



Princess Christian Day Nursery - Altrincham

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310342
Inspection date	14 November 2005
Inspector	Sheila Iwaskow / Joan Isabel Madden
Setting Address	72 Ellesmere Road, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 1JD
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Registered person	Nord Anglia Nurseries 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

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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?

Wyndham Lodge is part of the Princess Christian Day Nursery chain which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Nord Anglia Public Limited Company.

The nursery has been registered since September 2000 and provides full day care to children in the local and wider community. It is situated in a large Victorian house in a residential area of Altrincham, close to the park and other amenities.

There are currently 105 children on roll; of these 17 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs though there are none attending at present. The children use three floors of the building with the older children on the first floor, and the youngest in the basement and an extension to the rear. There is an astro turf area to the rear for outdoor play.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday between 07.30 and 18.30 every day of the year excluding Bank Holidays. The setting receives supports for the early years advisory service in Trafford.

The setting employs 15 staff; of these 10 hold a suitable early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the importance of healthy living through a range of meals which are healthy and nutritious. Procedures are in place to record children's health and dietary needs, their likes and dislikes with regard to food and drink, ensuring individual needs are met. Pre-school children are well hydrated and have regular access to drinks. However, this is not consistent throughout the nursery in respect of younger children. Meal times are relaxed social occasions where children sit and chat about their day. However, children are not provided with appropriate crockery for their toast at breakfast time. Self-help skills are developed in younger children as they are encouraged to feed themselves at meal times and tidy up at the end of the sessions. Staff follow babies' routines with regard to meal and sleep times, providing an environment which is secure and consistent with home.

Children are protected by staff's attention to certain hygiene practices. However, some areas of the nursery are dirty which risks the spread of infection; carpets throughout the provision are heavily stained and a fridge in the baby room is caked in spilt milk. Children learn about simple, good health and hygiene practices as part of the daily routine. They are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and before meal or snack times. A sick child policy is in place which excludes children who are ill from the setting and informs parents about common childhood diseases and illnesses. When accidents occur children receive good care as a significant number of staff hold first aid certificates. However, first aid boxes are not located in the basement of the nursery which compromises younger children's health and safety.

Toddlers' health is promoted by opportunities they have to engage in physical play. Whilst playing outdoors they can run around in the fresh air, ride on bikes and slide down the slide, helping them to gain control of their bodies. However, the toys available for young children outdoors are covered in dirt, indicating that insufficient priority is put upon outdoor play and development of children's physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are greeted by staff when they arrive at the nursery. Examples of children's independent art work are displayed within some areas of the nursery, which helps to create a sense of belonging. Playrooms are heated to an appropriate temperature and children move around their immediate environment with ease. Background music, played in some play rooms, helps to develop children's senses and creates a relaxing environment in which they can play and learn.

Children have access to a satisfactory range of resources. However, toys and materials are insufficient in number and quality to provide children with a varied range of experiences which cover all areas of their development. Resources are not always attractively displayed to capture children's interest or stored to allow for freedom of choice.

Children's safety is assessed and managed through regular risk assessments of the premises and on outings in the local area. They take part in regular emergency evacuation and learn to follow outline procedures to protect everyone involved. Older children are learning to keep themselves safe as they are told to take care when coming down the stairs into the outdoor play area. However, some safety issues within the nursery, which effect children's safety, have been identified; an area of carpeting on the stairs is loose, a fire extinguisher is not securely attached to the wall, the drain in the outdoor play area is leaking, and a cupboard containing cleaning materials is accessible to the children. Children are protected by staff's good understanding of child protection issues and procedures. A written child protection policy is available and parents sign to acknowledge their understanding of the nursery's legal responsibility with regard to this aspect of their children's care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies and toddlers are happy, settled and relate well to staff and other children around them. Staff support babies as they learn to crawl, walk and balance. Resources in the baby and toddler rooms are laid out to encourage young children to develop their gross motor skills. Early speech patterns are developed as staff respond to babies' babblings, sing songs and rhymes. Children learn to make connections when they press buttons or turn switches and are thrilled by the outcome of cause and effect toys. Babies and young children investigate different sensory opportunities and develop tactile skills as they explore the contents of the treasure baskets and make prints from their body parts. Musical instruments are introduced to young children to increase their motivation to create sounds and extend their fine motor skills development. Young children gradually learn to cooperate and interact with others as they build models with the Lego and take part in creative activities.

Some staff have an awareness of the Birth to three matters framework and are beginning to use this to plan activities for younger children. Assessments are in the early stages and are not used to plan the next stages of children's learning and development.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff successfully provide children with a balanced routine that enables the children to work towards the early learning goals. The activities provided are developmentally appropriate to the children and demonstrate that the staff have a reasonable knowledge of Foundation Stage. All plans cover the six areas of learning; however, they do not identify learning outcomes. Adult-led activity plans are completed after the activity leaving staff unsure of learning outcomes and how more able children should be challenged or less able children supported.

There is a comprehensive assessment system in place that should accurately monitor the children's progress to the early learning goals. However, these records are completed infrequently and some children do not have an assessment file in place. Therefore, assessments do not effectively inform planning. Staff make effective use of the resources available to promote the children's learning. However, generally, resources are depleted, tired and grubby.

The children are settled, happy and friendly. They confidently select from a reasonable range of activities during free-play. Children have good relationships with each other and adults. They are able to play cooperatively and care about each other. Children are well-behaved and are learning appropriate behaviour for different situations. They use the toilet independently and are aware of basic hygiene rules. However, due to poor facilities other independent skills are hampered. The children find it very difficult to hang up their own coats as the hooks are unsuitable. This results in untidiness and children not respecting their environment. Children have been learning about an African village and plans show they celebrate and learn about different festivals throughout the year.

Children enjoy joining in with nursery rhymes and songs and at circle times talk about their experiences whilst others listen. This helps them to develop their language skills. Children listen to group stories on a regular basis helping to promote their listening skills. They particularly enjoy listening to the 'Gruffulo' story and are able to join in when prompted. Staff share stories with children individually helping them to learn that print carries meaning. The book area is uninviting with a number of books in poor condition. This does not entice sufficient children into the area or encourage children to handle books appropriately. Despite this, a few children do initiate reading books independently for good periods of time and are able to talk about the stories they have read. The children's opportunities for writing and drawing are uninspiring resulting in them not sufficiently developing their writing skills.

In daily routines children have sufficient opportunities to develop their counting skills. Some children are able to count and order numbers to ten. As they sing number rhymes, such as 'Five Little Ducks', they learn to calculate how many are left each time. Children complete puzzles and jigsaws that involve them learning about the properties of shapes. However, children have insufficient opportunities for problem solving or to meet mathematical challenges.

Children have reasonable opportunities to explore materials such as sand, water and rice. However, there are limited opportunities for them to explore a wider range of

objects. They enjoy building using a range of construction kits helping them to learn about the arrangements of shapes. The children learn how to operate a computer, but find it frustrating that the printer is out of action. During circle time children talk confidently about significant things that have happened to them. At times throughout the year members of the community visit the children helping them to learn about their local environment.

Children are able to play imaginatively and cooperatively in role play areas and outside. They become very engrossed with one another and imaginary scenes are successfully played out. Children enjoy joining in with their favourite songs. They are able to sing simple, familiar songs individually. Children have sufficient opportunities to explore the different sounds of instruments. In planned activities children explore colours and textures, but their experiences are hampered through lack of materials such as glue sticks and scissors. There are generally insufficient opportunities for children to respond to their experiences through drawing and painting.

Children benefit from playing outside at each session enjoying fresh air and natural daylight. As they play on wheeled toys, they are learning to negotiate them around one another, thereby developing an awareness of space. The children enjoy playing in the soft play area where they are able to move in a range of ways such as, rolling, jumping and slithering. They successfully practise their balancing skills as they walk along the beam. However, limited resources prevent the children from developing hand-eye co-ordination skills with bats and balls. The climbing equipment is small and does not sufficiently challenge the older children. Children's small physical skills are developing well as they use one-handed tools such as, cutlery, scissors and glue sticks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies and young children are beginning to learn that they are separate from others as they are encouraged to point to parts of their own bodies. Children are encouraged to be kind and respectful to each other, share, negotiate and take turns as they play. Children's individual needs are responded to, in most cases, in an appropriate manner. All children are included in activities and anti-discriminatory remarks are challenged in a manner which is relevant to the age and development of the child. Children have limited opportunities to learn about the world in which they live. There are insufficient resources throughout the nursery which promote equality of opportunity and a lack of planned activities to raise younger children's awareness of their diverse society. Children with special needs are welcomed into a sharing and inclusive environment. Staff work with parents and outside agencies to support the welfare of children with additional needs. This positive approach helps foster children's spiritual, moral and social development.

Children behave well and good behaviour is reinforced with praise and encouragement and a calm, consistent approach through out the nursery. Children's efforts and achievements are celebrated and their contributions valued, which promotes children's confidence and self esteem.

Children benefit from the satisfactory partnership staff have developed with parents. Parents speak highly of the setting and state that the children are happy and they find staff approachable; however, they are not made aware of the complaints procedure. Parents receive adequate information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and receive daily report cards on their children's day. However, parents are not given accurate information on children's progress towards the early learning goals as assessment records are not regularly updated.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the satisfactory leadership and management of nursery education. Senior staff ensure staff are clear about the routine and activities that are to be made available to children to ensure they experience an appropriate day. Staff are enthusiastic and conscientious. They have a good relationship with the children. Senior staff also work in the pre-school room, enabling them to monitor the day-to-day running of the pre-school. However, planning of the Foundation Stage lacks detail and children's assessment records are not regularly updated. This hampers the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for nursery education. Senior staff have correctly identified some of the gaps in the provision and have verbally outlined action plans to improve the provision.

Young children are cared for by staff who are consistent and work as part of a team. Sufficient staff are employed to work with the children, however, they are not always deployed effectively ensure the needs of the younger children are met. Staff across the setting attend training courses to improve their child care practices. Children are grouped according to their age and stage of development. Space is organised to provide children with a satisfactory range of experiences.

All policies relating to the continuity of care for the children are in place. However, there are issues concerning accessibility and confidentiality; some policies are not made available to parents and children's health details and dietary requirements are displayed in the playrooms. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to address some issues regarding the development of a key-worker system, planning and assessment, child protection, safety and resources.

Some progress has been made to develop these areas since the last inspection. A key-worker system is now in place which is consistent throughout the provision. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and procedures and the policy is shared with parents. The garden fence and loose hanging television cables have been made safe. Fire safety requirements are now being followed. Staff indicated that the fire fighting equipment has been serviced recently, but dates stamped on the fire extinguishers do not indicate this. The deputy manager had agreed to look into

this issue immediately. Babies and toddlers have access to an adequate range of books and natural materials.

All other areas for development remain outstanding and have been highlighted again at this inspection. These improvements made to date ensure that children share continuity with staff, develop their sensory and literacy skills and are cared for in a safer environment.

Two key issues were raised at the last nursery education inspection. The staff were required to develop an effective assessment system and share the information with the parents. It was also recommended that resources for knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development were improved.

Staff now have a comprehensive assessment system in place that should accurately monitor the children's progress to the early learning goals. However, as yet these assessment records are not effectively used as they are infrequently completed and some children do not have an assessment file in place.

Children now enjoy playing in the soft play area where they are able to move in a range of ways, such as, rolling and slithering. They practise balancing as they walk along the beam. However, limited resources prevents the children from developing hand-eye co-ordination skills as there are no bats and balls. The climbing equipment does not sufficiently challenge the older children. The resources to promote aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world relating to children exploring and investigating have not improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st April 2004 Ofsted had received four complaints relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play, National standard 5: Equipment, National Standard 7: Health, National Standard 11: Behaviour, National standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers and National Standard 14: Documentation.

The first complaint concerns staffing ratios and relates to National Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to investigate these concerns. The investigation included examination of attendance records, observations of the numbers of children and staff and discussions with senior members of staff. The evidence examined demonstrated that staff to child ratios were being met.

The second complaint concerns staffing ratios not being met, equipment being in a poor state of repair, the cleanliness of the premises and staff not working in partnership with parents. These issues relate to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 5: Equipment, National Standard 7: Health and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. An unannounced visit took place to investigate these concerns on 18/06/2004. The investigation included the examination of attendance registers, cleaning rotas and daily record sheets, observations of the premises, equipment and the numbers of children and staff. The evidence examined demonstrated that National Standards 2, 5, 7 and 12 continue to

be met. However, it was noted that there had been problems with the cleaning company used and another company replaced them on the 07/06/2005. Since then the standard of cleanliness has improved. Ofsted reminded the nursery manager of her responsibility to ensure that all conditions of registration are complied with at all times.

The third complaint relates to the strategies used to deal with a temper tantrum, that the child, on a separate occasion in June 2004, had been left in a buggy all afternoon and that the child was punished for not sleeping. These issues concern National Standard 3: Care Learning and Play and National Standard 11: Behaviour. We asked the provider to investigate these concerns and report back to Ofsted within seven days. The provider explained that the incident of June 2004 had been difficult to investigate as the staff concerned no longer worked at the nursery, however details of the incident were provided. The provider supplied relevant supporting documentation. Ofsted are satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns.

The fourth complaint concerns staffing ratios and staff records. These issues relate to National Standard 2: Organisation and national Standard 14: Documentation. An unannounced visit took place on 07/01/2005 to investigate these concerns. The evidence examined demonstrated that National Standard 2 was not being met and that some records in relation to staffing were not being maintained. Two actions were raised. The provider's written response indicated that relevant action had been taken to meet National Standards 2 and 14.

Ofsted are satisfied with the nursery's response to all of the above complaints. The provider therefore remains qualified for registration. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints records 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):

- allow children access to drinks at all times, provide children with plates to eat their toast from in the morning, maintain appropriate standards of hygiene within the nursery and ensure first aid boxes are available in the basement area of the nursery
- minimise safety risks to children both within the nursery and outdoor play area; these relate to the loose carpeting, the fire extinguisher, the cleaning materials and the drain
- develop resources that reflect equality of opportunity throughout the nursery; plan suitable activities which allow younger children to gain an appreciation of the world in which they live
- ensure staff are deployed effectively to meet the needs of younger children, make all policies including the complaints procedure available to parents; ensure that children's health and dietary needs are kept confidential.
- develop staff's knowledge of Birth to three matters and ensure that assessments are used to plan the next stages of children's learning and development.

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 planning and assessment, relating to the Foundation Stage, to ensure that assessments effectively inform planning and appropriate learning outcomes for children are identified
- improve resources in all areas so that they are of a high standard, appropriately maintained, organised, plentiful and inviting (also applies to care)
- improve children's opportunities to develop self-help skills
- place more emphasis on the children taking part in reading, writing and drawing activities
- provide children with appropriate mathematical problems and challenges

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