

Cleverkidz

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY278278
Inspection date	09 July 2008
Inspector	Anne Archer / Rhonda Foster
Setting Address	Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 5JB
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Registered person	Cleverkidz 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cleverkidz Nursery is one of three nurseries under the same ownership. It opened in May 2004 and operates from purpose built premises next to Tithe Farm Lower School in Houghton Regis Bedfordshire. A maximum of 79 children aged from birth to eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 throughout the year. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is in receipt of funding for the early education of three and four-year-old children. The nursery employs staff with childcare qualifications to work with the children. A cook and cleaner is also employed to support them.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

On the whole children are adequately protected from infection as staff follow appropriate health and hygiene procedures. However, on occasions when rooms are operating with minimum staff or resources are not available, procedures are not always maintained. There is also, on occasions, an issue with full bins of used nappies not being emptied or removed from the toileting area. This causes an unpleasant environment for children using this area.

Children in most areas of the nursery are beginning to become familiar with simple health and hygiene routines and practices. Children in all areas of the nursery benefit from periods of outdoor play, enjoying the freedom to explore in the fresh air, whilst promoting their physical well-being. Children's health is further promoted as staff show an awareness of their individual health needs. They respect babies individual sleep patterns and routines in order to maintain continuity of care.

Children are protected in the event of an accident as several staff have current qualifications in paediatric first aid and records are maintained. Medication records are also maintained appropriately and procedures for staff to follow in the event of a child becoming unwell are familiar to staff.

Children enjoy a varied menu and staff take care to ensure individual dietary needs are catered for in order to maintain children's welfare and respect parental wishes. Children under the age of three are provided with regular drinks of water to keep them hydrated. However, children in the pre-school room, who are able to help themselves, often find the jug empty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in purpose built premises which are adequate for the purpose. However, no risk assessments are carried out to enable management to evaluate potential hazards and maintenance and repairs are not always completed promptly which has an effect on children's care. Rooms are generally light and well presented as staff display posters and children's art work to make the areas attractive.

Children are grouped appropriately in base rooms which helps them to become comfortable and familiar with their environment. Children aged up to two years have their care needs met within their own room with appropriate equipment and facilities. However, children aged two to three years share a toileting area with the pre-school children and receive no privacy during nappy changes. A wide selection of toys and resources is available throughout the nursery although some are worn and dirty. Discarded, broken toys are not always removed out of children's reach but stored in the outdoor area until they can be repaired or thrown away which potentially compromises children's safety.

Child protection procedures within the nursery are poor. They do not meet Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements. Staff are unsure about who to report their concerns to and there is no trained designated person. Parental concerns are not always investigated or acted upon and un-vetted staff provide personal care to children which further compromises their welfare and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children under three experience a variety of free choice and adult led activities which are suitable for their stage of development. Planning and observations are based on the Birth to three matters framework but the observations are not evaluated or used to plan for individual children's needs. Children in the baby room are well supported and their continuity of care is considered. However, in the room for children aged from one to two years, the care is often inadequate because there are insufficient staff working with them. For example, one member of staff was working alone with three children during the middle of the day and so was unable to chase up their late lunch or accurately complete daily records. On the whole, staff interaction with children during their play is appropriate although not all staff have yet developed the skills of asking open questions and encouraging children to think for themselves.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. A significant number of children do not progress well enough because teaching is ineffective. The staff have an incomplete knowledge of the Foundation Stage, use a limited range of teaching methods and have an insecure understanding of how young children learn. Assessment of children is inadequate and planning is ineffective because staff do not identify children's starting points. Staff do carry out general observations on each child however they are not meaningful, are not consistently evaluated and do not identify next steps in learning. Several children also attend other early years settings.

Most children are confident and eager to take part in activities, however some remain unsettled and a minority of children are insufficiently aware of the effect of their inappropriate actions on others which hinders the quality of learning. The staff are uncertain about effective ways of managing children's behaviour and put much effort into supervising rather than promoting good behaviour to fully aid learning.

Most children are developing independence as they select what they wish to do or fetch their own resources. They develop speaking and listening skills as staff regularly engage in conversations with them although children's thinking and learning is rarely extended due to staff's limited understanding of the Foundation Stage and different teaching methods. Children learn to express their needs and speak within a group at snack time and circle time. Most children enjoy listening to stories read to them by staff and some children enjoy looking at books for their own pleasure, turning pages in the correct order. However, the book corner is unattractive with books piled on top of each other rather than displayed invitingly to encourage all children.

Those children that participate begin to develop an understanding of numbers as they count each other at group time and play games such as 'Snail race'. They have some opportunities to explore touch and texture when playing with spaghetti. They are also able to build their own model at the junk modelling table. Children explore a range of sensory materials such as glitter bottles and pebbles set up on a sensory table in the classroom.

