



## Charlie Caterpillars Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY102780  
**Inspection date** 30 November 2005  
**Inspector** Carol Johnson

**Setting Address** Grace International Centre, Leamore Lane, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS2 7PS  
**Telephone number** 01922 490939  
**E-mail**  
**Registered person** Charlie Caterpillar's Day Nursery Ltd.,  
**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](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 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?

Charlie Caterpillars Day Nursery opened in 2002. It operates from several rooms within The Grace International Centre, Bloxwich. A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.15 for 51 weeks of the year. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 65 children from 3 months to 8 years on roll. Of these 9 children

receive funding for nursery education. The nursery serves Walsall and the surrounding area and children attend for a variety of sessions. A play scheme is offered during holiday periods and a daily wraparound service is available for school-aged children. The setting has systems in place to support children with special needs, and those who speak English as an additional language.

Twenty staff work with the children. Most of the staff have early year's qualifications and the others are working towards an appropriate qualification. A cook and cleaner are also employed. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a satisfactorily clean and healthy environment. Appropriate hygiene routines are generally followed. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before touching food, after messy play and after visiting the toilet. Children in the preschool area independently access the toilets near to their base room. However, they do not always use soap when washing their hands and as a result are not learning about the importance of keeping their hands clean. Children are well protected in the event of an accident or illness because most staff hold a current first aid certificate and there are well-stocked and easily accessible first aid supplies. Children's risk of infection is reduced as parents receive clear information with regards to the setting's sickness policy. Parents are advised of exclusion times for illness and they are asked not to send children who are a health risk to others.

Children are well nourished as they enjoy a good variety of nutritious meals and snacks. Food is prepared and cooked on site and includes pasta, vegetables, salads and pies. Menus are displayed and take into account children's individual dietary needs. A supply of fresh and dried fruit is available within each room and drinks are regularly provided. Nine staff members have basic food hygiene certificates and appropriate standards of hygiene are maintained in the kitchen. Mealtimes are generally sociable and relaxed. Staff sit alongside children and encourage social skills and table manners. Children are developing a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet through everyday routines, planned activities and discussions. Children are offered a savoury starter before lunch, as opposed to a desert afterwards, to encourage good eating habits and reduce children's sugar intake.

Children benefit from regular outside play. The setting has a fully enclosed outdoor play area and this is used by the children on a daily basis. They go out in all weathers and parents are asked to provide suitable clothing and footwear. Outdoor play is planned and children are given plenty of opportunities to develop a range of physical skills, for example, running, jumping, riding bikes and catching and throwing balls. Indoors children move to music and take part in action rhymes and ring games. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and parental wishes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in welcoming, secure and generally safe premises. The nursery does not have sole use of premises but areas used by the children are self-contained and secure. Most potential risks and hazards to children's health and safety have been identified and minimised. Toys and resources are observed to be in good condition and they are adequately stored to allow children sufficient room for play. Extensive, regularly reviewed, written risk assessments are in place and suitable precautions are in place to prevent children's access to unsafe areas. However, staff are not effectively deployed during everyday routines. They are often preoccupied with carrying out basic tasks, for example, setting up and clearing away activities and during these times children are not sufficiently occupied or supervised and their health and safety is at potential risk.

Children are well protected from the dangers of fire as safety equipment is regularly maintained and fire exits are unobstructed and clearly marked. Staff and children frequently practise emergency evacuation procedures and therefore know what to do should there be a need to evacuate the premises. Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded by a staff team who are aware of their responsibilities with regards to child protection. Four members of staff have attended specific child protection training. Children are not left unsupervised with persons who have not been vetted.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a wide range of planned activities and experiences both indoors and outside, including dressing up, singing, water play and craft. Play sessions generally include a good mixture of both planned and free play. Toys and resources are good quality and age-appropriate. Children are well supported in trying out new activities because staff encourage them, explain what is going to happen and offer reassurance.

