



Wonderland Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146469
Inspection date	07 September 2005
Inspector	Sarah Catherine Jex
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Registered person	Wonderland Day Nursery
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?

Wonderland Day Nursery opened in 1994 and operates from five rooms in a purpose built building. It is situated in the Industrial area of Letchworth, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 84 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 08:00 to 18:00 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to the secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 81 children aged from 3 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these

20 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs 23 staff, 14 of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery have input from a qualified teacher. They receive support from the local authority and are members of the Day Nursery Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through well-organised routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and are aware to wash them after messy activities and before snacks. Children are informed in simple terms why such practices are important to prevent cross infection. Younger children are developing their understanding through watching positive role modelling by staff and being involved in the process. Most children are developing an awareness of keeping their teeth clean and healthy by being encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch. Staff effectively adhere to clear and well-structured health and safety procedures, which are consistently applied. However, they need to be aware of maintaining good hygiene practices in the baby room, by adults removing outdoor shoes before entering. All suitable consents are in place from parents. Accident and medication procedures and records are robust and ensure that children receive appropriate care. The majority of staff hold current first aid certificates, which are regularly updated. Babies and the younger children's needs are met by incorporating their individual needs within the nursery environment, allowing them time to sleep, eat and play. Personal care is fully supervised. Staff check nappies frequently and change these as often as necessary.

Children's health is promoted by a wholesome, nutritious and balanced diet. Meals and snacks are freshly prepared using fresh fruit and vegetables. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions where children sit in small groups with staff, talking together, learning about table manners and enjoying their food. Children are encouraged to try a variety of foods increasing their awareness of a range of tastes. Children have use of a knife, fork or spoon. They are encouraged to eat independently depending on their ability. Staff use snack time as a learning experience for the children to make healthy choices and develop their independence skills by pouring drinks and benefit with sensitive support from familiar staff. Staff are aware of each child's individual dietary needs and ensure these are met. Younger children are offered drinks regularly throughout the day while older children help themselves to drinking water.

Children enjoy an extensive range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They confidently use their physical skills to access a range of large and small equipment. They use outdoor facilities, including a climbing frame and slide with gusto, and most children have good control over their bodies. Children's

dexterity and hand and eye coordination is developing as they manipulate play dough, pencils and beads. Children are helped to understand how exercise helps them stay healthy. Staff use 'Birth to three matters' framework well to provide a good range of physical play experiences for babies and young children. All children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, clean, well-maintained environment. Wall displays are bright, stimulating and reflect the recent learning experiences for the children. For example, displays about 'differences' reminds the children about how each one of them is different, their height, different genders, colour of eyes and hair.

Children use a broad range of safe, well-maintained and developmentally appropriate resources, including everyday household items. Equipment and activities are attractively presented at the children's height to encourage independent access and to help the children to respect and look after their resources. Unfortunately children's selection of activities is restricted due to the separate enclosed areas within the main room. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe in nursery as they explain safe practices in a skilful manner, such as not running inside, not throwing sand and the need to pick up items dropped on the floor, so that other children do not fall or hurt themselves. This helps children of all ages to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children's safety is paramount to the organisation of the nursery. Staff recognise hazards and take positive steps to minimise these. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks are undertaken and staff practices are clearly reflected in the written procedures. Security systems are good and staff help keep children safe by ensuring children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and there can be no unauthorised access to children. There are clear procedures to ensure only authorised people collect children. Children's individual needs are met and staff support the children well. Staff and children know what to do in the event of an emergency and practice their evacuation plan with suitable frequency.

Child protection procedures are robust and children remain well protected. Staff are vigilant in their practice and confident in the knowledge of child protection procedures. The child protection coordinator ensures that procedures are up to date and that staff understand their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They have a sense of belonging as they come into the nursery and know the routine well. Children relate well to each other and socialise together seeking out friends to share activities. Most children spend their time in a purposeful way as they access the activities. However, due to the

physical set up of the nursery, children are unable to move freely around the activities as each group have allotted half hour slots to access certain activities, such as creative play, physical activities, small and large manipulative skills, construction toys, imaginative play and quiet reading times. This has an impact on the children's independence skills as they have few opportunities to access and select some of the resources and materials they wish to play with. Opportunities for children to work at their own pace and allowing them to come to a natural end when playing is limited. This has an effect on children's growing self-confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy experiencing real life situations through role play such as being in the home corner and dressing up. They are able to dress up in various costumes, look at themselves in the mirror, imitate making the tea and looking after the baby.

