

Natural Choice Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Natural Choice Day Nursery is owned by a limited company. It opened in 2006 and is open to children aged from birth to five years old. It operates from a converted detached house in Alveston, South Gloucestershire. The nursery serves children from the surrounding area. Access to the nursery is gained via one step or alternatively by a ramp. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. Of these, 12 may be aged under two years. The nursery opens five days a week from 8am to 6pm all year round, except during Christmas and bank holidays. There are 67 children on roll, some of whom attend part-time. All are within in the early years age range. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and children speaking English as an additional language. Over half of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The core members of staff are employed full-time and are qualified to at least level 3. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of early education. The setting gained the quality assurance award, South Gloucestershire For One And All Children, in May 2008.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery offers a happy environment, where children are supported by caring adults. Children are making good progress in their learning and development, given their starting points. Staff work well with parents and carers, providing good opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning and for influencing provision. However, the uniqueness of each child is not always fully recognised and supported. Planning for securing improvement and the process for self-evaluation is generally good. Partnership arrangements with other providers of childcare and education are developing well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that risk assessments cover anything with which a child may come into contact and are robustly implemented
- give further consideration to creating a homely environment that is reassuring and comforting for babies and toddlers; and to the organisation and use of the outside play space to support their development
- monitor the effectiveness of methods used for assessment and improve the support for children learning English as an additional language, such as using the effective practice examples in the Department for Children, Schools and Families guidance 'Supporting children learning English as an additional language'

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust arrangements are in place for vetting, supervising and inducting new staff. Arrangements for safeguarding children are also robust, regularly reviewed, carefully managed and understood by those who work with the children. They have clear management roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection. Effective procedures are in place for identifying children at risk of harm, for acting on information and for liaising with appropriate child support agencies. Children benefit from staff who feel valued, recognised and respected. There is a strong team spirit and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and have a common sense of purpose. They work very well together to promote good relationships between staff, parents and children. The management team have high expectations of the staff and children and are keen to drive improvement. This is reflected in their progress since the last inspection. Target setting is realistic and has had a positive impact on outcomes for children. Their self-evaluation takes into account the views of children, staff, parents, carers and involved professionals. On the whole, it effectively identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery and makes good use of findings gained from their participation in the quality assurance award, 'South Gloucestershire For One And All Children'. As a result, they raise children's achievements and improve provision.

The nursery have been largely successful in addressing the recommendations raised at the last inspection. They are providing parents with written and verbal information about the programme of learning their children are following and suggest ways in which parents can be involved in their children's learning at home. Policies and procedures are relevant, meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and help to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. The nursery have improved the range and variety of resources and experiences for children to use to explore using their senses. For example, the treasure basket contains a real lemon, which children are encouraged to touch to release the smell from the zest. Consideration of the planned outcome of activities for children, has led to more effective organisational use of the large playroom. However, they have been less successful in increasing the range of appropriate domestic furniture in the baby unit, to enable staff to sit in comfort whilst feeding babies and to assist young children to developing their mobility and to continue normal life experiences. With regard to implementing a system to assess the strengths and weaknesses in the education provision to ensure gaps are highlighted and actioned, provision across all areas is not yet completely uniform, as provision for the youngest children does not equal that for older children. Finally, the nursery were asked to use children's assessment and development records to ensure that they inform planning for children's future learning opportunities, in particular challenges for more able children. Greater focus is now placed on meeting the needs of more able children, but the assessment arrangements do not have effective links between observations, assessment and planning. Observations tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative, with the result that assessments and planning do not always focus effectively on how to achieve the desired outcome.

The nursery are taking steps towards sustainability. They disseminate good practice among staff, source mainly organic foods and recycle food waste and packaging. Toys and resources are generally good and in the area of information and communication technology, are outstanding. However, some resources are not always easily available or provided in sufficient quantity. For example, most of the outside resources for the babies and toddlers are not routinely cleared of snow to enable the children to play on them. In addition, the sand pit contains very little sand. Also, the enclosed area dedicated to babies and toddlers, is less than a fifth of the overall outside play space available to children. Additionally, babies are unable to use the 'bars' fitted to the wall of their room, to practice pulling themselves up, because these are obscured by toys and resources.