Children have good relationships with staff and each other. They are praised for their achievements and are learning to share and take turns in their play. Children are treated with kindness and concern by constant staff members. They are at ease to go to staff for comfort and support. Children experience familiar routines throughout the day, which help them to settle and gain a sense of security. Babies are well nurtured because staff respond promptly and appropriately to their gestures and attempts at communication.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Sessions are planned around topics that children can relate to and staff provide a wide range of play and learning experiences. Staff are patient and have good relationships with the children. They interact well and use effective questioning techniques to extend children's learning.

Staff are still developing their knowledge of how to carry out child observations and complete assessment records. Although they are able to identify what children can do, it is not always clear as to how their conclusions are arrived at. Consequently, staff do not effectively plan for children's next steps in learning, and information shared with parents, in respect of individual children's progress towards the early learning goals, is limited. Staff provide an inviting learning environment, children's artwork is displayed and generally children are happy and engaged. However, space is restricted and the majority of resources are not freely available for children to make independent choices. The majority of activities are adult chosen and led and sometimes children are disinterested and disruptive.

Children are beginning to show an understanding of their own needs with regards to personal care and are developing some independence skills, for example, they put on their own coats ready for outside play. Children are starting to make friendships and play with and alongside others. They are developing increased self-confidence and join in eagerly when conversation interests them. At group time children share news from home and confidently talk about the weather using a range of descriptive vocabulary, for example, windy, muddy, slippery and slushy. They are learning to listen to each other and take turns in conversation. Children are starting to recognise familiar words and some children identify and attempt to write letters within their own name.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. They can count confidently to five and some to twenty. They use number names and mathematical language in their play. Children talk about their age and the time and they are starting to recognise numerals to five. Children explore objects and they show an interest in why things happen and how objects work. For example, children are given opportunities to experiment with the properties of magnets and they learn about floating and sinking whilst playing with toy boats during water play.

Children's physical skills are developing well. They develop co-ordination and balance outside and learn to use tools and equipment safely inside. They are able to control their bodies and can move fast and slow. Children join in eagerly with favourite songs and ring games and they use their imagination in craft activities. They paint, draw, use scissors and are able to explore texture, form and colour through art and playing with sand and construction toys.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed and respected as individuals. They celebrate and explore a range of religious and cultural festivals through various activities, including craft and stories. They have adequate access to a general range of toys and resources that reflect diversity. For example, children can choose from a selection of books, dolls and dressing up clothes. However, children are not sufficiently helped to develop a positive attitude towards others because resources that display positive images of the wider community are limited. All children are valued and included and there are clear policies and procedures in place to support children with special needs. They are well

supported by staff who demonstrate a clear commitment to working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to ensure needs are appropriately met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriately fostered. Children generally behave well. Staff are positive role models and offer frequent praise and encouragement. Children receive stickers for achievement and good behaviour. Consequently, they have increased self-esteem and are motivated to co-operate and learn. However, staff are not always consistent in their approach and sometimes miss opportunities to alert children to possible dangers and remind them of necessary rules and boundaries to protect their safety and well-being.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children are helped to settle and receive consistency of care because staff regularly exchange information with parents regarding routines, learning and behaviour. Parents are given an informative prospectus before their child starts at the setting and they are encouraged to take advantage of a gradual settling-in procedure for their child. Useful information is communicated by way of notice boards, newsletters and daily chats. Each child has a daily diary and parents are invited to parents' evenings where they can view their child's progress records. However, information exchanged regarding children's learning within the Foundation Stage is limited. The nursery has a parent committee but it is currently not very active and there are limited opportunities for parents to become involved in children's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. Most rooms used by children are spacious and brightly decorated. The preschool room is due to be refurbished in the near future and plans are in place to take down partition walls and create a more open play space. However, furniture and resources in this area are currently not well-organised. Children's choices are restricted and there is insufficient room for children to play and move safely.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager is in charge of the day to day running of the nursery and liaises on a regular basis with the registered persons. She demonstrates a professional attitude and a commitment to improving both staff practice and their knowledge and understanding of relevant child care issues. There is a good level of qualified staff within the nursery and the manager satisfactorily monitors and assesses staff training and development needs. She is aware that all staff have limited knowledge of effective observation, planning and assessment techniques and training is planned. Also, the whole staff team is due to receive imminent training as a result of the introduction of, 'Birth to three matters'.