Children are confident, they show curiosity, interest and ask questions. They are encouraged to complete tasks such as puzzles and art work before moving onto another one. Children are supported and encouraged by staff during the activities. They receive regular praise for their efforts and achievements.

Children's independence skills are encouraged in some areas such as pouring their own drinks, putting their personal belongings in their own trays and becoming self sufficient when using the toilets, washing hands and putting on dressing up clothes.

Children enjoy singing, action rhymes and using musical instruments. For example, 'Jo Jingles' directed a music session. Children use various musical instruments while singing familiar songs. They are introduced to the concepts of loud, quiet, slow and fast. This resulted in the children gaining control, distinguishing sounds, practising rhythm and their concentration is developing as they listen to instructions.

Children speak confidently and animatedly during 'teaching' time, they recall events from home and past experiences. Children are given opportunity to speak and finish what they want to say without interruption. Their awareness of shape, number, letters and colour is encouraged during this time. Children talk freely and confidently during this small group time. They are encouraged to recognise their name and are engaged with finger phonics. For example, all children were learning about letter 't' tracing it with their finger, taking turns to write it on a white board, what the sound was and linking it with other words which began with the same sound. Children were then encouraged to draw in their work books a picture that began with that letter. The teacher wrote underneath so the child could relate the word to written meaning. Children with differing levels are catered for as these activities are adapted to each child's individual needs.

'Birth to three matters' framework has been introduced and is incorporated into the planning of activities. This has a positive effect on the children as staff have a good insight into focussing their attention when adapting activities. Babies are becoming mobile and use their senses to explore and investigate a good variety of equipment placed at a low level. For example, exploring a large cardboard box, crawling inside and playing peek-a-boo, looking at themselves whilst playing in front of the low level mirror and moving around in different ways over a length of bubble wrap. Staff encourage pre-verbal children to develop their language skills by modelling conversations, imitating babble and talking about what they are doing. Children develop positive confidence and a strong sense of self through positive interactions

with adults. Babies are settled and happy in the setting because parents regularly share information about the children's needs, interests and experiences outside the setting. Staff use this information to link to children's experiences in the nursery.

Nursery Education

Children are progressing well due to the staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. A good balance between adult and child led activities in a range of small and large group situations enables children to achieve well in most areas of learning. Good quality resources support children's learning in most areas, although enabling children's independence and accessibility of these would benefit them in making informed choices in what they play with. Planning is excellent, very detailed and shows interesting activities which challenge and stimulate most children. Staff have a sound awareness of each child's individual needs and their starting points in order to move them forward. Key worker groups help enable staff to assess each child's individual needs. They continually monitor children's progress and use the stepping stones to record and plan for the next steps in their learning. Staff use systems well to ensure children with special needs are fully included within the nursery activities and routines. Evaluation of activities is thorough and provides staff with information about where they have been successful in promoting learning and any aspects which need improvement.

Children show a sense of belonging as they greet each other and the staff on arrival. They feel safe and secure within the friendly environment. Most children are actively involved in play and activities throughout the day. However, children would benefit from being able to freely choose activities for themselves and be able to work at their own pace.

Children use large movements during physical play outside, they are developing a sense of space, health and bodily awareness. Children use equipment, tools and materials which promote the use of their small motor skills. For example, children are involved in threading beads, painting with different implements, cutting with scissors and construction with different brick and blocks.

Children take part in spontaneous, meaningful conversations, they listen to staff, their peers and respond to instructions. Children's vocabulary is growing and new words are introduced during the activities and as they recall and describe past events and experiences. Children enjoy songs and rhymes in small groups. They listen to stories and are beginning to recognise their names, letters and numbers. They have regular access to various writing materials and computer programmes which develop their hand and eye coordination and extends other areas of learning. Children are introduced to various activities which encourage counting, sorting, grading according to size and simple calculating activities. For example, a shop activity. Children were encouraged to label toys with different prices, taking turns to be a shop keeper and customer and learnt how to use the till. This activity incorporated mathematical skills and language skills linked with real life experiences.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating as they take part in activities watching how things grow and change. For example, growing cress and exploring how it grows and changes. They show curiosity about their environment by having topics about the

different weather and how it impacts on them. For example, what they would wear, what it feels like on their skin. Children participate and celebrate in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar festivals and celebrations throughout the year giving them a positive insight into different cultures and beliefs.

