



Maidenhall Neighbourhood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY285889 |
| Inspection date | 17 October 2005 |
| Inspector | Hazel Meadows / Mary Gilbert |
| Setting Address | Conway Close, Maidenhall, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 8PR |
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| Registered person | GHNS Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day 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?

Maidenhall Neighbourhood Nursery opened in August 2004. It operates from a purpose built, single storey building in south Ipswich. The nursery primarily receives children from the local area. It opens each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round. A maximum of 51 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The registration includes an after school and holiday club for children in full-time education. Children are cared for in four playrooms and have access to three

separate outside areas. There is a community room in the building which is sometimes used for children attending the holiday club.

There are currently 72 children aged from 8 months to under 8 years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff, plus pool staff. More than half of the staff who work directly with the children, plus the manager, have appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards a level 2 or 3 childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from cross-infection as staff mostly follow appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines. For example, tables are wiped before and after snacks and meals and staff consistently wear gloves when changing nappies or clearing up accidents. However, cleanliness of the refrigerator and hygiene procedures in the kitchen require improvement so that they do not pose a health risk to children. Children follow simple good health and hygiene practices when encouraged to do so. For example, they wash their hands after toileting.

Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. Their individual sleeping habits and preferences are maintained to help them feel relaxed and secure. For example, staff cuddle babies and sing to them to help them sleep. Children are able to have undisturbed sleep in small sleep rooms, with sound monitors linked to the playrooms to ensure they are well supervised. They sleep in a cot or on a floor mattress, however, sheets are not always used on the mattresses.

Children's wellbeing is promoted as medication, accident procedures and records are well maintained and there is a well stocked first aid kit in each room. Children are reassured and appropriately cared for if they become unwell or have an accident. However, spare clothes are not always readily available when required.

Children are well nourished and are offered healthy snacks and meals. They mostly have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents. However, there is not an up to date list of allergies/intolerances in the kitchen and not all children have easy access to fresh drinking water.

Children enjoy physical activity outside where they are able to run around and learn some new skills, such as jumping into and rolling hoops. The toddlers have regular access to a climbing frame and slide, play tunnel and ride on toys plus an outdoor play house, developing their confidence and physical skills. The pre-school children have some access to this area and also play in a sloped grassed area which does not always offer them sufficient challenge and interest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. They are greeted by name and examples of their artwork adorn the walls, helping them to feel valued. Furniture and equipment are bright, colourful and child sized. A broad range of inviting resources is mostly on low level shelving enabling children to self select or request activity of their choice. Children use suitable and safe equipment, in good clean condition, which ensures their safety whilst playing.

Children are mostly kept secure and safe indoors, and outside as staff are watchful of the children and ensure the gates outside are kept secure with high level bolts. Parents with toddlers enter through the foyer which is kept secure and opened by staff. Pre-school children enter and leave through the side gate and there is mostly a member of staff by the door to prevent children escaping. However, on occasions, staff are distracted and a clear view of door is blocked by the coat rack.

Children are exposed to some potential hazards as regular risk assessments are not routinely undertaken. Improvements are required to ensure children can play safely and that open sockets, trailing flexes and fungus growing in the grassed areas do not pose a safety hazard to children. The fire escape doors, which are used for access to the garden areas, can easily blow closed leaving children and staff outside. Fire routine is regularly practiced and logged, ensuring children can be swiftly evacuated in an emergency. Any hindrances identified, such as staff and children not wearing shoes, are swiftly addressed and rectified.

Children are well protected because staff recognise their role in child protection and have a clear understanding of the appropriate procedures to follow if necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing confidence and most come into the nursery enthusiastically. Any children who are initially anxious settle and gain confidence with warm and gentle reassurance from staff. Children in the baby and toddler rooms have access to a broad range of stimulating toys, textures and equipment and show an active interest in what they do. They have easy access to the resources enabling them to explore freely and initiate some of their own games.

The toddlers acquire new knowledge and skills, for example, through doing roller painting they begin to recognise different colours and gain increasing hand-eye coordination. They respond to challenge with positive encouragement from staff. For example, one child tried to construct a brio bridge with the help and support of an adult. Children are beginning to make positive relationships with their peers and staff. For example, they know some of the staff's and children's names and seek out particular children to sit next to at group time. Children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong, for example, they actively help with tidy up time when encouraged to do so by staff.

Staff are beginning to use 'Birth to three matters' with children under three and have received some input from their advisory teacher. They have begun to use simple planning sheets and write some observations to enhance the provision for children under three.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have limited knowledge of the early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them. Long term plans identify topics to be studied and medium term plans identify some activities related to these. Adult focused activity plans are organised by individual key workers and only children assigned to that worker access these activities. Other short term plans are simply a list of activities completed after the children have used them and do not monitor what the children have learnt. Some observation of children's learning takes place but this is limited by a lack of understanding of how this relates to the stepping stones and the early learning goals. There are plans to implement a new assessment structure which will be related to these.

