



## Scallywags Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY294872
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Veronica Sharpe
<b>Setting Address</b>	Westwick Hall Farm, Westwick, Oakington, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 5AR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 232400
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Countryside Day Nurseries
<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 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?

Sallywags Day Nursery (Westwick) is one of two nurseries owned by Countryside Day nurseries. It is located on a working farm in the village of Westwick, near Cambridge. Children are housed in two units according to age. There are several enclosed outdoor play areas and children have supervised access to various parts of the farm and the farm animals. The nursery is open all year round from 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday, with the exception of some public holidays.

The nursery is registered to accept up to 82 children aged under 5 years, of these no more than 44 may be aged under 2 years. There are 111 children on roll, 13 of whom are eligible for nursery education funding. There are a number of children attending who have English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 21 staff, 19 of whom work directly with the children. Most of these have appropriate child care qualifications to at least Level 2, 8 are currently on training courses.

The nursery is working towards the quality assurance scheme 'Quality Counts'.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they learn the value of good hygiene practice from consistent nursery routines. Staff provide good role models, for example by washing their own hands thoroughly before preparing food or after nappy changing. Children learn that hand washing after visiting the animals is important to keep away germs. So that children's medical needs are known and met any special requirements are recorded and displayed so staff are fully aware. To safeguard children's welfare accidents or incidents are recorded and shared with parents or carers and any medication administered is witnessed and countersigned.

Children benefit from healthy and nutritious meals that are attractively presented so they are appetising and interesting. They learn why certain foods are good for them through topics and themes, although staff do not always take the opportunity to extend children's learning by discussing the foods provided at meal times. Children learn to make healthy choices at snack times because they are offered a selection of fruits and breads, which they eat with enthusiasm. Children with special dietary requirements are offered suitable alternatives. Younger children are offered water frequently throughout the day so they are well hydrated. Older children independently use a water cooler, which enables them to develop their own self-care.

Children in all areas enjoy fresh air every day. Babies are taken for walks in the garden and around the farm, or in inclement weather are carried out to see the rabbits. Older children enthusiastically make use of the nursery equipment to pedal, scoot, balance or climb in the garden and they manoeuvre around each other with eager self-confidence. Balls, bats and beanbags are provided so that children enjoy a variety of activities and develop positive attitudes towards physical exercise. Indoors children play active musical games such as 'The Music Man' in the spacious rooms.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are kept safe because a rigorous risk assessment enables staff to prepare

an exceptionally safe and stimulating environment. Children move around freely in the spacious and well organised rooms, which are warm, comfortable and attractively decorated so children, family and visitors feel welcome. Children learn to take care of themselves and be aware of danger because staff explain reasons why some activities are hazardous, for example, climbing on a gate. Fire drills are conducted frequently, and to help children understand the procedures a pictorial representation of the procedures is displayed. So that babies are protected when sleeping the sleep room is monitored and staff visit to physically check them every 5 minutes.

Children use a wide range of high quality resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. These are organised in safe and accessible shelving so children learn to be independent and follow their own interests. Children's safety and health is assured because all equipment and resources are cleaned and checked frequently. Older children, in particular help to maintain the safety of their play spaces by initiating the clearing up of toys and sweeping spilled sand.

Children are kept safe from harm because staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the nursery procedures in the event of child abuse. Senior staff have completed the necessary training that ensures they have a good understanding of the local Area Child Protection Committee guidance. Policies and procedures are made available to parents and carers and form part of the induction process for new staff.

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

The provision is good.

All children progress because staff know them well and have a good understanding of their individual development and interests. Children arrive happy and eager to participate, they greet staff warmly and settle quickly to their chosen activities. Close and caring relationships exist between staff and children and they enjoy affectionate cuddles together. Children play well together, they enjoy each other's company and play alongside each other or co-operatively according to their stage of development.

Babies enjoy a peaceful and soothing atmosphere, rooms are spacious and well-organised so mobile babies can crawl and toddle safely and explore their environment. Babies and staff interact well, they babble to each other and babies are clearly happy and secure, they hold up their arms to be carried or settle in laps to share games, such as sorting shapes. Younger children benefit from flexible routines that follow parents wishes and rest or play according to their own needs.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework enables babies and toddlers to benefit from an wide range of age appropriate activities that enable them to develop and progress. Children happily participate in sensory experiences such as messy play with shaving foam or develop their communication skills through music or listening to stories. Children generally enjoy an excellent range of accessible resources and activities that meet their individual needs. Although children in all areas benefit from a wide range of books, these are mostly kept in cupboards, rather than arranged in accessible displays, this inhibits children's ability to seek them out independently.

## NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan and provide a good range of activities that cover all of the areas of learning effectively. Resources are plentiful, interesting and accessible and children eagerly and confidently make their choices and decisions. Staff facilitate a good range of free-flow activities that are not time limited, and therefore give children good opportunities to concentrate and finish their chosen activity, which enhances their confidence and self-esteem. Staff are pro-active in their responses to children, offering help when needed, but also mindful of children's need to experiment and take risks. Staff do not always make the most of opportunities to ask children pertinent questions to challenge their thinking.

