

Quackers Kids Nursery @ Ridgehill

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY365144 |
| Inspection date | 26 June 2008 |
| Inspector | Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher |
| Setting Address | Ridgehill Children's Centre, School Crescent, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 1EA |
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| Registered person | Quackers Kids 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 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?

Quackers Kids Nursery at Ridgehill Children's Centre is a limited company and was registered in 2008. It operates from the first floor of the Ridgehill Children's Centre in the Stalybridge area of Cheshire. Children are cared for in a large open area which is divided to meet children's developmental needs. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00, all year round, with the exception of a week over the Christmas period and all statutory bank holidays. There are currently 33 children aged from eight months to four years on roll. Of these, 11 children are in receipt of the nursery education grant. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports several children who speak English as an additional language.

The manager has a Bachelor of Arts in Early Years and has eight staff who work directly with the children on either a full or part time basis. Of these, the majority hold appropriate early years qualifications. A caretaker and a cleaner are also employed.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean premises by staff who effectively follow procedures and practices which enable their nutritional, physical and health needs to be met. Discussion, topics and routines are helping children develop good awareness of personal care. For example, children independently access the well placed sinks in the play areas, competently dispensing soap and washing under running water. Most know to wash before handling foods or after messy play. The older children take themselves off to the toilets and follow hygienic routines consistently. Staff implement good nappy changing routines. Attention to detail in the recording of accidents sustained or medication administered protects children's well-being. The effective use of the sickness and exclusion policy if children become poorly limits the spread of infection and protects the other children from illness.

Staff foster children's growth and development through the provision of healthy, freshly prepared, nutritious meals and snacks. Good attention is given to children's individual dietary requirements which are discussed with parents and recorded clearly on children's records. Meal times are a relaxed, social occasions where children learn to feed themselves independently, enjoy healthy options and make choices. For example, children choose what they will drink or if they want some more pear or popcorn. Older children develop their pouring skills as they carefully fill their cups.

Children develop and test their physical control on a daily basis. Staff know children well as individuals and this encourages children to confidently try new skills, ask for help and set their own limits within a supportive environment. For example, children manoeuvre wheeled vehicles by different means and in different directions, they balance along narrow bricks and across the tops of tyres and challenge their own climbing skills on steps, frames and ropes. Babies crawl and explore on the decked area and can pull themselves up against the tree trunks and sturdy walking toys. Children know how to protect themselves from the elements so that they can play outdoors. They put on wellington boots and select umbrellas when play is interrupted by rain.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into a light and airy environment which is maintained to an optimum temperature to ensure their comfort. Ample space enables the children to move freely and explore in safety. The organisation and arrangement of the environment effectively meets the needs of the children. The low level wooden divider enables babies to safely crawl and play but creates opportunities for them to socialise with the older children. They can see and hear them at play thus providing the younger children with role models and easing transitions between groups. Well planned and resourced activity areas stimulate children's interest in learning.

The nursery is very well equipped to promote all areas of children's learning and development. Resources are of high quality and include many made from natural materials. The ease with which children can locate, select and transport resources impacts positively on their motivation and ability to initiate and extend their own play in safety.

Staff give priority to children's safety. Thorough risk assessments monitor the safety of the premises, resources and equipment and children's safety on trips off the premises. Fire precautions are in place including evacuation plans. However, these have not yet been practised with children or linked into the risk assessment procedures. Children are learning to take responsibility for their own safety. For example, they know that if it is wet they must walk across the first level of decking by using the rubber stepping stones so that they will not slip and hurt themselves. They handle scissors, knives and forks competently and safely.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by vetted staff who are skilful, knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of safeguarding children issues and the procedures to follow in the event of concerns about a child. There is a well written policy, which is shared with parents and a designated person available to liaise with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Ofsted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel safe, secure and contented in the setting. Close and affectionate relationships develop between adults and children generating harmony and an environment where children are able to thrive. Children are confident and self-assured because the high quality interaction between the adults and children nurtures a trusting and supporting environment. An effective key worker system is enabling young children to make healthy relationships with key individuals and enjoy consistency of care with someone who knows them well. Gradual admission procedures allows sufficient time and space for children to familiarise themselves with staff, routines and the environment at their own pace. This approach supports their emotional security well and the majority of children settle quickly on arrival and enjoy their time at nursery.

Children are fully engaged and absorbed in their play. Babies learn using their natural senses. For example, they sort through a selection of baskets containing wooden and metal objects, handle a variety of textures, such as loofah, soft bristles and pumice stone and sift sand through their fingers. They explore their environment thoroughly, crawling through equipment, examining the face that appears in the mirrors, popping up animals and fitting cups inside each other. They pull up against the low shelves and select toys that have pulsing lights or make sounds as they push them along and use sturdy furniture and wooden walking toys to help them with their mobility. Babies babble and coo and staff respond with language helping them to discover their voices and raising their awareness of early speaking patterns. Staff systematically observe children to identify their interests and what they know and can do and use this information as a basis for their planning.

