



The Oak Tree

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY279877
Inspection date	26 September 2005
Inspector	Christine Powlesland
Setting Address	Old Medical Centre, Marlborough Road, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8JL
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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?

The Oak Tree neighbourhood nursery opened in 2004. It is located near the centre of Ilfracombe. The nursery operates from its own premises consisting of 3 ground floor rooms and 1 first floor room. There is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open 5 days a week throughout the year from 08:00 to 18:00.

The nursery cares for a maximum of 35 children aged from 6 weeks to 8 years at any one-time. Of the 79 children on roll, 33 receive funded nursery education. Most

children live in the local area. The nursery supports children with special needs and a small number who speak English as an additional language.

There are 14 staff who work with the children, 13 are full-time and 13 have a recognised early year's qualification. One staff member is currently attending training to achieve this. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are outdoor activities for all the children to help them develop control of their bodies, for example as they jump from the climbing frame and ride on wheeled toys. Staff have a keen knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and they support and encourage activities well. Their excellent understanding of each child's stage of development means the youngest children's physical and emotional needs are well met, for example staff cuddle babies as they fall asleep.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene. They are becoming independent in self-care skills, however not all children have access to soap to wash their hands before eating and there is some risk of cross-infection. Children's health is safeguarded by the provision of suitable first aid boxes, staff with current first aid qualifications and the good maintenance of accident and medical records.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet and they help themselves to drinking water throughout the day. Parental wishes and the children's choices are taken into account to provide nutritious meals and snacks that appeal to the children and meet their dietary needs. All food prepared for the children is fresh, such as bread rolls made daily. Menus show a wide range of tastes are catered for. Different foods are regularly introduced to widen children's experiences, including foods from differing cultures. Children help plant fruit and vegetables and then harvest these for their snacks and meals.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The nursery is purpose built to make a child safe environment. There are keypad locks to the main entrance and playroom doors for the safety of the children. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use continual risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. This means children are able to move around freely and independently. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to involve children effectively in taking responsibility for their own safety. For example children discuss the safe use of the climbing frame before playing outside and they independently walk carefully up the sloping path to the higher garden level.

The garden is designed specifically for the safety of young children whilst giving them opportunities for adventure and interesting activities. For example the paved race-track in the higher garden has a gate to prevent bikes from going down the slope. Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development, independently selecting from a wide range of toys and activities which meet safety standards.

Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give top priority to the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well in the nursery. They enter confidently and make themselves at home. They relate well to each other and share and take turns routinely, waiting patiently until there is a free tricycle to ride on. Children become independent as they freely choose between a wide variety of toys, books and activities which appeal to all. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework to adapt the themes and activities of the older children to promote the younger children's learning. Photographs show the babies and toddlers enjoying paint and water play. All children spend their time purposefully. Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their creativity, such as singing, playing instruments, painting and baking.

Nursery education.

The quality of the teaching and the children's learning are good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn effectively. There are 2 staff who plan a broad and balanced range of interesting activities, which are adapted to meet individual needs and interests. As a result, children are motivated and make many good links in their learning. Children have a positive attitude to learning and they make good use of the range of resources, collecting leaves from outside to put onto the display table. Behaviour is generally managed well, however occasionally the children lose focus and become distracted when in large group activities. All children are included and questioning is used by most staff to encourage the children to think. Activities do not always challenge the older children sufficiently and everyday situations are not used effectively to solve problems, such as setting the table or pouring their own drinks at lunch time. Children are good listeners and have access to a wide range of books which they handle appropriately and take pleasure from when in small groups.

Overall children make good progress in all areas of learning. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations which link well to the stepping stones. Records of children's achievements are shared with parents. They are used successfully to inform future planning for each child.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A range of meaningful activities and resources promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. For example, as they celebrate festivals from across the world. Children's understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to care for each other, to share and to give a hug to say sorry for snatching a car.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are known and met as they follow their normal daily routine as discussed with parents. For example, babies sleeping as individual need dictates. Children behave very well. They make themselves at home and confidently decide what to do, helping themselves to drinks and independently visiting the toilet. They have time to relax as well as to be active. Children have equal access to equipment and play materials. The nursery fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They are made welcome and encouraged to take part in activities with their children at the nursery which contributes to the children's well being. For example, parental involvement in dance and in constructing an outdoor mosaic. Parent's views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before the child enters the nursery, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure that parents know how their children are progressing and developing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation and the leadership and management of the nursery are good. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children, who feel at home and at ease within the well organised environment. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children and are regularly reviewed. All staff are committed to continuous improvement and development. They regularly reflect and monitor the quality of their care and education and they are currently involved in a quality assurance scheme. Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection by providing suitable hand washing facilities.

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 activities challenge the older and more able children sufficiently and that everyday situations are used effectively to enable children to solve problems.

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