

St Nicholas Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY364811
Inspection date	07 July 2008
Inspector	Angela Hufton
Setting Address	St. Nicholas Day Nursery, Runcorn Road, LINCOLN, LN6 3QP
Telephone number	01522 812 470
E-mail	
Registered person	Lifeline Family Care 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?

St Nicholas Day Nursery opened in August 2003 and re-registered in 2007 as a limited company. The nursery operates from purpose built premises on a leisure industry estate in North Hykeham, Lincolnshire. There are four main play rooms, a sensory room, an information technology suite, a children's working kitchen and a parent and baby room. There are two adjoining secure outdoor play areas, part of which are covered. The nursery serves the local area and beyond. The nursery offers full day care for children from birth to five years and occasional holiday care for school-age children. It is registered to care for 86 children at any one time. There are currently 92 children on roll, all aged under five years. Of these, 26 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is open all year round from 07:30 until 18:00 except for a week at Christmas and public holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are 32 staff working with the children regularly. Of these 23 have an appropriate qualification and six are working towards an early years qualification. The owner has a teaching qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority. It is affiliated to the National Day Nurseries Association and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and well-maintained environment. They are actively and consistently learning about the importance of good hygiene practices through well-established daily routines. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and when returning from outdoor play. Children have access to a good range of activities which effectively contribute to their health and well-being. They have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through regular access to both indoor and outdoor activities where they are encouraged and supported to develop new skills. For example, as children skilfully jump through hoops, learn to pedal bikes and throw and catch balls. Children enjoy the fresh air as they have daily access to the outdoor play environment. A recent favourite being camping and playing in tents.

Children enjoy a nutritional diet which is prepared on the premises using fresh ingredients. Fresh fruit and vegetables are offered on a daily basis, for example, pitta bread with various dips followed by grapes. Children have a good awareness of healthy eating as they regularly engage in topic work and have meaningful discussions with the staff. Children access drinks independently, so they do not become thirsty and bowls of fresh fruit are provided for children to select independently. Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children calmly and comfortably fall asleep as they feel safe and secure in their surroundings.

Children's health and dietary needs are very well met at all times because staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. For example, children's individual requirements are discussed fully with parents on admission, recorded and shared with all staff. Children's dietary requirements are also shared with the cook who ensures that all children's dietary needs are met at all times. Children's accident, medication and emergency consent forms are all in place and maintained. On occasion the accident and medication records are not sufficiently explicit to fully ensure all aspects of children's on-going health needs. However, parents are in regular communication with staff to ensure their child's individual needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised, secure and safe environment. For example, visitors to the nursery are required to formally identify themselves, sign the visitors book and are accompanied at all times whilst in the setting. Children are kept suitably safe as identified hazards are minimised through the completion of risk assessments. Whilst the current risk assessments do not fully identify all potential hazards, for example, sand near the toilet entrance because of the proximity of the sand tray, immediate action is taken to sweep up the sand to minimise the risk to children.

Children benefit from very experienced and caring staff, who are very well informed of the group's health and safety procedures, for example, children engage in regular fire drills and learn about other aspects of safety through topic work and gentle explanations from staff such as why they should sit carefully on their chairs and not lean back in case they fall.

Children have access to good quality equipment and resources which are appropriate to their developmental needs and which are checked daily to ensure they are safe for the children to use. Children are encouraged to access the well-organised resources which are clearly labelled and stored in child-height furniture. Children learn about safe practices whilst using equipment, for example, staff talk to the children and gently remind children to sit down whilst using scissors.

Children are safeguarded through the setting having robust child protection procedures in place and because, staff are competent and aware of their roles and responsibilities whilst protecting children in their care. The setting have a designated child protection co-ordinator who would follow through any issues of concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, confident and actively enjoy their time in this welcoming setting. They have very good access to toys, equipment and resources which are independently accessed by all age-ranges of children throughout the nursery. Children are able to build on knowledge and skills already acquired as staff continually assess their achievements and interest and respond positively to their individual learning needs. However, these observations and assessments are not consistently recorded to fully ensure each child's progress is maximised. Babies and young children benefit from the staff's knowledge and understanding of the "Birth to three matters" framework and the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Babies needs are skilfully met by staff who are fully aware of their individual needs. They receive positive support from experienced staff who spend time holding, talking and playing with them. Babies early communication skills are developed as they engage with staff who respond to their non-verbal gestures and verbal sounds during play. They have very good opportunities to develop their senses as they explore a variety of natural and man-made objects. Babies early physical development is supported as they begin to roll, crawl, stand and take their first steps.

Children's personal and social development is very good throughout the setting, all children enjoy positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children become engrossed in a wide range of self-selected activities which they enjoy enormously. Their behaviour is very good, they are actively and consistently praised by staff for their effort and achievements, consequently, their self-esteem is carefully fostered.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They speak confidently and share their personal experiences within the group. Children listen carefully to each other, they take turns and show care and concern for others. They are worried as they see their friend trying to put Wellingtons on that are too small and find them another pair so they can continue in their camping game. They express their feelings and manage their self-care needs effectively. Older children confidently put on their hats and shoes before going outdoors, whilst younger children wash their hands with soap and water before snacks.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching effectively promotes children's learning towards the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The staff are caring, patient and supportive of the children; they have high regard for the children and know them well. The staff demonstrate a very high level of commitment to their work and provide good role models

for the children. The staff manage children's behaviour sensitively and consistently; they encourage children's good behaviour through regular praise and encouragement, consequently, the children's behaviour is very good. The setting ensures planning is based on regular observations and assessments of children's interests and achievements. They are continuing to develop the range of observations and the use of evaluation to clearly identify each child's next steps. The interaction between the staff and children is very good; adults encourage children's thinking, questioning and exploration.