Practical planning is undertaken by the staff team and offers children a good balance of adult and child led activities. Assessments using the stepping stones effectively monitor and record children's achievements and includes information provided by parents to widen the knowledge of children's progress. Planning does not yet utilise the full range of the stepping stones, and there is some inconsistency in the timing of observations and the amount of information recorded, however, staff are working on further improvements in planning and assessment with the help of the Local Authority early years mentor.

Children are confident, independent learners who are keen to join in the planned activities and make choices and decisions on their own. They help each other tidy away and are beginning to be responsible for their own self-care. They interact well with their peers, enjoying extended role play activities like 'doctors' involving adults confidently in their play and sharing and taking turns with the resources. The free-flow pattern of activities gives children good opportunities to be creative and imaginative as they have time to develop and extend their ideas and complete their self-chosen tasks.

During free play children select from a good range of age appropriate activities, they develop pre-writing and physical skills as they thread beads and reels, paint, glue and use scissors. Writing materials are plentiful and children write or attempt mark making in various ways, such as the letter to the 'hospital' or by indicating ownership of their artwork. Children enjoy story time, listening carefully to a familiar rhyming tale, predicting and remembering what comes next. They are not always able to access books spontaneously as many are not displayed.

Children experiment with volume and weight, using scoops and other containers and learn about mathematics in practical activities such as cooking or play-dough. They build three-dimensional objects and pass objects under, through or over, learning mathematical language and concepts. Interesting activities, such as making Rangoli patterns for Divali enable children to learn about and practise symmetry. Children play games together, such as 'Hungry Frogs' and they eagerly count the balls at the end to see who the winner is. Children benefit from a good range of technology, they have free access to computers, which have a range of suitable software, such as the 'Cat in the Hat'. They are beginning to use a digital camera to record their activities and print out the photographs for displays and for parents and carers to enjoy, which is good for their self-esteem.

Children have very good opportunities to learn about the world around them. They visit the rabbits and help to feed them and watch the farrier shoeing the horse. Regular walks round the farm enable them to explore, for example the relationship between sheep and wool and they learn animals need good health too as they watch the vet giving preventative injections. Well equipped outdoor play areas ensure children learn good physical skills, such as climbing, sliding, running, pedalling or kicking. Indoors they play active musical games with energy and enthusiasm, using actions and moving in time to 'the Music Man'.

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

The provision is good.

Children know staff well and have strong relationships with their key workers, they are warm and affectionate together and exchange hugs and cuddles. Children have their individual needs met because staff take time to settle children in and know and understand them well. Parents and carers are consulted about children's interests and routines and leave their children with confidence, which means children feel secure and settle quickly to their activities. Children learn about similarities and differences using a range of resources that show them positive images of diversity and they celebrate and learn about relevant festivals, such as Divali or Hanukkah. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional welfare is fostered.

There are no children attending with special educational needs at present, however the nursery has systems in place to support these children and has successfully supported children with additional needs in the past.

Children are helped to share and take turns because staff follow clear and consistent guidelines when dealing with behaviour issues. Staff use praise to encourage children to behave well and apply short, but firm sanctions to children who behave inappropriately, for example, children are expected to say sorry and offer a hug if appropriate. Children in all areas of the nursery are very well behaved, and older children show their understanding of harmonious behaviour by sharing spontaneously and happily helping to tidy up.

The partnership with the parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive good feedback from key workers about their children's progress and have planned opportunities to share what they know at open evenings. Staff provide a full written report twice-yearly and parents are invited to comment and contribute. Good relationships with parents ensure children are secure and confident. Children in all areas of the nursery have their individual needs met because parents and staff exchange good quality information about the children's health, safety and welfare. Verbal feedback is given daily and parents and carers of younger children receive written daily information. A well-written newsletter keeps parents informed about events and changes and other information is passed on using the prominent notice boards.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are kept safe because the setting has sound strategies in place that ensure staff are suitable and have the appropriate skills to support the children in their care. Care is taken to check references and complete a vetting process, including a criminal records bureau check.

The leadership and management of the provision is good. Children benefit from a stable, qualified and motivated staff team who are committed to the education and welfare of the children. High priority is given to staff training and staff are encouraged to seek out areas for development that interest them. For example, staff caring for younger children are booked to attend training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. A good proportion of the staff are currently working towards improving their qualifications, which will further enhance the good practice already evident in the setting. Generally the management are aware of the provision's strengths and weaknesses and are currently exploring further options with the help of the local authority advisors. Staff work together very well organising the play spaces safely and effectively and managing necessary domestic tasks whilst still providing good quality care and support for the children.

Policies and procedures are complete and up to date and contribute to children's health, safety and welfare. These are shared with parents and a comprehensive induction process ensures staff have a good knowledge and understanding. Regular monitoring by senior staff ensures effective implementation of the policies and procedures. To improve the provision of care and education a new deputy has been recruited to complement the existing staff team. This will enable more time to be spent ensuring the setting identifies areas for development and work towards the quality assurance scheme 'Quality counts', without compromising the care and support given to the children. The provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

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

Not applicable

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

The provider is required 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 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 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):

- increase the range of books accessible to the children so they learn to select them independently for both pleasure and information (This also applies to nursery education).

##### **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):

- improve staff skills in questioning children to encourage them to think and wonder and extend their own learning (This also applies to care).

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)