



## Early Days (UK) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY216300
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Barbara Redmond
<b>Setting Address</b>	Early Days UK, 7-15 Linacre Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L21 8NJ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Early Days (UK) Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Early Days Nurseries is one of three nurseries, within the Sefton area, which are owned by the registered person. It is a purpose built facility located in Litherland district of Liverpool and is open from Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 each day.

The nursery is divided into four base rooms according to children's ages. There is a

fully fenced outside play area, which has a grassed area used mainly by the babies and a soft surface playground with a static climbing frame for older children.

There are currently 81 children on roll. Of those 12 children receive funding for nursery education. There are no children at present with special educational needs or English as an additional language.

There are thirteen staff who have early years qualifications at level II or above. There are three staff working towards level III qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Most areas are clean providing a suitable area for the care and play of children. Cleaning rotas are in place to ensure that all areas are kept clean for children. However, some hygiene routines are not rigorous enough and pose a risk of infection for children. These include the procedure for disposing of nappies in the baby room and the hand washing routine for children. The recording and maintaining of temperatures in the fridges do not always meet the required level, which is a risk to children's health.

Children taking medication are not fully safeguarded. Medication consent forms are in place but there is no formal daily record of medicine given to children. Some parent signatures are missing and in some cases no record has been kept over several days of the doses and times of medicine given.

Sleeping children are protected because they are provided with suitable sleeping equipment and are checked regularly. Checks are recorded on charts, although this practice is not consistent, reducing the protection of children. Children can be cared for in emergency situations because sufficient staff hold first aid qualifications and parental permission is in place to seek emergency advice or treatment. However, there is no first aid kit in place to treat any minor injuries to children.

Children are provided with a mixture of freshly cooked and processed foods that meet their nutritional needs and provide a balanced diet. Drinks are provided regularly to prevent children becoming dehydrated.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

All areas in the nursery are bright and airy and provide sufficient space to meet the needs of the children. The baby room is nicely decorated and blinds on the windows can be pulled down to prevent the room becoming too hot, providing a suitable space for babies.

There are sufficient toys and equipment to provide appropriate care for children.

There is enough age appropriate furniture in all rooms to meet the needs of the children. The toys are in a reasonable condition and are checked regularly to ensure they remain safe for children.

The premises are safe for children. Many features are in place to ensure children remain safe including safety gates, radiator covers and finger guards on the doors. Basic risk assessments are in place to ensure all areas continue to be safe, although no electrical appliances have been safety checked since the provision opened in 2002. Security is good with a controlled entry system using an intercom and closed circuit television to monitor visitors is installed. A visitors' book is in place but this is not used consistently and may compromise children's security.

Children are protected in case of fire as smoke alarms and a written fire evacuation procedure are in place. The fire evacuation procedure is practiced regularly so that children are familiar with the routine.

Children are protected because staff, including the named person for child protection, have received training and are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse. Appropriate documentation and contact numbers are in place so that staff know what to do if they are worried about a child.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is inadequate.

Children have good relationships with staff who are friendly and affectionate with them, fostering their feelings of security and confidence. However, children throughout the nursery have very little choice of activity. Staff select all resources and all children play with the same items at any one time, so independence skills are not fostered for children. Very little messy play is evident to help children express themselves creatively and emotionally. Over the two day inspection no sand or water play is used although the necessary resources are available. Children in one room did some gluing and sticking and another room used some paint but opportunities are limited.

Very basic planning is in place for babies which consists of a sheet for each day with one activity identified. For example, on one day construction materials are identified as the activity. They are tipped in the middle of the floor for babies, alongside the usual toys, with no additional learning or purpose evident. In the room for children aged two to three planning consists of the day divided into the morning and afternoon so four activities each day are identified for the children. However, no learning intentions are recorded so children just play with the toys as staff watch them. Although staff have accessed some training on the Birth to three matters framework a lack of understanding has meant that no valuable planning and assessment strategy has been implemented. Therefore, a balance of activities to stimulate all areas of development is not planned for or provided. Simple milestone checklists are used to record children's progress, which provides limited information that is not used to plan for children's further development.

