

Monkey Puzzle

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342102
Inspection date	09 July 2008
Inspector	Alison Reeves
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Registered person	Linda Louise Shaylor
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?

Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery opened in 2007 and operates from eight rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated in Cole Green near Hertford in Hertfordshire. A maximum of 82 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery employs 32 staff, 22 of whom, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

There are currently 118 children aged from two months to four years on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as many of the parents travel to work in other towns. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well supported because staff follow appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines in line with the nursery policy. Clear and well-defined procedures help children learn the importance of good hygiene practice in relation to their own health; the bright signs in the bathroom areas and for the older children, Captain Hand Wash make being clean fun and enjoyable.

Children enjoy a varied and balanced diet. Menus offer a range of foods over a period of weeks and children's individual dietary needs are noted and care is taken when planning and serving meals to meet these. Regular meals, snacks and freely available drinking water mean children are satisfied and hydrated throughout the day; this enables them to play and concentrate well on what they are doing. Older children have a clear understanding of a healthy lifestyle and can explain about foods that are good for their bodies and those that are not. They understand the effects of exercise and differing temperatures on their body and can take action to make themselves comfortable. Children talk about being thirsty after energetic play and can identify the need for warm clothing on chilly days or the need for sunscreen on sunny days. This awareness helps them to meet their own needs independently and with confidence.

Children are physically active in all areas of the nursery. Babies have many opportunities to explore their environment, crawling and using solid furniture to pull themselves up to standing. Adults provide suitable and interesting toys for those who are not yet mobile encouraging children to follow objects with their eyes or to reach out and grasp items that interest them. Tweenies and toddlers play in a spacious room where they are free to move between activities at their own pace. The oldest children make good use of the indoor space to allow for energetic games even when the weather is unsuitable for prolonged outdoor play. Each age group has their own secure outdoor space all of which are well used with adults planning outdoor time into the daily routines of all children. Children develop their co-ordination as they use large and small items, babies are grasping toys and learning to push buttons to make lights flash and sounds fill the air. As children progress they use tools for mark-making, drawing and writing.

Children's medical needs are met effectively because adults ensure they have relevant information from parents and follow procedures for the administration of medication rigorously. Accidents are recorded appropriately and parents are informed. Adults have appropriate knowledge gained through training to care for children who have minor accidents and seek help when further medical attention is required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an attractive setting; the building has plenty of natural light with low-level windows so children can easily see outside. Children's rooms are decorated with a variety of colourful pictures, posters and information for adults. The reception area has comfortable seating for adults and information for parents and staff. A visitors' book is used to ensure any additional people in the setting are noted down and included in any emergency evacuation. Safety measures are in place throughout the building to minimise the risk of accidents and careful monitoring through formal risk assessments and adult observation as they work means that any potential hazards to children's safety are quickly dealt with. For

example, when a catch became loose on a safety gate adults took action to repair this safely and immediately. Children learn how to keep themselves safe because adults help them to understand dangers; they keep walkways clear of toys whenever possible, and if they are going on outing to the farm or further afield children wear nursery uniform and hi-visibility waistcoats so they can be clearly identified by adults supervising them. These measures ensure children's safety inside and outside the building.

Children have free access to many of the resources helping them to independently select items that interest them. Low-level storage in all rooms supports children in making their own choices. The range of resources is extensive and supports all aspects of children's learning and development. These are in sufficient quantity and of good quality to enable large groups of children to play together and for different age groups to play with the same type of toys at the same time. For example, there are several play kitchens in the nursery so that toddlers and pre-school children can use them when they need to and sets of construction equipment are big enough to enable large structures to be assembled or for several children to build their own models.

Children are safeguarded because of the rigorous procedures in place for admitting people to the premises; careful checks of their identity are carried out and their presence is recorded in the visitors' book. This along with adults' knowledge of child protection issues ensures children's safety .