Children are confident and self-assured. They express their natural curiosity about items, their environment and events in hands on activity and through questioning and discussion with staff. For example, children initiate their own water play at low level sinks. They select equipment from well resourced shelves and experiment with funnels, a washing up bowl and a variety of jugs. During play the children observe and discuss where the water is going and the speed it travels through the funnel. They describe the water as dripping over and staff introduce the word 'over flowing' and they compare size, volume and capacity as they experiment and describe their findings. Younger children are drawn by the older children's exciting play and access the second sink where they operate the taps at varying speeds and laugh and giggle as the fast water jets splash their faces when they try to fill containers.

Nursery Education.

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves in purposeful and meaningful play. They engage in a wealth of activities and self initiated play opportunities that support their independent learning very well. For example, children liberally build, design and create to express their ideas and thoughts because they can freely access a wide range of media, tools and materials. Their self-determination and independence is increasing because staff create an environment where children are encouraged to 'have a go' and make decisions. Children put on aprons for messy or wet play, dress up to support their characters when role playing and take themselves off to the toilet or for a drink. Older children act as good role models for the younger and less able children.

Children talk with confidence. They describe their actions, articulate their needs and recall events and previous learning. For example, children vividly recount their recent visit to the local library. They tell with great excitement of the 'great big Daisy' and indicate her size with their hands. They retell the story of 'Daisy Duck' from memory, find the books in the book area, differentiate between which ducks are Daisy and which are not and paint their own pictures using the books as a guide. Children are learning to identify patterns. They set the knives and forks for lunch correctly and tap out the syllables in words, such as but-ter-fly, during a matching game. Children gain first hand experience of planting, nurturing and growing. They have planted their own potato seeds in large pots on the decking and are watering and watching events carefully.

The quality of the nursery education teaching is good. Staff are secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn best. They use teaching methods that motivate, stretch and challenge children's thinking and learning. Staff record, reflect and respond. Systematic observation and knowledge of children as individuals informs the planning and the interaction with children focusing on individual learning at their own pace. The indoor environment is effectively organised and resourced to stimulate and motivate children's independent learning. This positively impacts on the children's dispositions, attitudes and abilities. Staff have a skilful approach to developing positive relationships and boosting self-confidence. They effectively deploy themselves and this enables them to play with, observe or support children as individual needs arise.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the professional and positive relationships that are established with their parents and carers. Staff work closely with parents to meet children's individual needs and ensure that they are fully included in the life of the setting. As a result, key workers have a good understanding of children's individual health, dietary, social and emotional needs, religious and cultural beliefs and they work effectively to ensure these are catered for within the nursery. Staff take positive action to ensure all children are included in activities, experiences and opportunities that are on offer. For example, they use signs, objects and symbols to supplement the spoken word to ensure everyone can effectively make choices. Staff work closely with parents to learn appropriate ways to communicate successfully with the children. This approach supports children who are learning to speak English as a second language very well.

Children behave well. They receive meaningful praise and encouragement from staff who have high expectations of their behaviour. Children know what is expected of them because staff use a calm approach and give them clear and consistent messages. Staff ask children to reflect on why they did something and how the recipient is feeling. For example, when a child pushes another away from the sink, thought and discussion helps the bigger child to understand the

consequences of his actions and raises his awareness of right, wrong and other peoples feelings. Children respond to the good examples set by staff. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Information is available to share with parents about themes, events and activities on offer to the children. Staff gather a wealth of information from parents as a starting point for children's learning and development. Parent's are encouraged to assist on special activity days, such as baking day, fit kids and dance day. Ideas on play at home are linked to the learning areas and are shared with parents via a notice board in the hall. Children's files are accessible in the play areas and parents are verbally encouraged to look at them. However, the nursery are not yet consistently sharing information relating to children's progress and achievements with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a positive and supportive setting which effectively promotes their individual needs. The nursery offers a welcoming atmosphere and a stimulating indoor environment which encourages children's natural curiosity and thus motivates their learning. A good balance of child initiated and adult led activities helps children to develop and progress at their own individual pace. Clearly defined areas separate the different activities enabling children to make choices. Staff are effectively deployed to sensitively support and encourage children's play.

Appropriate records and documentation are well maintained. Policies and procedures are consistently reviewed and adjusted to improve practice and underpin the operation of the establishment. However, the complaints policy contains out of date information relating to the regulator. Rigorous recruitment and selection procedures are complemented with good induction practice and ongoing support and appraisal systems. This approach safeguards children's welfare.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Children benefit from the strong, hands-on leadership and the efficient management of the educational program. The committed staff team receive positive direction and are encouraged through clear role modelling, regular training and up-dates to maintain and extend their professional development. Well developed procedures systematically monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and effectively highlight areas for future development. This contributes significantly to children's good progress towards the early learning goals.

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):

- practise and record emergency evacuation procedures to highlight any potential problems which may be encountered when carried out with children
- review the complaints procedures that are shared with parents to update the regulators contact details.

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 re-organising the outside play area and resources to enable children to facilitate their independent learning during outdoor play
- further develop the systems used for sharing information with parents and carers relating to their children's achievements and progress towards the early learning goals.

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