Required adult:child ratios are maintained throughout the nursery and staff generally remain constant within rooms to ensure continuity and consistency for children. However, staff are not deployed effectively during everyday routines and as a result children's safety and well-being is compromised. Satisfactory systems are in place to ensure the continued suitability of staff. The nursery is working towards a recognised quality assurance scheme and the management regularly asks parents for their views

on nursery procedures and practices. Responses are collated, shared with parents and any issues addressed. Policies are reviewed and all required documentation to enhance children's welfare is in place and well-organised.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

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

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure sufficient furniture; obtain written permission before administering medication to children; ensure the protection of sleeping children and ensure that all staff have a secure knowledge of health and hygiene policies and procedures.

The issue regarding furniture was due to the fact that at the time of the last inspection there were not enough highchairs available for all children that required one. This has been fully addressed as more have been purchased and there are now sufficient to meet children's needs.

Sleeping children are now suitably protected as they sleep in areas away from the main thoroughfares around the premises. Children sleep either in cots or on mattresses on the floor. They are appropriately supervised and regular information regarding children's individual sleep patterns and routines is exchanged between staff and parents.

Some improvement has been made to staff knowledge and practice with regards to health and hygiene policies and procedures. They have all been given up-to-date copies of the relevant policies, a new meal time policy has been implemented and the manager regularly monitors and assesses staff practice. Staff are aware that medication must not be administered without prior written permission from parents and this is always obtained.

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

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints.

In July 2005 Ofsted received information that suggested that a number staff changes had occurred recently and that staff:child ratios had not been maintained at all times. The information also suggested that a lack of qualified staff and supervision may have contributed to accidents at the nursery. These concerns related to National Standards 1 (Suitable person); 2 (Organisation); and 6 (Safety). Ofsted investigated by unannounced inspection and found that staff:child ratios were correct at the time of inspection but that staff and child attendance registers were not accurately maintained and therefore the provider could not demonstrate that staff:child ratios were maintained at all times, although assurances were made. Ofsted also found that parents had been notified about recent and proposed staff changes and that suitable contingency arrangements were in place to ensure that sufficiently qualified staff were in place at all times. However, Ofsted had not been informed of these changes. A review of incidents and accidents showed that correct procedures were followed in

response to events and there was no evidence that any accidents had occurred as a result of failure in supervision. Risk assessments are undertaken on a sufficiently regular basis but did not include assessments for water play. Ofsted agreed 3 actions requiring that: the provider ensures registers of staff and child attendance accurately reflect arrival and departure times; water safety is considered within risk assessments; and Ofsted are notified promptly of all staff changes. The provider has written to Ofsted detailing the steps taken to meet the requirements of the agreed actions and to improve practice. The provider remained qualified for registration.

In October 2005 Ofsted received information relating to National Standards 6 (safety); and 7 (Health) concerning a minor accident to a child and parental concerns about accident rates within the setting. Ofsted contacted the provider and required a written report into the circumstances surrounding the quoted accident as well as details of accident rates and processes in place to critically review accidents in order to identify risks. The provider's comprehensive response outlined the circumstances surrounding the accident and also provided evidence that accidents are recorded and monitored and that any 'accident hotspots' are risk assessed in order to effect actions to minimise risk. The information provided suggests that the relevant National Standards and supporting criteria are being met and therefore Ofsted intend no action. The provider remained qualified for registration.

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**

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 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 that staff consistently apply positive behaviour management strategies and encourage children to understand and respond to the rules and boundaries that are in place to protect their safety and overall well-being
- increase resources that help children to develop a positive attitude towards race, gender, culture and disability



- improve the planning and organisation of everyday routines to ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times.

### **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):

- develop staff knowledge and understanding of how to observe and assess children and then use the information gained to effectively plan for children's next steps in learning and inform individual children's progress records, shared with parents
- improve the organisation of space and resources to ensure that children are able to safely make independent choices from a wide range of equipment, toys and experiences.

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