All children have equal opportunities for learning; staff ensure that both full and part-time children are able to access the full range of activities and special project work. Children make good progress as a result of the wide range of stimulating activities and resources that are made available to them, and, through the staff's constructive questions which encourage children to express their feelings and develop their ideas and interests. Children have good opportunities to use their own initiative and develop their independence whilst engaged in both indoor and outdoor activities. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are very well supported in the group.

The well-organised accommodation provides a stimulating learning environment in which children are able to access the resources independently. Children's work is valued and attractively displayed on boards within the pre-school room. Children are enthusiastic, confident and settle quickly into the group, their relationships with adults and their peers are excellent. All children learn about their own and other cultures as they celebrate festivals throughout the year or take part in activities such as making rangoli patterns. They express their feelings and manage their self-care needs effectively. Children engage easily in conversation, whilst engaged in activities children participate enthusiastically, they listen carefully to adults and to each other. They are competent at naming colours or explaining to their key worker they are painting a spider man as they use water and brushes on the wall outside. Children learn how print carries meaning as they are able to identify their labelled work on displays. More able children are able to write recognisable letters on their own work as they freely access the well-resourced writing table. Children have regular access to a wide range of books; many of them show a keen interest in books and use them independently, carefully turning the pages and discussing the illustrations with each other and staff.

Children are encouraged to use number as part of every day routine; for example, children count how many plates are needed at snack time and how many children were in the line to go outdoors. The children use mathematical language effectively whilst engaged in activities and are familiar with words to describe size, position, shape and quantity. They confidently name shapes such as square, triangle, circle and rectangle and have opportunities to sort, match and compare objects in a variety of contexts. Children enjoy counting as part of action rhymes.

Children have good access to a range of toys, resources and planned activities which promote their awareness of diversity, for example, as they enjoy celebrating different cultural festivals throughout the year. Children freely access a good selection of programmable toys and technical equipment which they use competently and with increasing skill. Children learn about their natural environment and develop an understanding of living things, as they talk about the weather changes, investigate mini-beasts and recognise a dragon fly.

Children show good control and coordination as they move confidently and safely around both the indoor and outdoor areas. They children competently use a wide range of small equipment including scissors, paintbrushes, chalk sticks and cutters. Children develop an awareness of healthy eating through topic work and regular discussion with adults and their peers; for

example, whilst engaged in snack time children talked about their likes and dislikes of various foods, and staff explain why certain foods are healthier than others. Children have daily opportunities to paint, draw and make collages using a suitable range of media including chalk, felt pens, pencils, fabric and malleable materials. They use their imagination in activities such as painting, music and movement and various role-play situations. This is enhanced through project work and involvement in regular drama sessions. Children explore sound effectively through playing a range of musical instruments, listening to a variety of musical sounds and initiating singing sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are fully included in all activities and their differences are acknowledged and valued. They access a range of activities, toys and resources which actively raise their awareness of diversity and promote their understanding of others. For example, through investigating African music. Children's understanding is further promoted as they complete topic work on Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas, and through positive discussions with the staff. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good. They are fully aware of the nursery's boundaries and expectations for good behaviour. Children learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Their understanding of right and wrong is further developed as they respond to gentle reminders from staff, to care for their environment, resources and each other.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is satisfactory. The staff welcome informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of each day; they share information about the children's progress verbally on a regular basis, and parents are able to view their child's development file at any time. Newsletters help to keep parents informed about the pre-school activities, however, at present there are less opportunities for parents to be as actively involved in contributing to their child's assessments. This does not ensure each child's learning is maximised.

Parents and carers of all children have access to good quality information regarding the group, including a prospectus and policies and procedures, however there is less detailed information available regarding the funded educational provision. All children's individual care and educational needs are fully discussed with the parents before the child starts at the nursery, enabling staff to be fully aware of individual care needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation and focused leadership and management of the nursery. Staff are knowledgeable, they fully understand the setting's policies and procedures and ensure children are protected, kept safe and that children's individual needs are supported effectively.

The premises are welcoming with good quality displays, the environment is well organised and effectively maximises children's learning and development. Children benefit from qualified and skilled staff, who follow an effective induction programme and who are committed to on-going training and development. Staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their own practice, through regular staff meetings and yearly appraisals. All legally required documentation is in

place and most contain good levels of detail. The registration system is not currently sufficiently robust as required in regulations.

Leadership and management of early education is satisfactory. The staff work well as a team, they are deployed effectively and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss daily issues. The manager and staff work effectively with the local authority early years team. Recent changes in the pre-school room are beginning to show in the quality of the teaching and learning. These improvements have yet to be fully assessed to identify the setting's strengths and weaknesses, such as in the ways parents can contribute to their child's learning. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant training courses and in-house development workshops. Managers are fully committed to developing the early education provision.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of 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 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):

- develop the use of observations and assessments to identify each child's current achievements and ensure these are evaluated effectively and used to plan for their next steps in learning
- continue to develop policies, procedures and record keeping to promote the welfare and care of children with particular regard to accident and medication records, risk assessments and registers.

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 information provided to parents and extend the ways in which parents are involved and can contribute to their child's assessments and next steps in learning
- continue to develop the leadership and management of nursery education to ensure strengths and weaknesses are fully identified and any action needed is taken to improve the provision for each child.

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