Children are confident and develop their independence through the daily routines. For example, they are active in tidying up at the end of sessions and helping to serve themselves at meal and snack times. Children are keen to learn and most children are able to talk about what they have been doing. Children are developing a positive attitude to books as they make choices from the available range and share these with each other and with adults. They also take home books to share with parents.

Resources are available for children to access to enable them to develop their mathematical skills. However, few opportunities are developed to encourage them to problem solve through everyday routines. Few planned activities enable children opportunity to explore and discover and there is limited access to resources to support their understanding of information technology.

Children's creative development is encouraged by the access to a wide range of media and materials and musical instruments. They have access to a role play area which some children use to develop stories. However, children are limited in developing their creativity by the structure of the sessions which provides only a short period of time for children to initiate their own learning. Physical development is limited by the lack of opportunities for children to access suitable planned activities and resources in the outdoor area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. All children are welcomed and staff work with parents of children with special needs and consult other professionals to ensure adequate support is provided.

There are some books and posters reflecting positive images of diversity and a

variety of musical instruments and toys, however, children currently have limited opportunities to become more aware of the wider society. Not all children currently have opportunities to engage fully in all the activities on offer due to the organisation of the groups. For example, adult focussed activities and access to outdoor play equipment.

Children develop a sense of belonging and feel secure with the routine and one another. For example, they happily come into the nursery and are comfortable with familiar staff. They understand responsible behaviour and are mostly clear of expectations of behaviour. For example, they willingly help clear up and happily sit at the table for snack and meal times. They mostly work harmoniously with others when playing together for example, playing cooperatively at the water tray.

Children are developing positive self-esteem and respect for others. For example, some of them speak openly to the group and listen attentively to the contributions of others. They make some choices and take decisions. For example, selecting their choice of toys and equipment. Children are aware of their own needs, such as toddlers asking to go to the toilet/potty and are becoming aware of the needs of others, for example, making space for them at circle time.

The partnership with parents and careers is satisfactory. Children benefit from two way sharing of information between parents and staff to ensure their needs are met. A welcome pack is available for parents and term newsletters and notices keep parents well informed. There are regular parent evenings and open days to involve parents and give them opportunity to speak to their child's key worker about their child's progress. Parents are welcome to stay and settle their child and written and oral feedback is given by staff to promote consistency of care.

Parents are provided with information about foundation stage and how it relates to children's learning. Half-term plans are available for parents to view with ideas of how they can extend the learning at home. However, currently the written records shared are not related to children's learning through the foundation stage and do not enhance the children's learning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Systems are in place to ensure children are cared for by staff who are vetted and have reasonable levels of experience and training. Several staff are working towards levels 2 and 3 in childcare and are still gaining experience. Staff mostly have a high regard for the well-being of all children, however, at times they just supervise the children rather than interacting with them and miss opportunities to extend children's play and learning. For example, when playing with construction or outside.

Appropriate deployment of staff ensures that children are mostly adequately supervised, however, on occasions children are not well supported. For example, just one member of staff is responsible for groups of up to eight children which becomes

problematic if one child needs particular attention. The current organisation of the sessions results in not all children being able to regularly use the outdoor play equipment, as both groups go outside at the same time. Also, in the pre-school room children have only short periods to explore and discover for themselves and engage in practical activities.

The majority of policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's well-being. However, policies with regard to children's health and safety are not consistently being adhered to, thereby putting children at risk. Documentation is mostly well kept with accident, incident, medication and complaints records in place. However, children's safety is compromised as the registration system is not always accurate and there are discrepancies between the number of children in attendance and those marked in the register.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The directors recognise the need to establish a consistent team of experienced and suitably qualified staff at the nursery, to provide continuity of care for the children. They are beginning to establish methods for monitoring the quality of care and early education and have plans for future improvement at the nursery, such as developing the use of the baby rooms and community room and improving the outdoor play areas.

Overall the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not Applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.

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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 thorough and vigilant health procedures are maintained to promote children's health at all times (this relates to the hygiene of the refrigerator and kitchen, providing children with access to water, ensuring fresh bedding for each child and ensuring children's allergies are clearly displayed in the kitchen)
- ensure thorough and effective risk assessments are routinely undertaken to promote the safety of the children (this relates to sockets, trailing flexes, outdoor area, security)
- develop the operational plan and ensure compliance with the National Standards at all times. This particularly relates to improving the registration system to provide an accurate record of attendance at all times and monitoring and evaluating the quality of care and early education at the nursery

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's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them
- improve planning and provide practical activities which challenge and extend the children and offer them opportunities to problem solve, explore and discover for themselves in all areas of learning
- improve observation, assessment and evaluation to identify children's progress and the next steps in their learning.

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