and was registered to the current provider in 2007. It operates from a detached, converted, two storey building. It is situated in the village of Grampound Road, near St. Austell, in Cornwall. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll, of whom 14 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 until 17:30, for 50 weeks of the year. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. They can be taken to and from the local school by nursery staff.

The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties/disabilities. The nursery employs six members of staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from the risk of illness and infection through the implementation of a clear sickness policy. Staff promote good hygiene practice and children become familiar with the routines. They develop competence in their personal care and understand when to wash their hands. They also see simple signs and pictures in the bathroom which help to remind them. Children have individual sheets and flannels, which is hygienic and prevents risk of cross-infection. Accident and medication details are clearly maintained and all staff have a current first aid qualification.

Children's individual dietary requirements are met well in the setting. Parents provide milk formula for babies and discuss weaning arrangements with staff. Healthy, nutritious meals are available and menus are displayed. Mealtimes are sociable and provide children with some opportunities to develop independent skills, although these are not consistent. For instance, not all children are encouraged to pour drinks and help themselves to food. Children learn about food at mealtimes and during activities. They examine and talk about healthy fruit and vegetables, experiencing a variety of tastes and textures. Children learn how things grow and begin to understand that produce comes from different countries.

Children play outside on a regular basis and benefit from the physical play opportunities. They also enjoy trips to the local park where they have the opportunity to use large play apparatus. Staff provide outdoor resources which promote children's coordination. For example, children manoeuvre themselves around on wheeled toys, or play ball games together. Children have enthusiasm for physical exercise and cooperate well during action games. They show interest in a familiar character and begin to understand that exercise is good for their health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a secure and caring environment. Staff provide a warm welcome and children separate easily from carers. Children show a clear sense of belonging and immediately engage in their play. They are familiar with the setting and move around with confidence. Babies and toddlers have plenty of space as they become more mobile and begin to explore their surroundings. Premises are maintained in a suitable condition and staff plan to develop the outdoor play area for children. Resources are stored appropriately, made accessible and rotated to promote interest.

Staff undertake routine risk assessments to ensure safety for children. They set suitable boundaries and expectations of behaviour, which promote safety. For example, they remind children to be careful as they move around. Hazards are minimised to prevent accidents and sleeping children are checked frequently. Staff supervise children well and take them safely up and down stairs. Children learn about safety when they practise the fire drill and also during outings. For instance, they know that they must hold hands and learn to cross the road carefully.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a clear understanding of the procedures to protect children. They attend relevant training to ensure that their knowledge and awareness is up to date. Parents are informed of the procedures and the responsibilities to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in two groups, the babies and toddlers upstairs and children over the age of two years are downstairs. Staff plan a wide range of activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. This means that children are set age-appropriate challenges, which promote all areas of learning and development. Children have warm, secure relationships with staff and develop social skills in the setting. They also benefit from good support and attention to their individual needs. The daily routines provide a balance of structured activities and free play for children. The youngest children are nurtured and respond positively to familiar staff, such as a key worker. They enjoy a good variety of play experiences and interesting materials. For example, staff provide treasure baskets with a variety of textures in everyday resources. Children squelch 'gloop' with their fingers, made from soap flakes or cornflour. They make marks as they swirl finger paints and shaving foam on a table.

A breakfast and after school club are available to children of school age. They are familiar with the setting and staff. School children have a choice of age-appropriate activities, including outdoor play. They can be taken to and from school by staff by prior arrangement. Children show interest in their activities and approach staff with confidence. They understand the routines and respond with enthusiasm to instructions. For instance, children gather together quickly as a group for singing or circle time. Staff are sensitive to children's individual preferences and respond accordingly. For example, when a younger child wants to play alone, rather than joining the larger group. All children take part in a variety of creative play activities, although these tend to be adult-led and prescribed. This limits children's individual creativity and produces a uniform result.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Activities are carefully planned to link with the early learning goals, which effectively promotes children's development. Staff adapt activities to suit individual learning within the group. For instance, they allow younger children to examine and explore materials, whilst asking questions which prompt challenge for older or more able children. Staff make observations during activities and use these to plan for children's next steps. They provide opportunities throughout the sessions which consolidate children's learning. For example, resources, activities, songs and stories link to a current theme or topic.

Children form positive relationships and play happily together. They are confident communicators, willingly expressing their thoughts and ideas. They make interesting observations as they play and show keen interest in the resources. Children listen carefully and concentrate well, they have a good understanding of taking turns and respecting others. For example, they listen to each other at circle time as they recall and share recent experiences. They show care and concern when they role play, for instance, when playing with the dolls.