Children have no choices in the activities provided so their independence skills are

not encouraged. In the room for children aged one to two years all the children do jigsaws at the same time. They then have a story which is read out to the whole group, although the text is beyond the understanding of the younger children. Only closed questions are asked limiting opportunities to extend children's thinking and vocabulary.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very weak. For example, a statement for parents on the notice board is misleading describing the Foundation Stage curriculum as part of the National Curriculum. The early learning goals are used as part of the evaluation after the activity rather than a target for children's learning before the activity takes place, so that the practitioner can support children's progress. This shows no understanding of the stepping stones, or how assessment influencing planning.

The planning for nursery education is very limited. Only two activities are identified for the morning and afternoon sessions. Only the early learning goals are used for this process and there is no mention of the stepping stones so progress for children is compromised. The learning goals are only identified after an activity has been carried out. Staff do not know the learning intentions for children before an activity is conducted, limiting its value for their learning. No differentiation is in place to ensure that each child can develop at their own pace. The very basic weekly planning does not help covering staff to carry out activities that meet the children's learning needs. There are no medium or long term plans to ensure that a balance of activities is provided to help children make progress in all six areas of learning. All planning is weekly based. There are monthly themes such as 'opposites' that are identified but only one activity during the month may be linked to the theme, making the topic based programme ineffectual.

Learning is often repetitive with little challenge. Children sit on the carpet as the practitioner shows flash cards of colours, shapes and numbers. The practitioner tries desperately to hold the interest of the children who are engaged in a variety of distractions, such as frequent visits to the toilet, playing with shoes and jumping up and down on the spot. Children are not very interested. Children who do not know their colours become very confused but this is not addressed, having a negative effect on learning. As children name shapes correctly the practitioner does not show the images to the other children so this is of no value to the whole group.

Assessment is inadequate and inconsistent. Children's progress can be monitored and recorded in the Sefton Council 'Plotting Progress in the Foundation Stage' booklet. However, these are not used consistently to provide an accurate record of children's progress over time. The booklet advises using a range of observations such as photos and paintings to provide accurate evidence of assessment but only dated work sheets are used here which are of limited value. Assessment does not influence planning so the learning programme does not meet the needs of the children who attend.

Children have opportunities to see the writing in wall displays so they become familiar with the written word. There are no mark making materials readily available to

children to encourage early literacy development and none in play situations such as in the role play area so they have no experiences of writing for a purpose. They have access to a book area with a range of books for them to enjoy. Children listen well to stories and relate them to their own interests. The practitioner is interested in what they have to say encouraging communication skills. However, few opportunities are taken to introduce new vocabulary and mainly closed questions are asked limiting learning and the development of ideas. Stories are not linked to any topic or theme and are not used to further develop the children's interest in a particular subject.

Numbers are also included in displays helping children to become familiar with numerals. During play, no opportunities are taken to encourage counting or number recognition. The practitioner uses flash cards so children chant numbers by rote. The value of this activity is low as some children do not focus and others already know their numbers well. Shapes and colours are introduced in the same way and few opportunities are taken to help children learn about mathematical concepts through play and every day experiences.

Children are given limited opportunities to explore and investigate. Planning indicates that a topic on mini-beasts consists of children saying which is their favourite insect and a mini-beast hunt where none are found. Children's physical development is not sufficiently encouraged. On a cold but bright and sunny day children are not allowed outside due to the weather. They have no opportunities indoors to practice their gross motor skills, such as climbing and balancing. Throughout the year outdoor play is only available once or twice each week providing insufficient scope for children's physical development. Children are given few opportunities to develop fine motor skills. They do not have free access to mark making materials or tools such as scissors and glue spreaders. Basic planning indicates that the use of these resources is infrequent.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to sufficient resources reflecting diversity including dressing up items, dolls and some books and jigsaws. Small world figures with glasses and a hearing aid help children gain some understanding of disability. Children also use musical instruments from the toy library to supplement provision so that they can increase their awareness of the wider world. Planning shows evidence of children making Rangoli patterns for Divali so they have limited experience of different religions and cultures. Children learn about the needs of others. For example, children are involved a pyjama day to raise money for Children in Need. Children's individual needs are not fully met. Children are not given a range of activities that meet all their developmental needs. They engage in activities as a whole group with no attention paid to their individual stage of development and learning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

The needs of children with special educational needs are met because staff have had additional training in this area. The premises provides good access for all as it is a ground floor facility with ramps and a toilet for people with disability. Staff would work

with parents and other professionals to ensure appropriate care was given.

There is a suitable behaviour management policy in place. Staff use positive methods such as praise to manage behaviour and help children behave well. For example, a staff member draws attention to someone who is helping to tidy up and praises her. This encourages others to join in. Stickers are given to children to encourage them to behave well. Staff provide children with good role models as they speak politely and encourage manners. The only times behaviour deteriorates is when children become bored with the activities provided. The manager and staff have no understanding of the requirements for incident records. Accidents are recorded at random on incident and accident forms.

The quality of the partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff ensure consistency of care for children as suitable systems are in place for the exchange of information between parents and staff. Information is recorded on admission forms and the necessary written parental permissions are in place so that children can be cared for according to parents' wishes. The parents of babies under one are kept well informed about their child's day as they receive daily information sheets that record appropriate information. Parents of older children can ask to see staff records if they wish to find out about their child but entries for all children in a room are recorded on one sheet posing a risk of breach in confidentiality for children. There is a parent notice board with information such as planning, menus and staff details so that parents are kept informed about the setting, although not all of the information relating to nursery education is accurate. Parents have to ask in the pre-school room about their child's progress, providing limited opportunities for them to be involved in their learning. They are not provided with sufficient information relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum, so that they understand and can contribute to the programme of education their child is receiving.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Staff records are in place that include the necessary information such as contact details. Appropriate checks are in place for all but one member of staff so children only come into contact with suitable adults. However, there are no documents in place for the recruitment of staff or a record of complaints in accordance with new Ofsted requirements and the manager is unaware of the changes. There is no induction system for new staff to ensure they can care for children according to the policies and procedures of the setting, although all staff sign the back of the policies to say they have read them.

Adult to child ratios are met throughout the provision to ensure children have the appropriate level of care. The manager provides cover for lunch breaks so that levels are maintained. Records are stored in a locked cabinet in the office to maintain confidentiality for children and their families. Children's records are stored for the required time after a child has left the setting to ensure their interests continue to be fostered after they have left the setting.

Overall the quality of leadership and management is inadequate. Poor

communication between the manager and the named person results in the manager having limited information and not making the changes necessary to meet the requirements of current legislation. Documentation necessary to provide an efficient and effective service for children is not in place. Planning to help children make good progress is not in place. Therefore, a balanced and stimulating curriculum is not provided and this is detrimental to the development of the children who attend.

Overall the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to provide a record of visitors and devise a written procedure for lost and uncollected children. These requirements have been met providing a more efficient service for children, although the visitors' book is not used consistently. They were also asked to ensure that posters and wall displays reflect diversity. Some posters have now been put up to show positive images of racial diversity to raise children's awareness. Further recommendations to obtain information relating to infectious diseases and devise an equal opportunities policy have also been met to improve the level of care for children.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

The provider is required by law 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. There are no complaints to report.

## **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 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:

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are



suitable to work with children by devising a robust system for the appointing and induction of staff

- plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children aged from birth to three, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs using an appropriate framework such as Birth to three matters
- keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children and provide a suitably stocked first aid kit for their use

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:

- develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, including planning and assessment, so that children are provided with a stimulating and balanced curriculum that meets their individual needs.

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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)