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy and make good progress in their development because adults provide a range of stimulating and interesting activities for children. Their confident, knowledgeable approach supports children as they play. Adults use the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage guidance to underpin the educational programme for all children. Careful planning taking account of children's interests and stage of development supports them in making progress. All the children enjoy the shredded paper play, putting it on their heads, covering and uncovering their legs as if burying their legs in sand, some rustle the paper and throw it in the air. It is an activity that captures the children's interest in each group room. Babies and toddlers move freely, exploring their environment and choosing their own toys which supports their decision making and child-led learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are busy, engaged and motivated by a varied range of stimulating, practical activities related to their needs. They access a diverse range of good quality resources, which support their learning across the Foundation Stage. All children are keen to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. They listen with considerable levels of concentration to stories and rhymes and use these in other areas of their play. Children often burst into song when playing and talking, several children talking about the weather with an adult sing 'I hear thunder', without prompting. Children are beginning to use marks readily to represent their ideas and older children are becoming adept at writing their own names. Children are highly imaginative as they create their own role play, outside in the garden a small group of children in the play house are pretending they are in Africa and the house is surrounded by lions, the children take on different roles with some great roaring from the lions. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them as they care for the rabbits and snails and observe seasonal changes. Children learn about the

wider community as they use a range of resources that reflect positive images of others, celebrate festivals and regularly enjoy foods from around the world. Children create three-dimensional models, collages and draw pictures, many of which are displayed. They are inquisitive, fascinated by how things such as keyboards work and wonder at the changes they see in the snails as they hatch and grow.

Children work very well together. For example, younger children learn about turn taking and sharing as they play with the older children who enjoy explaining the importance of being fair and kind. Children gain confidence in using numbers in their play and respond well to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and some daily routines. Children gain some opportunities to develop their physical skills, through frequent daily access to the garden but the opportunities for the oldest and most able children are limited as equipment does not provide sufficient physical challenges that stretch and progress children's large muscle movements.

Adults seek information from parents about children's skills, interests and needs and try to build on this effectively to help children achieve their full potential. Planning has been developed to include time for both child and adult-led activities. A flexible approach to the day and a balance between energetic play and quiet spells allows children to learn at their own pace. Adults are perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and use questions successfully to encourage children's thinking and language skills. They use appropriate systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all warmly welcomed in the setting. Adults ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend and also the wider community. This helps children develop a positive attitude towards others. Children are extremely well behaved and very polite in response to the consistent and high expectations of the adults. The senior team ensures that a warm and welcoming environment is provided, prioritising the welfare of the children and their families. Children engage in a number of worthwhile activities throughout the day but care must be taken to ensure care routines do not disrupt their involved, purposeful play. Children show concern for others, they are good at sharing and turn taking. A positive and supportive approach to children's care and learning fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Parents are fully included in the setting. Adults value parents for the knowledge and expertise they have about their children. Regular exchanges of information ensure parents are fully informed about their child's care and the progress they are making. Clear information for parents, including requests for their contribution towards planned activities helps them to be involved in their children's learning. A wealth of information is easily accessible to parents and adults working with the children covering many aspects of care and education. Parents are relaxed and open with staff, enabling them to share information in sensitive situations. Parents are highly complimentary about the level of service provided. Staff encourage parents to actively contribute towards individual assessment records. Therefore, children benefit from a two-way sharing of information between parents and practitioners to enhance their learning. This underpins their progress in the nursery and consequently their ability to fully contribute to the provision. The nursery effectively communicates and shares literature and information about

the educational provision and therefore the partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very well organised environment. Comprehensive documentation is used effectively to support the management of the setting and the adults in their work with the children providing a safe, caring learning environment. All relevant documentation is easily accessible to parents and staff. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure children's well-being and help senior staff in communicating their passion for high quality care for young children to potential staff. Regular reviews of practice identifying areas for improvement demonstrate the commitment of all team members to enhancing the experience for the children. This includes supervision and appraisal for staff, giving them an opportunity to look at their own strengths and weaknesses. A number of initiatives have been implemented since registration including the rabbits and snails to help children learn about caring for living things, and a parent questionnaire seeking their views on various aspects of the provision. Further developments are planned to further enhance the provision in relation to diversity and inclusion to make this accessible and meaningful to the children. A large number of the staff team hold a relevant qualification and all are encouraged to access short courses to ensure their skills remain in line with current practices. The presence of senior staff, one of whom is responsible for training, supports staff in their day to day practice.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. A strong management team, with a clear vision for the setting enhanced by sound and detailed documentation and a dedicated staff team ensure that children benefit and enjoy their time. All adults demonstrate a strong bond and real affinity with children. They respect children's feelings, value their comments and overall enjoy their company. Planning and assessment systems are well thought out and used effectively to record children's progress and to support the identifying of the next steps for each individual child. Additional support is organised to assist children in making good progress towards the early learning goals. Knowledge of the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage has helped adults to include this in their practice prior to the official implementation in September. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable, as this was the first inspection since registration.

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):

- ensure care routines do not interrupt children engaged in play.

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 for older children to be physically challenged.

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