Children begin to understand that print has meaning and learn to recognise familiar signs and letters. They identify their own place mats at the table and their named coat pegs. They have access to writing materials in planned activities and in free play. For instance, they use a diary, notepad and pencils in role play and write their names on their pictures. The 'letter of the week' prompts repetition, which helps children to remember and learn. They listen well as staff read to them and also respond positively during interactive stories. Children have fun as they follow the process of writing a letter and then going to the post box.

Children use mathematical language and develop understanding of number in many activities. They measure, compare and calculate in everyday activities. For example, children consider differing heights on the sunflower wall chart. They draw an outline of their foot, measure the length with cubes and then write the corresponding number. In the role play area children use money and count as they pretend to pay for items. Capacity is considered as they fill and pour from containers in sand and water play.

Children develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff provide a good range of activities to promote children's interest. For example, children learn about the natural world as they plant flowers and vegetables. They become aware of life-cycles as they see tadpoles become frogs, or learn about caterpillars and butterflies. Children enjoy talking about their pets, which on occasion are brought to nursery as a learning opportunity. For example, children enjoy seeing and stroking young rabbits. They talk about birds as they recall a recent activity, which is to be further extended with a visitor from a local sanctuary. Children investigate and explore a good variety of sensory play materials. They manipulate malleable materials, such as, kneading dough to make bread rolls. Children take interest in technological equipment and show a good understanding of how things work. They are inquisitive and ask questions as they consider cause and effect. Children develop awareness of the wider world through a variety of planned activities and events. They become aware of similarities and difference in people and places.

Children develop physical skills and coordination in the setting. Staff plan a variety of activities for indoor and outdoor play. Children also enjoy spontaneous opportunities, such as singing action rhymes in music and movement. They use a variety of tools and equipment which promote the development of fine motor skills. For instance, children handle writing materials with developing control and snip with scissors.

Children enjoy the role play area which is often linked to a topic. For instance, children play imaginatively in the 'garden centre', the 'vets' or the 'home corner'. They show their understanding of its purpose and use the resources constructively. Children are enthusiastic as they name and play musical instruments. They understand how to make a loud or soft sound, and when to start and stop playing. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capability and start points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well in the setting. Staff are familiar with children's personalities and preferences and clearly provide for personal requirements. They implement effective policies which promote equal opportunities and inclusion. Staff seek key words for children who speak English as an additional language. They have recently introduced simple sign language, for example, children are familiar with signs for drinks and biscuits. Resources and activities reflect positive images of diversity, which help children to develop positive attitudes. Staff work closely with parents and other agencies as required, in order to meet children's specific needs.

Children are very well behaved, cooperative and constructive in their activities. They understand and follow instructions during the daily routines. For instance, children respond promptly at 'tidy-up time' and form a line when asked. They organise themselves into a group, ready to play a game or do an activity. Staff act as good role models, reminding children about manners and encouraging respect. Children are pleased help with simple tasks and develop self-esteem.

They are confident, sociable and form warm relationships in the nursery. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Effective systems are in place which promote positive working relationships. For example, younger children have a journal in which staff record details of activities and routines. Regular discussions ensure that staff provide consistent care and respond to individual requirements. Parents provide initial information to inform staff of the children's development at the start of the placement. Staff use this to plan for individual progress and parents are aware that staff keep developmental records. However, parents do not have the opportunity to contribute to these. Parents are informed by newsletter of forthcoming activities and events. Staff provide suggestions on how to extend these in the home, which involves parents in children's learning. They seek parent's views on the provision through a questionnaire and respond to comments or ideas. Parents provide positive feedback and value the care given in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. Staff provide consistent routines and interesting activities for children. They demonstrate a good understanding of children's care, learning and development. Staff monitor and evaluate their provision at meetings and in general discussions. For instance, at the end of the day they talk about the effectiveness of activities, then suggest suitable adjustments to the benefit of the children. Staff appraisals identify training needs and promote continuous development.

Children are happy, well cared for and stimulated in the nursery. The nursery operates a suitable key worker system and staff work well together. Vetting and recruitment procedures are in place, however, these are not securely robust to fully ensure the health suitability of staff. Records and documentation are clearly organised and maintained in good order. Comprehensive policies and procedures are available to parents, which effectively contribute to the care, safety and welfare of children. 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- develop the vetting and recruitment procedures to fully ensure the health suitability of staff
- improve the opportunities to promote children's individual and spontaneous creativity (also applies to 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):

- develop opportunities which encourage parents to contribute to the children's on-going records of assessment and development.

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