



The Trees Day Care Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109128
Inspection date	09 November 2005
Inspector	Janet Maria Moutter / Angela Ismond
Setting Address	Trees, Quarry Road, Old Town, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 4EN
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Registered person	White Horse Child Care 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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Trees Day Care Nursery is one of three nurseries run by White Horse Childcare Ltd and has been registered since 1990. It is situated in a quiet road off the main road in the Old Town district of Swindon, in Wiltshire. It operates from 10 playrooms, in a large detached house in its own grounds. A maximum of 60 children may attend with no more than 20 children under 2 years of age. The setting opens all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00 including out of school care. All children share

access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 78 children from birth to 8 years on roll. This includes 18 three-year-olds and 10 four-year-olds receive funding for nursery education. Children attend both full and part-time. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 full time and 8 part-time staff who work with the children. There are 8 with early years qualifications, and 6 staff are currently on training programmes. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership(EYDCP). The nursery is also a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing their awareness of effective hygiene practices through discussion and the staff's good example. The children spontaneously wash and dry their hands carefully after craft activities and understand the need to wash their hands before snacks and after toileting. This is having a positive impact on promoting children's good health. However, not all hygiene practice throughout the nursery is sufficiently thorough to prevent cross infection.

Most staff have a current first aid qualification. Children are cared for appropriately if they become ill whilst in the nursery as they are made comfortable and parents are contacted. They are also protected through the staff's good understanding of the correct procedures to be followed if accidents occur or children require medication.

Babies and children enjoy a variety of tastes and food during sociable meal times. Their food is nutritious and includes a wide range of fruit and vegetables. Babies who are being weaned try many different appropriate flavours. The children are served their food in sufficient quantities and are able to help themselves to additional food if required. Parents can view the weekly menus and at the end of the day a daily diary is available.

Each day children enjoy energetic outdoor play. They develop large muscle skills and older ones can pedal bikes, pull and push items, and are confident climbers. There are plans to enhance the garden furniture and equipment; this will benefit the children by adding new interesting and stimulating outdoor play. Children develop their fine muscle skills, coordination and control through the safe handling of a variety of equipment, tools and materials, such as scissors, glue sticks and pencils as part of their play or when pouring their own drinks at snack time. Children move freely and confidently within the playroom, demonstrating good spatial awareness. They have regular planned opportunities for exercise such as when moving to tapes and disc music. However, the well used equipment available to the children to promote their physical skills in the garden, requires additional hygiene procedures especially,

during the winter months. It is available the minimum of twice a day and the children do enjoy going outside to play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery is situated within a large detached house with a coach-house in the enclosed garden. The coach-house has been successfully adapted for the breakfast and after school children. The children are cared for in premises which are safe, secure, routinely cleaned and maintained. All required permissions are in place, such as for outings; and risk assessments are undertaken prior to each session, to help ensure children's safety. Staff are consistently well deployed to help promote children's safety when playing outside. The environment is warm and welcoming to parents and children, who are greeted individually on arrival. Children's artwork is displayed on the walls. There are many reminders for the parents about stages of children's growing and learning. This welcoming environment supports children's enthusiasm to enter the day care and helps them to settle quickly at the start of their session.

Children self-select from an appropriate variety of clean, safe resources stored in easily accessible low level resource units, which helps to support their developing confidence and independence. They are involved in keeping the playroom safe, for example, when tidying up. However, the stair carpet is worn and poses a risk to children and parents.

Staff have a good understanding of the possible indicators of potential child abuse. This knowledge helps to support children's welfare. However, they do not have a secure understanding of the correct procedures to be followed should they have child protection concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There are differences between the quality of experiences offered to children under two and those provided for older children. The presentation of the nursery and its resources welcomes children and encourages them to self-select and investigate promoting their development and independence.

Babies receive lots of cuddles and have warm relationships with the staff members which increases their sense of wellbeing. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home until they reach one year old. The base room progress begins, this means that when they and their parents are ready and confident, within their stage of development, the child moves to the next base room and so on until school. They enjoy the textures of natural material and the colours and sounds of manufactured toys which they explore with interest. Babies develop early communication skills as they attract attention of staff who respond to their sounds during play.

The presentation of the nursery and its resources welcomes children and encourages them to self-select and investigate, promoting their development and independence.

Children throughout the nursery are confident in their relationships with staff. They play happily together and with other adults enjoying using resources such as puzzles, games, small world toys and outdoor equipment, suitable to their age and development. Staff's good use of the Birth to three matters framework is improving children's achievements. They have a secure understanding of the range of experiences which enables babies and children to make greater use of their senses and creative abilities. Musical activities include communication skills. Exploration with paint, dough, clay and damp or wet sand helps children represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff plan and provide a suitable range of activities that promote children's learning towards the early learning goals. They use the outdoor play area frequently so children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Most staff act as positive role models, they know the children extremely well and have a good relationship with them. They are aware of each child's stage of development and undertake regular assessment of the children using the building blocks scheme. However, the staff have recently undertaken training on the early years curriculum and do not yet have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stages. Information from assessment is not used in the planning of activities to promote individual children's future learning. This leads to some activities offering insufficient challenge to meet the needs of older or more able children. In addition, staff deployment to other tasks means that children are occasionally not consistently supported in their learning.

