



Dagnall Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY260853

Inspection date 07 November 2005

Inspector Ann Hilary Guy

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Registered person Dagnall Under Fives

Type of inspection Integrated

Type of care Sessional care, Out of School 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dagnall Under Five's is a committee run group. It first registered in 1975 and operates from two rooms within the Village Hall in Dagnall, Buckinghamshire.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the group at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 school term times. For the last two terms of the academic year additional afternoon sessions are included from 12.45 to 15.00 on days when the hall is available. The group also offer a Holiday Playscheme during

the summer school holidays from 9.30 to 12.00, 2 days a week, for a maximum of 32 children up to 8 years at any one time. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from 2 to 5 years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area. The group has facilities to support children who speak English as an additional language and others who have special needs.

The group employs six staff. Five of the staff, including the play leader, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working on furthering her qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of good health through the daily routine, which includes washing hands before having a snack and after visiting the toilet. Suitable procedures for nappy changing are in place that take account of the child's need for privacy and prevent any possibility of cross infection. Policies and procedures ensure appropriate action is taken for children who are unwell, although not all required permissions have been sought. Good use is made of both indoor and outdoor space, enabling children plenty of opportunities for physical play.

Children benefit from a daily snack of either fresh fruit or vegetable pieces, together with a cup of milk or water. Two children assist with the snack preparation each day, whilst others tidy up the room, ensuring all are involved. Water can be requested at any time during the session, although none is readily available for the children to access.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The secure, child-friendly environment ensures children's safety at all times. The premises and deployment of staff are suitably organised and enable children plenty of space to play safely both inside and outside the building. A good variety of age appropriate toys and equipment are available, pre-selected by staff and regularly checked for safety. Water is available in the hall to wash hands after messy play, it is generally located on the stage with a step stool to enable children to reach safely. The sound, daily, risk assessment procedure ensures all aspects of safety are checked before the arrival of the children.

Regular fire practises are held at various times during the session. However, due to the proximity of a busy road the children do not always leave the building. These, together with a clear procedure for outings, help children learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff protect children well and have a clear understanding of the policy and procedure for child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children of all ages show some interest in what they are doing, as they develop their skills through the varied activities offered. They have a strong bond with the staff team, who respond to their needs appropriately and interact well with them. Children under 3 are beginning to benefit from the integrated use made of the Birth to Three Matters framework with the Foundation Stage, although no developmental assessments are made for children under 3 years.

The Holiday Club runs on a similar themed approach to the pre-school, with activities aimed at the age of children attending. There is a good variety of physical and creative challenges offered, together with additional age appropriate equipment.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children progress at their own pace through the Foundation Stage, although there are limited opportunities for more able children to be challenged. The assessment records clearly plot their progress against the stepping-stones, supported by observations, and these, together with the evaluations, are beginning to be used to plan for the next steps of learning. Planning is linked to the six areas of learning, however, it does not clearly identify how all aspects of learning, in all subjects, will be covered. Children benefit from the well-organised small group focus activities, however, teaching and learning is variable within the rest of the session.

Children learn through pre-selected free-play activities, with a few children at a time benefiting from small group focus activities. Adult intervention is varied, some staff are skilled at developing the children's abilities, whilst others act in a supervisory role. Children are happy, settled and confident, benefiting from the current high ratio of adults to children. They have plenty of opportunities to develop their communication skills, conversing with peers and staff, and to mark make using a variety of paint, pens and crayons. They are beginning to recognise their name with some able to identify sounds, although this is not effectively reinforced and there is little use of labels and opportunities to see print, other than in books. Children have some opportunities to count and learn about shapes, weight and measure. They have very few opportunities to compare and problem solve in every day situations. The weekly topic based programme ensures a good balance of themes, some based around major festivals and different religions.

Children have free movement between the outdoor area and main hall. Outdoor space is well used as an extension to the learning environment and children partake and develop their physical abilities both in the hall and outside. Their imagination develops through effective use of small world activities, dressing up clothes and the home corner, which transforms into many varied play situations like an Indian restaurant or a veterinary surgery. Children have access to some electronic toys and occasional access to a computer, which has suitable software to support their learning. They enjoy listening to stories in both small and large groups and very good use is made of puppets as a visual stimulus. Children have daily opportunities to sing

songs and enjoy partaking in other musical activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to develop an understanding and appreciation for other cultures and religions, through topic work and resources. They are able to make some choices and decisions, supported by a staff team who know them well and treat them as individuals. Their behaviour is reasonably good and they are beginning to show understanding of the basic rules of the group. However, concentration in large group situations is variable and deteriorates towards the end of the session. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children benefit from the positive relationships staff have with parents and carers, together with suitable communication links, some recently implemented, which ensure consistent and supportive care for the children at all times. Children with any form of special need are very well supported in this group.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are supported by a staff team who give sound regard to their welfare. This is a committee run group in which the staff work closely as a team. Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, the regulator had not been notified of the change in committee. An appraisal system is in place to enable the committee to monitor the provision. Staff each takes responsibility for planning an area of learning, which is coordinated and combined by the play leader. This enables children to receive a balanced curriculum.

Children receive a good level of care as the group functions with a high staff ratio of mostly qualified staff, enabling them to offer open access to the outdoor area throughout a large part of the session. The registration system does not always show an accurate record of persons present, as no times of arrival and departure are recorded. Suitable policies and procedures underpin the care offered, although some require minor amendment.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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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 the registration system clearly shows the hours of attendance for all children and request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice and treatment.
- ensure Ofsted is notified of all significant changes and events
- develop a system of recording the achievements of children under the age of three years.

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):

- continue to develop planning, to ensure all aspects of learning are covered and sufficient challenge is given to the older, more able children
- extend the opportunities for children to see print in many forms and to have an awareness of number in practical situations
- develop concentration skills, especially in large group situations. and increase opportunities for children to self select and develop independence.

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