



Elmscot Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY255885
Inspection date	20 November 2005
Inspector	Joan Isabel Madden
Setting Address	149 Stockport Road, Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 7LT
Telephone number	0161 980 0488
E-mail	info@elmscot.co.uk
Registered person	Elmscot 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.

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?

Elmscot Day Nursery opened in 2001. It operates from a large converted Victorian house in Timperley, Altrincham. There are six base rooms; the baby room, toddler room, yellow room, orange room, blue room and lilac room for the children. There is a large outdoor play area available to the children made up of a grassed surface, a hard standing surface and an impact surface. The nursery is privately owned. it opens from 08:00 until 18:00 Monday to Friday all year round except for Christmas

week and bank holidays.

There are 86 children from 0 to 4 years on roll and of these 18 are funded. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

There are 19 staff working with the children, of these, 15 have early years qualifications; 2 staff have qualifications to level 2 and 13 staff to level 3. There are also 2 staff working towards NVQ level 3 qualifications. The manager and the pre-school teacher are qualified early years teachers.

The setting receives support from Trafford Sure Start Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Effective procedures are followed by staff to protect children from illness and infection. They follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. The nursery is clean and the kitchen is regularly inspected by Environmental Health. Nearly all staff have a food hygiene certificate ensuring that food is prepared and served appropriately. There are stringent nappy changing procedures in place. Children are learning to understand the reasons for basic hygiene routines as they wash hands before handling food and as part of the toileting routine. They are treated appropriately for minor injuries as staff are appropriately qualified in first aid and the first aid boxes are fully stocked.

Nutritious food and discussion effectively promotes the children's good health. The nursery has won awards for providing children with good nutritious food. The children eat a varied range of healthy meals and snacks throughout the week. Sausage, mash and peas followed by yoghurt are popular with the children. Young babies have appropriately prepared pureed meals. Parents have the option of taking home 'Eskimo Joe' home cooked meals for the children. The pre-school children benefit from a water cooler in the room from which they independently access water at any time. This helps them to remain suitably hydrated throughout the day and become aware of a healthier option to juice. However, drinking water is not sufficiently promoted amongst the younger children. Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents. All staff are very aware of children's dietary needs. The information is updated every month or when a new child joins nursery. This information is kept in the kitchen and in the base rooms. Special meals and snacks are put onto red plates to ensure children receive appropriate food.

Daily routines include activities to help children develop physical skills and a healthy life style. All children benefit from regular outdoor play enabling them to move freely and with confidence. Generally staff make effective use of the Birth to three framework to foster the health and well-being of the younger children. The babies and toddlers are well supported by staff as they arrive and settle in each day. Staff

ensure their needs are met by allowing them to follow their own individual routines. The babies discover and learn about their bodies as they look into mirrors and enjoy exploring natural materials. Outdoors they have good opportunities to develop physical skills such as, climbing and balancing. However, there are insufficient opportunities for young babies to develop some physical skills indoors such as, skills associated with walking.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel welcome in the organised and nicely decorated premises. It is a bright and stimulating environment with children's work displayed throughout the nursery helping them to feel a sense of belonging. Space is well organised to meet children's needs with learning areas defined in each room. The toilet areas are thoughtfully designed enabling children to have privacy and develop independence skills.

The nursery is suitably equipped to promote all areas. The children use toys and materials that are safe, clean and well-maintained. The young children have good access to materials to promote the Birth to three matters guidance. The furniture for the babies is of good quality and well-designed, promoting their safety and meeting their needs.

Generally there are good processes in place to keep children safe. Staff conscientiously carry out comprehensive risk assessments both indoors and outdoors on a daily basis. No safety issues relating to building and equipment have been identified. Children learn from an early age to keep themselves safe. A mobile baby finds a safe way to come down the steps to the outdoor area. Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The comprehensive curriculum plans for Birth to three matters is effectively put into practice with the learning outcomes for the children clearly identified. The younger children are happy and settled. They eagerly choose and explore from a range of activities helping them to become confident and acquire new knowledge and skills. They enjoy exploring and experimenting with paint as they make yellow and red handprints. Activities are appropriate to children's age and ability. However, the very able children are not always sufficiently challenged. Children are encouraged to make positive relationships. Staff are good role models for the children and as a result young children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong. They are encouraged to share, take turns and be kind.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is rooted in a secure

knowledge of the early learning goals. The effective open-ended questioning of the children successfully promotes their learning. There are detailed long, medium and short term plans in place clearly identifying the learning outcomes for children. Continuous provision plans are displayed around the room helping the staff to promote the children progress through the stepping stones as they play. Thorough assessments are carried out on the children. Observations on the children are usefully transferred onto daily sheets, assessment profiles and child development records to monitor their progress. The very able pre-school children are skilfully challenged.

The children's language skills are developing well. They listen and respond appropriately at registration time. Children join in with familiar songs and listen attentively to stories. They are becoming familiar with the 'Snow Bear's Surprise'. However, the book area is not very inviting resulting in children not making effective use of books. Named coat pegs help the children to recognise their names and learn that print carries meaning. The able 4-year-olds are able to recognise all the letter sounds, write their name and read simple words. Children listen to each others news and respond imaginatively by creating lovely news pictures and stories. They attempt to write their names on their paper. Children are taught to hold pencils correctly and are learning to use one handed tools such as glue sticks and scissors. They enthusiastically take part in number games that encourage them to count, match, recognise and order numerals, add and take away. Many of the children confidently count objects to beyond 10. Daily routines such as setting the table helps to promote the children's mathematical thinking.

Children benefit from a wide range of opportunities to explore materials. They learn about the properties of shells, sand, autumn objects, pasta and gloop. They study the properties of shapes as they build models using a range of construction kits. In circle time children confidently share their news about their families and past events. They learn about the wider world by celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children's mathematical and literacy skills are consolidated as they skilfully work through programmes on the computer; a popular game is 'Pingu'. Daily routines, such as observing the weather, help the children to learn about the world around them and show an awareness of change. Children learn about where they live and features of the local environment by making visits to the local library, church and taking nature walks. This is complimented by members of the community visiting the nursery. Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills. They respond to the 'Snow Bear's Surprise' by creating a snow scene in the role play area. The children are learning a range of familiar Christmas songs and explore sounds made by musical instruments. Children enjoy daily opportunities to develop their physical skills. They run around freely in the outdoor area and use equipment to promote their hand-eye co-ordination skills. They practise balancing on beams, but are not presented with suitable challenges to develop their climbing skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of equal opportunities and special needs

issues. All children are included in activities. They celebrate their birthdays and their work is displayed around the nursery helping them to feel a sense of belonging. Individual education plans are devised for children if concerns have been raised regarding their progress. These are sensitively incorporated into group activities to avoid children being singled out. The children learn about the wider world by celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Displays around the nursery successfully promote positive attitudes amongst the children to different cultures and beliefs.

Children are learning responsible behaviour for different situations and to work harmoniously with one another. They feel valued and encouraged resulting in their self-esteem and respect for others developing well. The staff successfully implement good strategies to promote positive behaviour. The children are enthusiastic and animated. The pre-school children take turns to answer the register, help to tidy up and have jobs of responsibility. They receive lots of positive praise. This positive approach successfully fosters children spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. They are cared for by staff that work with parents to meet the individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. Staff have created a welcoming atmosphere and have built up good relationships with parents.

Parents are well informed of the curriculum both for the older and younger children. Every parent receives daily report sheet on their child. All parents speak highly of the provision and find staff approachable if need to discuss anything. Parents of the pre-school children receive thorough, evaluative and informative reports on their children's progress towards the early learning goals. The reports include identifying the next stage of learning in each area helping to provide continuity in the children's learning between home and nursery. There is a complaints procedure in place, but this does not include providing a written response to parents following the investigation of a complaint in writing to the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Generally recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff records demonstrate all staff undergo correct vetting procedures. A minor issue relating to the supervision of children has been raised. Staff have a high regard for the well being of all children. There is a comprehensive operational plan in place that is effectively implemented. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. There is a key worker in operation that helps the children to settle and feel a sense of belonging. Generally policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, records are a little disorganised and therefore not easily accessible.

Leadership and management of the nursery education contributes positively to the children's progress towards the early learning goals. The teacher has an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage programme and leads her staff into successfully implementing the programme. Senior staff effectively uses the assessments of the children and observations of the activities to monitor progress. The development plan demonstrates that the staff are committed to improvement.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the staff were required to review the provision of natural materials for babies. There is now a wide range of natural materials available for the children to explore helping them to learn about the world around them.

At the last nursery inspection, the staff were required to review the assessments records to clearly show children's progress or identify any gaps in their learning. Thorough assessments are now carried out on the children. Observations on the children are usefully transferred onto daily sheets, assessment profiles and child development records to monitor their progress. Parents of the pre-school children receive thorough, evaluative and informative reports on their children's progress towards the early learning goals. The reports include identifying the next stage of learning in each area helping to provide continuity in the children's learning between home and nursery.

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

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 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 fresh drinking water is available to children at all times
- ensure the younger very able children are suitably challenged and have appropriate opportunities to develop physical skills
- ensure children are supervised by fully vetted staff 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):

- improve children's opportunities for learning how to handle books and to practise their climbing skills.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk