



Discovery Nursery LTD

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290188
Inspection date	19 September 2005
Inspector	Beth Kingsland
Setting Address	Dover Discovery Centre, Market Square, Dover, Kent, CT16 1PH
Telephone number	01304 244580
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Registered person	Discovery Nursery LTD
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?

The Discovery Nursery was registered in June 2004. It is run by Discovery Nursery Limited and operates from two rooms in the Dover Discovery Centre in the town centre. There is access to a fully enclosed outside play area. The group serves the local and surrounding area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00, all year round. Children attend on a sessional or full time basis.

There are currently 48 children on roll aged from 2 years to 5 years. Of these 22 children receive funding for nursery education. The group currently supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff. Three of the staff hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. Two staff are working towards qualification.

The group receives support from the Local Authority and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children are aware of the importance of their own personal hygiene and take responsibility for washing and drying their hands throughout the day, for example, children confidently commented, 'let's wash our hands before we eat lunch'. Although staff protect children from cross contamination while changing children's nappies, facilities are not appropriate to afford children their privacy and dignity. Children's nappies are changed in full view of their peers, staff and any visitors. Procedures for ensuring that equipment is clean and well presented have been implemented and children can generally select from equipment that is clean and well maintained. However, the carpet area within the nursery is in a poor state of cleanliness and is not suitable for the children to play.

Children are provided with a packed lunch brought from home. Children receive regular access to drinks and snacks, which provide them with a choice of healthy and nutritious food. Details of allergies are recorded on children's admission forms, however, there are no procedures to ensure this information is updated or that staff are fully informed. Details of allergies and preferences are displayed within the nursery; however, this information does not include information about relating symptoms. As a result, in the event of a child having an allergic reaction, staff may not recognise the symptoms and act promptly to ensure children are safe and well.

Children have access to outside play facilities and during the inspection played happily and confidently. However, use of the garden area is generally limited to the warmer months; as a result, during inclement weather children have limited access to fresh air and vigorous physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Procedures to ensure the children's safety with regard to their arrival and departure

are implemented well. Clear systems have been developed to ensure that children are only collected by authorised adults and entrances and exits are kept secure at all times. The children are generally housed within one main room and are given free access to all available accommodation. They are given some direction with regard to their own safety within the nursery. However, due to poor organisation and management of the available space, children's safety cannot be assured. For example, the children receive little guidance from staff to put equipment away, resulting in children tripping and falling over equipment sprawled over the floor.

The manager conducts risk-assessments of the premises. However, as she takes full responsibility for completion, staff are not involved in the process and do not contribute to identifying and addressing potential risks. Although emergency evacuations are completed to allow children to be aware of procedures, these cannot be effective as staff fail to ensure that the children's daily attendance records are completed accurately.

The children's welfare is not safeguarded with regard to child protection issues. Although procedures have recently been developed, information has not been shared with staff, resulting in them being unaware of what would happen in the event of an allegation being made against them. Staff have a limited knowledge of child protection issues and are unaware of their own responsibilities in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

The children are aware of their daily routine and arrive eager and enthusiastic to join in with the activities provided for them. Although children appear to know the staff well, the lack of adult stimulation to encourage and motivate children results in them not reacting and openly expressing themselves, for example, children who speak English as an additional language remained very quiet and staff failed to openly communicate and provide activities that allowed them to explore and find their own voices.

Although children are able to select from a range of equipment, limited staff involvement results in children not exploring or discovering independently. The manager has attended training for the Birth to three matters framework, however this knowledge has not been put into practice and information has not been cascaded to other staff. As a result, staff have a limited knowledge of early childhood development and the importance of self-discovery and creativity. Although children have access to sand and free-painting, there are generally limited opportunities to access a balanced range of activities that allow them to explore, express their own ideas, discover how things happen and respond using their imaginations and thoughts. Activities are not appropriate to children's stages of development, for example, children aged two years were provided with thin pencils and colouring sheets resulting in children losing interest and looking around for other activities. Although staff are beginning to assess children's achievements, they fail to make effective use of these within planning. As a result, all activities are the same, with no adaptation or differentiation for individual children. Although there is a key worker

system, this has yet to been managed effectively to ensure that the differing needs of children are fully supported.

Nursery Education

The overall quality of teaching and learning is inadequate.