The children have a good range of vocabulary. They use language confidently when talking to peers and staff, which has a positive impact on their growing social skills and self-assurance. They listen carefully to stories and are learning to use number, such as when counting peers present or the pieces of collage stuck on their pictures. Children are developing their awareness of space and shape and learn to recognise familiar words in print through practical activities, such as locating named coat pegs or place cards at snack time. However, children do not have regular opportunities to explore mathematics or to solve simple problems to their satisfaction, as part of the daily routine. This means that with limits to the chance for them to consolidate or build on their knowledge some golden opportunities for learning are missed. Older or more able children are not sufficiently challenged during mathematical play and early writing activities, resulting in missed opportunities for skills to be enhanced. Due to the way the session is planned, whole group time is often interrupted, distracting the children. This means that children are limited in their opportunities to share stories with staff, it also has an impact on the development of their concentration and devalues the activity.

Children have good, exciting opportunities to learn more about the world around them through activities such as celebrating festivals. More opportunities are taken on local outings, to the 'Town Gardens', a good local resource just across the road from

the nursery. The nursery also welcomes visitors to the setting. The children love chasing each other around the play area, supported by staff they realise the rules of games such as 'Duck, duck, goose' making them change direction while running. Children spontaneously use their imagination to initiate role play scenarios and enjoy developing their own creative ideas through art and craft. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for the funded children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and acknowledged as individuals. The staff know the children extremely well and ensure their differing needs are met, such as accommodating a child with a food allergy. They have access to an appropriate range of activities and resources, such as colourful wall charts and books to help them develop their understanding of diversity. Children with English as an additional language receive appropriate support, staff are proactive in introducing initiatives to support their development.

Children behave appropriately in the setting, benefiting from the role modelling demonstrated by the staff. Minor disagreements are handled efficiently by staff, who use praise and encouragement well to encourage children's positive behaviour. Children are beginning to develop their social skills and are starting to learn the need to share resources and to take turns.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident and enthusiastic, demonstrating good self-esteem. They have regular opportunities to share news about their home lives and to listen to others, although there are some missed opportunities to respond and build on this information. Children undertake regular outings within the local area and welcome meaningful visitors to the setting to develop their awareness of the wider world.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Families benefit from the good range of information received by the parents about the provision, such as through the well displayed notice boards, regular newsletters and informal discussion with staff before and after each session. Parents are made to feel very welcome in the nursery and freely discuss their news, such as a recent family holiday. This positive, friendly approach helps children to feel relaxed and self-assured when in the nursery. Parents are encouraged to support the day care, for example by attending seasonal whole family social events, such as a summer barbeque. Parents are aware of their access to their child's assessment records which are readily available. However, they are not encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child's achievements at home when starting at the nursery. This means that initial educational assessments are limited.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's wellbeing and education is supported by staff who have appropriate early years' qualifications and valuable experience in caring for young children. High staff to child ratios are in place.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The nursery benefits from the commitment and enthusiasm of the three nursery managers combined with the close working relationship of the staff. They liaise very regularly, have shared aims for the five grouped age ranges and are working together as a team to further develop the quality of the day care, such as by supporting staff's special needs training and raising awareness of the setting within the wider community. However, some staff are not consistently effectively deployed to promote children's learning and development. This means that although staff's knowledge of the curriculum is sound, their understanding and extension of activities are limited and hamper the children's opportunities for development. The group has not been proactive in tackling weaknesses identified eleven months ago, within the educational provision.

The good partnership between the nursery and the local school, fostered through activities such as involvement in the out of school club's play, this enhances the children's experiences within the group and supports their transition into the reception class. Suitable procedures are in place to record the daily attendance of children, staff and visitors, which has a positive impact on promoting children's welfare. Documentation is carefully maintained and easily accessible to staff should children's personal information be required in an emergency. Detailed policies and procedures are in place, which are easily accessible to parents and discussed with them as part of the registration process.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has made improvements, acting on the recommendations raised at the last inspection. The development and formalisation of the key worker system; training has taken place and throughout the nursery a new monitoring and evaluation system is in place. The planning for outdoor activities has improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints made to Ofsted 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.

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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 routine hygiene procedures are implemented to maintain the good health of the children
- ensure all staff are fully aware of Child Protection procedures

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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop their individual educational achievements; by improving staff's understanding of child-led activities
- continue to develop appraisal and monitoring systems which includes promptly implementing the staff's induction programme

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