Staff take effective steps to close identified achievement gaps for children with special needs. They have good knowledge of each child's background, but do not always place sufficient emphasis on overcoming barriers to children's involvement and achievement, where children are speaking English as an additional language. Partnerships with other childcare providers are developing well. The nursery regularly share information with other settings. The information gained is used well in planning to promote children's achievements and wellbeing, but is not yet fully in place for each child. The nursery have established very positive relationships with parents and carers, who describe staff as caring and approachable. They regularly request parents views and use any feedback to inform future provision. Parents are kept well informed about the organisation of the nursery. For example, when the manager took maternity leave, the handover between the manager and deputy was clearly communicated to parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are making good progress in relation to their starting points. Staff have good knowledge of the welfare and development requirements. On the whole, they promote children's learning, social, physical and economic development, well. Good quality interaction from adults and well organised routines, help babies and very young children to feel safe, secure and confident to explore new experiences with interest. Children benefit from staff who are interested in what they say and do and who are involved in their activities, such as using the camouflage netting to change the trampoline into a den. They engage well in imaginative play based on their own experiences and can organise their play through discussion, such as two older girls putting pillows on the floor and placing their dolls on them. One asks 'does she need a cover, because she is cold?'

Staff provide excellent role models through their calm and polite manner and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They set and maintain clear and consistent limits, using positive behaviour strategies. Children are very well behaved. They learn to take turns and cooperate well. For example, a child shovels snow into a wheelbarrow and another pats it down. The child asks 'can I have a go?' and the other child with the shovel replies 'yes when I have put a bit more in it'. Later, a different child making a snowman is helped by a child using the shovel, to collect more snow to use to form the snowman.

Children demonstrate very good speaking skills, for example two older boys negotiate how long one will play on the computer, before it is the turn of the other. Children show a keen interest in number and counting such as number rhymes. They regularly hear and use mathematical language to solve problems during everyday activities such as at lunch time when older children set out the correct number of plates for the children present. Older children learn how to match shapes as they play a programme on the computer, called Mouse Island. They are given explicit instructions from staff, such as how to operate the mouse effectively. They also build on their understanding of number, as they work out how many squares they need to move the programmable car, to reach the Post Office on a village map, divided into a number of squares.

Children's confidence and self-esteem are raised by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. They make friends with their peers and develop excellent relationships with the well-established staff team. Children are beginning to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences, for example staff use resources to reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. However, staff do not always fully support children's own heritage. Children learning English as an additional language are not effectively recognised by staff as requiring additional support. They do not build on children's experiences of language at home by providing a range of opportunities to use their home languages in their play and learning, so that their developing use of English and other languages support one another.

Generally, the environment is safe and secure with good procedures in place for the delivery and collection of children. However, staff failed to identify and address risks to children's health and safety from unsecured chemical cleaners; and from failing to secure an outside area which is not deemed safe for children to enter. Children are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe, by adopting safe and responsible practices such as waiting for their turn to ascend and descend on the climbing frame. Risks to children from accidents are substantially reduced through the close attention paid to the recording and reviewing of accidents to monitor the type of accidents and the areas they are happening in, in order to help spot patterns and address any danger areas.

Good hygiene is actively encouraged. Staff wipe the younger children's noses and encourage older children to independently fetch and use tissues from dispensers placed at child height in each room. Children learn to take responsibility and to manage hygiene, as they help to care for Bob the hamster. Good hygiene practices are also consistently applied when food is being prepared and good records are kept of children with particular health requirements in order to safeguard their welfare. Children thoroughly enjoy the range and variety of healthy snacks provided and understand which foods are good for them. They are involved in some decision making, which has a direct impact on the provision. For example, their preferences are sought over the menu plan, so that one day each week, it is 'Children's Choice'. They choose from a book containing pictures of the prepared meals and make their own selection. All are made on the premises using organic ingredients where possible. Older children are encouraged to practice pouring their own drinks, helping them to develop confidence in their physical capabilities. Their

independence is fostered as they are encouraged to scrape any left over food into a bin and to stack their plates and cutlery.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met