Children are aware of their environment and beginning to develop clear relationships together. Children appear confident within their environment and are beginning to select from equipment stored in sliding draws. However, children do not experience activities that allow them to use their initiative and take control of their own learning. Children confidently take themselves to the toilet, and wash and dry their own hands; however, opportunities to develop personal independence as part of their daily routine are limited. For example, at lunch times children do not pour their own drinks, lay the table or serve themselves their choice of food. Although children are beginning to work together, they do not receive sufficient support to learn about and respect the values and feelings of others. For example, children regularly snatch toys from each other and are not effectively guided towards turn taking, choosing instead to keep toys to themselves. Children are beginning to communicate their ideas; however, staff do not actively question children throughout the activities they complete. As a result, activities lack challenge and children soon lose interest. Children spend long periods of the day waiting, for example, at lunchtime. This results in children becoming fidgety, losing patience and being easily distracted. Children listen attentively to stories read to them by staff, actively joining in with the story and discussing the pictures they see. Children are provided with a range of books to select from, and were observed sharing the stories in small groups. Children are provided with opportunities to take part in role-play. However, space restrictions do not allow children easy access. As a result, although children choose to play within the area, they soon leave, as there is insufficient space to move freely. Children confidently count to ten and beyond. However, opportunities for children to solve simple mathematical problems are not incorporated into the daily programme. As a result, there are insufficient opportunities for children to identify numbers, recreate simple patterns and use practical problem solving as part of free-play. Children learn about living things, through trips and outings, for example, children visited a local wild life park. Opportunities for children to learn about the local and wider world are limited. Children do not work with a wide range of materials or substances that allow them to explore, investigate, observe and re-visit. Staff fail to provide appropriate questioning techniques that allow children to be naturally curious or enthusiastic about the activities they experience. Children's fine-motor skills are developed through experiences, such as pegs and boards and pouring activities. Children receive daily out-door opportunities to move vigorously, helping to develop their gross motor skills. However, due to the management of the outdoor play area, opportunities are restricted to warmer months. Although the children experience indoor movement activities, space restrictions inhibit freedom of movement. Children's development is not effectively extended or developed due to poor staff knowledge and ineffective planning for this area of learning. Children's creativity is stifled due to staff not creating a stimulating environment in which children can use all their senses to explore, express and communicate their ideas, while using their imaginations freely.

Staff display a poor knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, which has a direct impact on children's development. Staff fail to plan and provide an appropriate range of purposeful and meaningful activities that allow children to build upon what they already know. Although staff have begun to make assessments of children's development, staff fail to make effective use of their observations. As a result, activities are not effectively planned to meet the differing needs of individual children, with activities provided with the same learning objectives and outcomes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

Children learn about their local community through visits by outside agencies. Activities are provided to allow children to talk openly about their home and family life. Opportunities for them to learn about the views, feelings and needs of others from the wider world are promoted through a range of equipment and posters. This allows children to develop a positive attitude to, and increase their awareness of, diversity. However, opportunities for children who speak English as an additional language to be fully involved in provided activities are limited. As a result, children remain quiet, wandering aimlessly from one activity to another. Staff fail to ensure that identified needs are fully incorporated into the planning of the educational programme. Plans are not developed to include how activities can be adapted to meet individual needs and capabilities. Staff do not provide adequate support or guidance to children with English as an additional language. For example, there are limited systems for gathering useful words in the child's first language, no literature is translated for parents and staff do not actively attempt to engage the children to join in with activities. Staff report that parents request that children only speak English while at the nursery.

Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. However, the setting fails to meet the individual needs of children. They are given no clear guidelines with regard to discovering and understanding about set boundaries and limits. This results in some unruly behaviour with children displaying inappropriate levels of aggression, for example throwing toys and shouting at each other.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and encouraged to stay and settle their children. This contributes effectively and leads to an easy transition that benefits children's development. Parents are informed of children's development through daily exchanges of information. Parents receive limited information about nursery policies and procedures and the range of activities provided for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The organisation of the nursery is not effective, resulting in activities and opportunities not being appropriate to meet children's individual needs. Space restrictions inhibit children's freedom of movement. The manager of the setting works as a prominent leader however, she fails to delegate responsibilities to her staff, resulting in staff not working effectively with children and children not receiving a balanced and broad range of activities that motivate and stimulate their natural curiosity.

Staff have developed as a close team and know each other well. Although the nursery have produced policies and procedures, these have not been effectively shared with staff, parents and carers. As a result, staff are not able to fully implement them into practice. Staff are unaware of correct procedures for the recording of consent forms, for example medication records. Staff fail to ensure that all records of individual children are available for inspection. The nursery has not developed effective systems for the recording of children's attendance. This results in the nursery not complying with their registration requirements.

Leadership and management is inadequate. Monitoring procedures are not effective to ensure that children receive a suitable range of activities that support their progress in the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff knowledge of the curriculum is not consistent; therefore they are unable to support children within the provided activities to help them progress on to their next steps in learning. Assessments of children are not effective and are not used to inform the planning of activities. As a result, activities are not adapted to meet the differing needs and abilities of children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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:

- ensure that the environment allows children to have freedom of movement and that activities are effectively organised to meet the individual needs of children. Develop systems to ensure children have full and equal access to well-organised facilities that are maintained appropriately
- ensure that correct adult to child ratios are maintained at all times and clear and accurate records are kept of attendance that clearly identify the times of arrival and departure of staff and children
- plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs
- ensure changing and toilet facilities afford children privacy and dignity and conform to environmental health standards
- ensure correct procedures are adopted for the administration of medication that are fully known and understood by all staff
- ensure all staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Ensure that the child protection procedures comply with those of the local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC)
- ensure that all records relating to day care activities are appropriate to meet individual children's needs, readily accessible and available for inspection at all times.

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 the leadership and management of the nursery. Introduce appropriate systems to monitor the quality of teaching to ensure all staff implement a consistent approach to children's learning
- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning
- make effective use of assessment to inform the planning of activities to ensure all children, including those with special needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make consistent progress within all areas of learning
- ensure children have access to a suitable range of experiences and activities that allow them to explore, investigate and use their imaginations, both inside

and outside the nursery. Provide opportunities for children to use their initiative, to select freely and independently from a wide selection of purposeful and meaningful activities that are appropriate to 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