Children are beginning to develop some understanding of the wider world through activities to aid their recognition of various festivals such as Diwali when they make candle holders to take home. There are a few resources that represent images of the wider world such as ethnic dolls and factual books, although these are in poor condition. Opportunities for children to develop their understanding of information technology are very limited as there are few resources

and the computer has been broken for some time. Children's physical skills are developed through activities that support co-ordination and control such as playing hop scotch outside and riding bikes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Whilst all children are welcomed into the nursery, the range and condition of resources throughout the nursery do not adequately represent the diversity of their backgrounds. Staff have recently started to plan activities to acknowledge cultural festivals but most show little understanding of what or why they do so. The behaviour of children under three is generally good and the staff working with them use consistent, positive methods to manage any issues. However, some children in the pre-school room are poorly behaved and staff struggle to manage their behaviour while trying to maintain a calm, learning atmosphere for the other children. The behaviour of a few seriously impacts on the level of care and learning for all children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

Staff show respect for parents wishes relating to their children's care needs by completing a daily diary about activities, feeding and sleeping patterns. There is a parent notice board in each area of the nursery and a newsletter is used to keep parents informed of events. The nursery maintains a log of complaints received although they do not have a written procedure stating how parental concerns will be dealt with and what parents should do in these situations. One letter of complaint received from a parent some time ago has not been dealt with. This has a negative impact on the child's overall care and wellbeing.

The partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Parents are not fully involved or informed about the nursery education and their children's progress. The weekly planning is poorly displayed and would be difficult for parents to follow. Parents are not invited to contribute towards their children's development records which they do not have easy access to. However, staff regularly welcome all parents into the room and create opportunities to engage in general conversation about what their child has done that day. The staff have recently introduced a daily diary for each child which informs parents about their child's care routine.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The nursery does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The deployment of staff within the nursery does not effectively ensure children's safety, welfare and development. Although the majority of staff are qualified to at least level two, their experience and skills are not always used in the best interests of the children. For example, the cook was unwell during the period of the inspection and the room leader of the pre-school was observed preparing and cooking the children's meals. Supervisory staff and room leaders do not all hold the required level three qualification. The nursery is currently without a manager and the contingency plans are not sufficient to ensure the smooth and safe running of the nursery to ensure children are not at risk. In addition, Ofsted was not notified of the previous manager to enable suitable checks to be carried out.

Accident, medication and attendance records contain all required information. However, there are no formal risk assessments of the premises and outdoor areas to indicate that potential hazards have been recognised, are monitored and suitable action taken to ensure children's safety. The nursery's current policies and procedures do not all reflect current practice within

this nursery and are in the process of being updated by the manager of another nursery within the chain.

The leadership and management of the setting is inadequate. Senior staff are unclear on their role in providing care and education for children. The staff team has changed several times and consequently this has impacted on the continuity of the educational provision. The lack of clear leadership and frequent changes means that children do not benefit from consistent systems to monitor their progress. The staff regularly receive support from an advisory teacher who is currently assisting them in reviewing and evaluating assessment and planning procedures. The content, suitability and effectiveness of the provision is rarely monitored and evaluated and limited attention is given to improving the quality of teaching to make it relevant and interesting to children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection on 25 January 2007, the nursery was asked to develop the outdoor area to improve children's physical development and also to improve the evaluation of planned activities to inform the next steps in children's learning. There is no evidence to support any improvement in either area to enhance the level of care provided to children.

The nursery was also asked to enhance the existing provision of nursery education to provide more activities for children to explore, experiment and be creative, to spark their curiosity and expand their horizons. There is no evidence to support any improvement to the provision of nursery education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection on 25 January 2007 Ofsted has received a number of complaints relating to National Standard 2 (Organisation), National Standard 6 (Safety) and National Standard 7 (Health). Unannounced visits have taken place to investigate and monitor the concerns.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- provide an action plan, including time scales, setting out how all supervisors and room leaders will hold a level 3 qualification appropriate for the care and development of children
- make sure positive steps are taken to promote safety within the nursery and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents
- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and that all adults working with and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice
- ensure appropriate and prompt action is taken on any concerns raised by parents and that complaints are investigated appropriately
- ensure records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the nursery, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Ensure these include notification of any changes in the person in charge at the earliest opportunity.
- ensure that staff are deployed effectively within the premises to ensure the safety, welfare and development of children.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve staff's skills, knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to enable them to effectively support children's development, learning and progress
- devise and implement systems to improve the effectiveness of the setting in monitoring and evaluating the provision of nursery education
- improve the partnership with parents by providing them with good quality information about the provision of nursery education, provide opportunities for parents to be informed about their child's achievements and progress and to be involved in their learning.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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