The quality of teaching and learning is good

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from all backgrounds and children with special needs are welcomed into the nursery. They have access to a variety of resources that represent and promote meaningful images of people, books, posters and characters. This helps the children develop a positive attitude to others. Children are learning to share, take turns, show concern for others and work collaboratively together in various activities. They participate in activities which help them to learn right from wrong and respect others. Children with specific needs receive appropriate support in the nursery by staff implementing reliable systems. This enables them to join in with all the activities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered

Children have a good awareness of the boundaries within the nursery and relate well to staff. They respond well to the consistent approach followed by all the staff. Children are provided with good role models by the staff being calm and polite. Praise is given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence, self-esteem and understand when they have done well. Children are encouraged to use please and thank you appropriately in all situations during the day.

Positive partnerships with parents have been established. They express their support and confidence with the nursery by joining in with the shared reading scheme. Clear information is available to parents about the nursery, their child's progress, activities and the curriculum. For example, a prospectus, regular newsletters, daily diaries, displays and parents' evenings for a fuller discussion about their child's progress. This enables them to extend their child's learning at home. Children benefit from two-way sharing of information between staff and parents. This enhances a good working relationship between home and the nursery. Babies and younger children benefit from a positive partnership with parents. Babies settle because staff work closely with parents to ensure they follow their home routine. They share important information about the child's progress and achievements during the day.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel secure and at ease with the well-organised environment. This enables them to be confident to initiate and extend some of their own play and learning. Children are well protected and cared for by the staff team who have a good

knowledge and understanding of child development, early learning goals and 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff work well together to develop planning which impacts on the children's play, learning and partnerships with parents'. Good systems are in place to evaluate and assess their practice. This contributes continuity to the children's care.

The quality of Leadership and Management is good.

Children benefit from the management team having a clear and positive vision for the future. They have a dedicated staff team who present themselves as positive role models for the children to relate to. Each staff member brings their own experiences and strengths to enrich the experiences for the children. This promotes positive outcomes for children. Induction training and qualifications are met and appropriate policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the nursery has made the majority of improvements asked of them. The nursery now have in place a detailed written risk assessment which is completed on a regular basis. All staff are aware of this and adhere to the procedures in place.

The presentation of toys and equipment has improved with them being labelled clearly in their defined areas. The opportunity for children to be able to access activities independently and at their own pace still needs to be addressed as the children do not have freedom of choice to move around independently, or opportunities to complete activities at their own pace. The nursery is in the process of consulting with the local authority development worker about how to do this effectively given the physical set up of the nursery. A new recommendation will be placed about this.

In the education part of the inspection it was recommended that the children needed opportunities to develop counting, calculating and independence skills to be developed in everyday situations. The nursery had addressed this by making staff more aware of the opportunities where they can experiment with mathematical ideas and language, encouraging children to eat independently at meal times and by staff setting good examples by promoting manners. The review of the organisation of children's routines to allow them independence in selecting their own resources has been partially completed by providing children with a wider variety of resources in the main room. Books have been put into all areas so children can help themselves but the children still do not have the independence to choose their own activities. This was discussed and the nursery is working towards it. The nursery has introduced very thorough plans that set out the aims and evaluations to the activities provided to the children this enables them to make progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

A concern was raised under Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers regarding information not being shared with the father of a child attending the nursery. Ofsted telephoned the provider on 01/03/05 to discuss this issue. The nursery stated that the parent had been shown around the nursery and been given information about his child and that they had also met with mother to inform her that father would be allowed access to reports and paperwork. The nursery had declined to give the parent details of who collected the child. Ofsted are satisfied that the nursery have taken appropriate action and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- maintain good hygiene practices in the baby room by adults removing outdoor shoes before entering.

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):

- ensure time, resources and accommodation is organised efficiently to allow freedom of choice to expand children's play choices and interests and for them to initiate or choose activities randomly with sufficient time to work at their own pace

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk