



Snap! 4 Kids Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 221636 |
| Inspection date | 17 November 2005 |
| Inspector | Heidi Falconer |
| Setting Address | 6A Chapel Street, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 1DY |
| Telephone number | 01223 477412 |
| E-mail | www.snap4kids.co.uk |
| Registered person | Snap! 4 Kids 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 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?

Snap4kids is one of 4 settings run by Snap4kids Limited. It opened in 2000 and operates from 5 areas in a converted church premises. It is situated in the village of Chesterton on the outskirts of Cambridge. A maximum of 106 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 for 52 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children from 3 months to 4 years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide area. The nursery supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 staff. 13 of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. 3 members of staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from the risks of cross-infection by the sound and consistent implementation of good hygiene procedures, for example, staff use gloves and aprons when changing nappies and clean the changing mat thoroughly after use. Children follow good hygiene routines for washing hands. Older children use soap and dry their hands independently. However, few of the children understand about why they must wash their hands. A high number of staff hold current first aid qualifications to enable them to deal with any accidents the children have effectively.

Children of all ages enjoy physical exercise in the garden, such as climbing on small apparatus, building towers and riding small wheeled toys indoors and out. Older children extend their physical skills, through attempting to skip, roll hoops, catch and throw balls, however, there are fewer opportunities for them to balance, climb and ride wheeled toys. This area has been addressed and the group are currently in the process of developing these resources to further develop physical challenges for all children. Younger children are able to rest in accordance to their individual routines.

Children have their nutritional needs met as they enjoy a wide range of good quality snacks and meals. All meals are freshly prepared and cooked on the premises each day. The menu takes into account children's individual dietary needs and is rotated every four weeks to offer children a wide variety of foods. Children enjoy the social aspect of mealtimes. They sit in small groups with staff and confidently engage in conversations with others. Older children learn about keeping healthy through planned activities on topics such as healthy eating. This enables children to learn about foods that are good for them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is generally well supported. They use a satisfactory range of safe and appropriate equipment, which is checked and cleaned as part of the settings regular routines. Most areas used by the children are clean and tidy ensuring that children have room to move and can play safely.

Children's security is enhanced by the procedures used to restrict access to the setting, for example, parents ring to gain entry to the building and they are always greeted by a member of staff. In addition an accurate record of visitors is kept.

Children are well supervised when using apparatus in the secure garden so they are able to play safely. Most potential hazards are identified and minimised, however, the settings system for identifying daily risks is ineffective. For example, cleaning products had been left out and were accessible to children and some low level sockets were not covered. These pose a risk to children's safety in the setting.

Children are learning safe practices because most staff provide explanations as to how they can keep themselves safe. For example, children understand that they should not run when in the nursery, so that they do not fall and hurt themselves. This helps them develop their understanding of potential hazards and learn to take responsibility for themselves and others.

Children's welfare is protected. The staff recognise their responsibility to protect the children in their care and understand the procedures they must follow if concerned about the welfare of a child. There is a policy in place that explains the child protection procedures. This is shared with parents to ensure that they are aware of the settings duty to report concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's communication skills are positively encouraged. The nursery have recently introduced 'Tiny Talk' a form of baby sign language. Spoken words are said at the time of signing, this helps to encourage early speech. Baby signing is helping to reduce children's frustration and is developing young children's self-esteem and confidence.

Planning for younger children follows the 'Birth to three matters framework'. Some staff have attended training on this and they are cascading the knowledge they have gained to other staff. This is helping them to plan activities for younger children. Children generally enjoy the activities that are provided. However, in most areas the range and access of resources limits children's ability to further develop their independence and follow their own interests.

Children have opportunities to use their sense to explore different materials. For example, young children enjoy playing with cornflakes whilst babies enjoy tactile experiences such as playing with custard and baby rice. Although children enjoy the range of activities, some art and craft activities are over-directed by adults and do not provide children with opportunities to experiment and make choices.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and of how young children learn. Planning is in place and is being further developed to ensure that all aspects are covered to promote children's learning. Assessment records are in place for each child, but have not yet been sufficiently developed to be informative or effective when planning the next steps in children's learning. Therefore, the older and more able

children are not being sufficiently challenged to enable them to develop their skills further. Parents are given some opportunities to contribute to their children's learning, sharing what they know about their child's abilities on children's reports. However, staff do not actively encourage all parent's to share information.

Most children separate from their carers happily and quickly settle to become involved in activities. Children display good levels of confidence and are eager to participate in new activities such as playing with new outdoor equipment and games such as 'Pop up Pirate'. Children have access to a satisfactory range of resources to support their learning; however, they are not always encouraged do so independently to help them further develop and extend their play.

Most children are confident communicators, initiating conversations with adults and speaking to a familiar audience. Children initiate conversations about their own experiences. For example, at mealtimes children talk about events at home, such as visits to the doctors. Early writing skills are not consistently promoted in daily activities. Opportunities to extend writing for a purpose in more able children are missed. Staff write children's names on art work and no writing resources are available for them to use in the role play area.

Children demonstrate an understanding of numbers, counting and calculation. This is supported in the daily routines to help children develop and practise these skills. For example, children have opportunities to count aloud and use numbers when looking at the daily weather board. Staff set some problems for children to calculate asking questions such as 'how many paintbrushes do we need?'

Children enjoy looking at photographs in the nursery to talk about events that have happened in the past, such as finding frogs and snails in the nursery garden. Through planned activities children develop a lively interest in the world around them. For example, children have drawn pictures to show what they can see from their bedroom windows. Children use their imagination in the role play area to re-enact familiar scenarios, such as playing 'mum's and dads'. Children enjoy exploring a range of media such as sand, water, dough and dry rice. Children have opportunities to develop their creativity by painting. However, art and craft activities are mostly adult-led which impinges on children's creativity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met because staff have a suitable understanding of their needs. For example, babies have their own individual routines for bottle-feeding and resting. Parents are able to share information daily through verbal discussion. For younger children, parents receive daily communication sheets to ensure that they are fully informed about their child's day. This promotes children's well-being. Parents of younger children and babies are consulted about routines, food preferences or weaning, which helps ensure their individual needs are met. Parents are invited to meet with staff at open evenings to share information about their child's well being, which helps to develop children's sense of belonging.

Children are becoming aware of the wider society and develop an understanding of other cultures through celebrating a range of festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas. However, the resources to promote diversity are limited. As a result, children have limited opportunities to learn about diversity through stories and role play.

Children mostly play happily together in all areas of the nursery, interacting confidently with adults and each other. Their behaviour is generally good and older children demonstrate an understanding of the rules for good behaviour, they share, take turns and show concern for others. However, at times children throughout the setting become bored and restless. This is often due to the limited resources that are set out or the length of some group activities, such as sitting for snack or stories.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents know about the daily activities and are given information about what they can do with their child at home to support topics. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and have some opportunities to look at and contribute to their child's assessment. This means that children benefit from the sharing of information to enhance their learning. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Effective systems are in place to ensure that staff working with children are safe to do so. To further enhance children's safety, these procedures are currently in the process of being reviewed inline with current changes in legislation.

Staff are keen to attend further training to improve their understanding and practice in early years and to enable them to help all children achieve well. Some staff are currently attending training specifically to develop their knowledge and skills of working with children under three. The staff team work well together with enthusiasm to create and maintain a caring environment for children in all areas of the nursery. All documentation is up to date, policies and procedures are in place that comply with current legislation and promote children's well being.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager and the area manager are committed to improvement and have an action plan in place to address weaker areas in the nursery education. However, this has not yet been fully implemented, which means that some areas of children's learning are not promoted as well as others. The practice is not being monitored effectively; therefore it lacks consistency in some areas. For example, planning and assessment records are beginning to lack detail. As a result planning is not based around children's needs and shows no extension of older or more able children. Overall, the setting meets the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The nursery has made some progress since the last care inspection. The setting have updated their policies and procedures in line with the National Standards and there is now a written policy in place for if a child is uncollected. This is helping to improve children's safety and welfare. To further enhance children's safety the group agreed to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. All staff have sufficient knowledge of the procedures to follow to protect children's welfare if they have concerns.

At the last care inspection the group were asked to improve the range of resources that show positive images of diversity. There has been some progress in this area. However, the resources are still limited, the group have identified this on their action plan and they will soon be obtaining additional resources. Once these resources are in place children will have greater opportunities to learn about diversity. In addition to developing the resources to promote diversity the group were asked to improve the range and quality of books available to children and organise and display them so that they stimulate children's interests. New books have been bought and in all rooms they are stored in low-level units so that they are easily accessible to children. As a result children enjoy looking at books on their own and with staff. A recommendation from the last inspection was to improve children's opportunities to create child-initiated arts and crafts. There are some opportunities for older children to paint and chalk freely but most art work is still over directed by adults. As a result children are not always able to express themselves freely.

Since the last inspection, staff's knowledge and understanding of the systems in place for identifying and supporting children with special needs has been developed. There are currently no children with special needs attending. However, they have appropriate procedures in place to ensure that children with special needs would be well-cared for.

At the last education inspection the group was asked to improve the assessment of children's progress using the stepping stones, so that it is clear how children are progressing towards the early learning goals and to ensure that future planning offers appropriate challenges to children. Children's assessment records are in place. However, ongoing assessments are not clearly linked to the stepping stones. Therefore planning does not build upon what children already know and can do.

The group were also asked to improve the system for assessing the effectiveness of the educational programme, so that areas for further staff training and development could be identified. Appraisals have helped to identify training needs. Some staff are currently attending further early years training. The knowledge gained will help them to develop the provision for children further.

Since the last inspection staff have improve opportunities for children to use books for enjoyment, reference and to extend their vocabulary. As a result children enjoy books and use them as a source of information when looking at different topics such as Diwali. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to write for a purpose. The nursery have also improved opportunities for children to use mathematical ideas and concepts to solve practical problems and opportunities for children to use mathematical language to describe and compare shape, position, size and quantity. Children confidently use number in their play and staff use everyday activities to

promote mathematical language and calculation skills.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004'. 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 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 children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- improve daily risk assessments to ensure that all potential risks are identified and minimised
- improve the organisation and range of resources to provide children with a stimulating and exciting environment where they make independent choices

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):

- further improve the range of practical activities that enable children to explore and extend their own ideas and enhance their progress in all areas of learning
- develop a systematic approach to assessments so that records clearly show children's progress and are used to inform short term planning to help them move on to the next stage of their learning and include parents knowledge of what their children know and can do
- develop the system for curriculum planning with sufficient detail to help staff know how the activities contribute to children's progress

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