



Child Base Ltd.

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291970
Inspection date	14 September 2006
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury
Setting Address	Pennypot Nursery School, Pennypot Lane, Chobham, Woking, Surrey, GU24 8DH
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Child Base Limited
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?

Pennypot Nursery School is one of 32 day care provisions owned and operated by Child Base Limited, which is a private company. The nursery first opened in 1999 and was taken over by Child Base in 2005. It serves families from the local community and further afield.

Pennypot is located in a rural location on the outskirts of Chobham in Surrey. Children are accommodated in age related rooms and have access to several outside areas for outdoor play.

It is registered to accept a maximum of 60 children under five years of age, of whom not more than 24 can be under two at any one time. There are currently 130 children aged from five months to four years on roll. This includes 22 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday all year round, excluding Christmas and Bank holidays, from 08.00 to 18.00. Children may attend on a sessional or full day basis. There are procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

Currently there are 14 members of staff who work directly with the children; of these 11 hold relevant qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Early Years and Childcare Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are accommodated in premises that are clean and comfortable. Their good health is promoted well because there are effective policies and procedures in place to ensure good standards of hygiene and to minimise the potential for the spread of infection. These are clearly understood and implemented by practitioners throughout their day-to-day practice. Such measures as the wearing of disposable gloves and aprons when changing children or serving food and prohibiting the wearing of outdoor shoes in areas where babies play and crawl benefits everyone. There are effective systems in place for the recording of accidents and existing injuries, for the administration of medication and for dealing with sick children. The company's "well child" policy is displayed throughout all areas of the nursery.

Children learn about good personal hygiene through daily routines and the gentle reminders of staff. Older children are independent in their self-care skills. They take themselves to the bathroom and wash their hands at appropriate times. Some children are beginning to display an awareness of the reasons why they need to do this. The display of relevant pictures at child-height in the toilet areas provides children with a useful visual reminder of the procedure they should follow. Staff offer support and appropriate levels of supervision for those younger children who are developing these skills. The health care needs of babies are carefully met as staff take account of parents' wishes, for instance, with regard to the use of wipes and creams.

All children have opportunities to take part in activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They regularly spend time outside in the fresh air. Staff recognise that the current lack of shade in some outdoor areas can be a problem in hot weather. They take steps to counteract this by not taking children outside in the hottest part of the day and by ensuring that children wear hats and have sun cream on. Children enjoy being energetic as they explore the large play apparatus in the adventure playground and play on wheeled toys. Children in the two to five year old age groups also take part in a weekly ballet lesson where they explore different ways of using their bodies; for example, stretching, bending, jumping, marching, skipping and hopping. Participation in the weekly "stretch and grow" sessions also enables children to be active and develop their understanding about good health. Under two's have their own separate outdoor play area. Inside, babies have ample space to move around and practise their crawling and walking skills. The provision of an interesting range of play materials set out in different areas of the room means that there is something exciting to go and investigate.

Children are regularly offered drinks and their cups or water bottles are arranged to be easily accessible. Older children recognise when they are thirsty and they are encouraged to have a drink after playing outside. Thus, they gain awareness of the importance of drinking regularly to maintain good health, especially after exercise. Children enjoy a variety of nutritious meals and snacks that are freshly prepared on site each day. Food looks appetising and is provided in sufficient quantities to enable children to have seconds if they wish. A separate menu is available for children under one year and staff are willing to make up bottles as required. Meal and snack times are sociable occasions as staff sit alongside children, helping as necessary or encouraging independence. There are good arrangements in place to ensure children's dietary needs and parents' preferences are met. Staff are fully aware of these.

Children rest in comfort and safety as staff physically check on them at regular intervals. Babies sleep as and when they need as staff seek relevant information about their usual routines and respond accordingly. They have their own cots and all children have their own bedding. Older children sleep after lunch or have a period of relaxation or quiet play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery offers a warm and welcoming environment. Photographs, displays of children's artwork and posters are attractively arranged throughout all areas with many items placed at child height so they can be easily seen and enjoyed. The premises are in a satisfactory state of repair overall but plans are in place for refurbishment of the nursery and work is due to start on this in the near future.

Children's safety receives good attention. Staff are vigilant of children and supervise them carefully. They make use of incidents that arise during the course of the day to reinforce children's awareness of safety issues and potential dangers, both to themselves and others. For instance, they remind children about not running indoors. Staff help older children understand the reasons why they need to answer when their names are called at registration time. Arrangements for ensuring the security of the premises are good and contribute positively to children's safety. Access to the site is controlled and children are unable to leave unsupervised. Staff are familiar with the nursery's evacuation procedure and children practise this regularly. Risk assessments, safety checks and use of appropriate safety measures minimise potential hazards and enable children to feel safe and confident in their surroundings. Children use a varied range of appropriate resources, furniture, and equipment that are suitable for their ages and stages of development. These are regularly checked to ensure everything is safe and ready for children to use.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a sound awareness of child protection issues. Everyone receives in-house training, which is delivered by the nursery's appointed child protection officer. There are written policies in place to support practice and staff are aware of the location of these procedures if they need to access them. The child protection officer is secure in her understanding of her role and responsibilities. Almost every member of the staff team holds a valid first aid qualification which means that they are well-prepared to deal with any accidents involving children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There is a happy, relaxed atmosphere evident throughout all areas of this nursery. Children feel at ease and they have a good time. They enjoy friendly relationships both with their peers and with the adults caring for them. Most children enter well. Their sense of belonging is enhanced as they are greeted warmly by staff who seem genuinely pleased to see them.

Babies are accommodated in a very attractively presented and cosy room that appeals to all the senses. Stimulating play opportunities are available; for example, in the range of interesting treasure basket items and the everyday household objects in the black, white and red sensory area. Resources are set out to enable babies' independent selection and exploration. Staff talk to the babies and offer hugs and cuddles. They maintain good eye contact as they sit on the floor and play with them. As a result, babies are very settled and happy.

Older babies and toddlers have access to two rooms and spend time in both, although they cannot move freely between the two. They giggle with delight as they run around outside chasing bubbles. They enjoy playing with push-a-long toys, talking on the telephones and taking part in sand and water play. They have opportunities to explore an interesting selection of items as they engage in heuristic play. Staff pick children up and cuddle them which helps them to feel secure.

The home corner is popular with the two to three year olds and they enjoy playing with dolls. They have opportunities to participate in creative activities, such as Wellington boot printing, which they do outdoors. Children enjoy playing outside with the cars or practising their throwing skills. Staff play alongside children, chatting to them and asking questions, for instance as they play with water and playdough. The addition of vanilla essence in the water and the provision of textured dough allows children to explore using their senses. Some of the books that children look at are in a tatty condition but management is aware of this, and there are plans to replace these.

Staff working with children under three plan activities that have regard for the Birth to three matters framework of good practice. Children's progress and achievements are monitored through observation and assessment. Staff identify specific targets for some children to support their development but it is not clear from children's records how staff are assisting them, nor when they have achieved these.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children experience a broad curriculum, with many interesting activities that have regard for all areas of learning and cater for both child-initiated play and adult focussed activities. Some activities relating to themes evolve and develop over time. For instance, children begin by making number plates which they place on the cars and bikes in the outside play area. Staff mark out a car park and children take turns to park their vehicles. They then experiment with writing as they write parking tickets for one another. On another day, a car wash is added, which builds further on children's play and scope for learning. Head Office offers support for staff delivering nursery education by means of

providing booklets listing different themes and activity ideas through its "Sound Foundations" scheme. Staff working at individual Child Base nurseries are then responsible for ensuring that the activities meet the needs of their children, for example by adapting these as necessary. Children's progress and achievements are monitored through the completion of individual development records, although these are not up to date in all cases. It is also not fully clear from children's progress records how staff help children to achieve the specific targets they set for them, nor when they have achieved these. There have been some recent staff changes within the room but newer staff who have less experience in the delivery of nursery education are receiving ongoing support and guidance. Children are encouraged to think through effective questioning.

Children are lively and have the confidence to express their needs to staff. They relate positively to one another and enjoy playing co-operatively, for instance, as they act out stories in the role-play area or engage in imaginative play using the small world toys. Children are happy to participate in the activities on offer and they remain well-occupied. Their independence is developing well.

Children engage in conversation with others. They listen attentively to stories with obvious enjoyment and respond positively as staff ask questions to check their understanding. Children choose to spend time in the book corner, looking at books both individually or in small groups. Good use of labelling within the room helps children gain awareness that print carries meaning. Recognition of their written names is aided as they are encouraged to find their placemats at meal times. Children develop mathematical skills through everyday activities, number rhymes and use of the daily routine. For instance, they count the number of children present as they line up to come back indoors after outside play and practise recognition of written numerals as they complete the day, date and weather board. Children develop their problem-solving skills as they take part in such games as Snap where they explore the concepts of same and different and as they discuss the number of children who can use particular resources at the same time.

Children have access to an interesting range of resources and materials that encourage them to explore and investigate; for instance, those items displayed on the interest table or in the "Finding Out Boxes." Children take turns on the computer. They independently access different games and complete these competently, using the mouse control. They often work together, and offer help to one another. Displays featuring photographs of the children when they were babies and as they are now aids their understanding of past and present. Children move confidently indoors and outside with good spatial awareness. They manage the climbing apparatus competently and use the wheeled toys with care. They demonstrate their ability as they adjust speed, change direction and manoeuvre around obstacles. Children have a repertoire of songs and rhymes and enjoy selecting their favourites for everyone to sing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and with equal concern by their carers. Staff are sensitive to the way children are feeling and they show respect for their views. For instance, they willingly accept that a child does not wish to participate in the ballet class and that a baby does not

want to take part in a painting activity. New starters receive good levels of support and encouragement. Staff are affectionate and caring and are always ready with a cuddle for those children who want one. Children gain a healthy sense of belonging and awareness of self as they see many photographs of themselves and their named art work displayed within their base-rooms. Children's awareness of the wider world is enhanced as they have access to many resources that reflect positive images and different aspects of diversity. The rural location of the nursery means that it is difficult, on grounds of safety, to easily take children off-site. However, outside visitors add to the children's range of experiences.

Staff seek useful information about children from their parents when they first start at the nursery and the children's key workers liaise with one another as children move from room to room. Thus, staff are able to meet the individual needs of the children they care for.

Staff are clear about their role in promoting children's good behaviour. They intervene as necessary to help children gain awareness of expectations for behaviour; for example, as they remind children that "we don't push our friends." Codes of conduct for the older age groups are displayed in word and picture format in places where children can easily see them. Children's self-esteem and confidence is well fostered by the staff's use of praise, both verbal and non-verbal. Older children are helped to gain respect for the needs of others as they are encouraged to play quietly whilst the younger children are sleeping.

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

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the friendly, relaxed relationships that are evident between staff and parents. Parents are greeted warmly and handovers are unhurried. Parents receive useful information from both the company and the nursery. They are notified about what their children are doing via the display of information on the noticeboards in each room. Day sheets are completed for all children under two and regular newsletters provide information about activities, with some including ideas for things parents might like to do with their children at home. "Stay and Play" sessions allow parents to come in and join in with activities alongside their children. The nursery's practice of putting together a "Family book" for each child comprising of photographs of the people, places and pets who are important to the child outside of nursery provides a nice link with home and recognises the importance of family in their lives. These books are added to as children progress through the nursery and are arranged to be easily accessible by the children themselves as and when they wish.

Information about the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum together with Child Base's planning system "Sound Foundations" are accessible. A parents' evening is held twice a year and parents can look at their children's development records when they wish. Whilst the development records of children do include space for parents to add their comments, procedures for ensuring this are not fully developed as there are few comments included. Parents speak very favourably about the nursery and the care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work together well as a team and who are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. The effective deployment of staff means that children are well supported. More than half of the staff team hold appropriate childcare qualifications and they have good opportunities to continue to develop their knowledge and skills through ongoing training. As a result, outcomes for children are good.

Required documentation and other records that contribute to the health, safety and welfare of children are in place, organised and kept confidential. Detailed policies and procedures underpin practice and staff's understanding and implementation of these is checked through ongoing monitoring systems.

Leadership and management are good. There are effective procedures in place for the recruitment, vetting and induction of staff. Staff have regular appraisals and the management team regularly spend time within the children's base-rooms to monitor practice. Agency staff working at the nursery at the time of inspection also undergo induction and show sound awareness of their role. Areas for development are identified through a reflective approach which demonstrates a commitment to the ongoing improvement of care and education for all children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- continue to develop assessment systems so that it is clear what measures are being taken to support the identified next steps in children's development and when they have achieved these
- continue to develop procedures to encourage parents to contribute to the development records kept on their children and the recording of these (nursery education also).

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 assessment systems so that it is clear how staff help children to achieve the specific targets they set for them, and when they have achieved these. Ensure that the development records for all children are up-to-date.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk