



Scarcroft Green

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY227482
Inspection date	01 December 2005
Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner

Setting Address	54a Nunthorpe Road, York, North Yorkshire, YO23 1BP
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Telephone number	01904 672 696
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Registered person	York Child Care Ltd
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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?

Scarcroft Green Nursery opened in September 2003 and is run by the charity York Childcare. It is situated in the Scarcroft area of York on the primary school site and operates from a two storey detached building that has been extended. Children are cared for in two play rooms on the ground floor and the first floor is used as offices for the charity. There is an enclosed area at the rear of the premises for outdoor play. A maximum of 35 children may attend the nursery at any one time. Opening times are

Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and the week between Christmas and the new year. The nursery serves the local area and commuters from outside the city.

There are currently 65 children aged from 0 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association (NDNA) and the Pre School Learning Alliance (PLA) and is working towards a quality assurance award. Fourteen staff are employed, 10 of whom, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. In addition there are four support staff employed as a teatime assistant, breakfast assistant, cook and a cleaner.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept healthy because they are cared for in an environment where on the whole staff consistently follow effective procedures and practices, which help to prevent the spread of infection. For example, they clean the tables before meals, wear disposable gloves for nappy changing and ensure the toilet areas are kept clean. Parents are provided with good information about the nursery's policy for the care of sick children, which includes details of infectious diseases and the time periods children shouldn't attend if they contract these. The systems, however, to ensure children's specific medical conditions are managed effectively are not rigorous enough.

Staff give high priority to helping the children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. As a result the older ones understand that they need to wash their hands before eating and after toileting and do so at all times throughout the day. Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy varied, well presented nutritious meals and snacks, which are prepared using fresh ingredients. These comply with all special dietary requirements to ensure the children remain healthy.

Children develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. For example, they practice and develop their physical skills in the nursery's outdoor area where they are able to use a range of equipment such as wheeled toys. They regularly enjoy walks in the local area and visits to the nearby park where they are able to use the grassed area to run about. All children are able to rest according to their needs. For example, staff follow the youngest children's sleep patterns as discussed with their parents and the older ones are able to sit quietly as and when they feel tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised effectively in the well organised setting, which has good safety precautions and excellent security systems. All areas and equipment are maintained to good standards and staff are vigilant and use thorough and well documented risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. They have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits and how to involve the children effectively in organising their environment. For example, the older children know they have to use equipment such as construction materials in the designated area.

Children use a good range of toys and resources that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff are vigilant in ensuring these are maintained in a clean, safe condition. For example, toys in the baby room are cleaned on a daily basis after use. Resources are well organised in child-height furniture to encourage independent access.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe because staff skilfully explain safe practices to them. For example, the older children learn how to access and use scissors safely. They all regularly practice the nursery's emergency evacuation procedures so they know what to do in the event of a fire. This helps them learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe. Children with special needs are safe and fully included because of the sensitive adult support and good communication with their parents and any outside agencies involved in their care.

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children from possible abuse. They all attend training in child protection, have a clear understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures and know what to do if they have concerns. They consistently follow the nursery's policy at nappy changing time, which ensures there is always two members of staff present.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and arrive happy and eager to participate. Children under 2 years make good progress because they develop strong bonds with key members of staff and benefit from routines, which are consistent with their experiences at home. Staff who work with this age group use their increasing knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework to plan a range of interesting activities to foster their development. For example, the children enjoy learning about colour and texture as they use their hands and sponges to make prints. They respond to sounds of manufactured toys with delight and enjoy moving to music. They have very good support to develop their early communication skills. For example, the very young ones attract the attention of staff who enthusiastically respond to their sounds during play and the older ones enthusiastically join in with rhymes and songs.

Children between the ages of 2 and 3 years are on the whole settled in their relationships with the staff and each other. They play happily together as they use resources such as small world toys, construction and imaginative play. They are offered a range of activities and experiences such as exploring paint, box modelling

and using musical instruments to accompany their singing. However, activities are not always planned at their level of understanding, which means they are often unable to take an active part or express their ideas.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and offer a balance of adult and child-led activities. Activities are planned around themes and are on the whole interesting and presented appropriately which encourages the children to take part. However, it is not always clear what children are intended to learn from these. Systems are in place to record children's progress but staff's evaluation of focused activities are not effective. For example, they do not record children's individual responses to help them assess their understanding and plan for the next steps in their learning.

Both the 3 and 4 year olds are eager to learn, self assured in their play and confident in their self care. For example, they direct their own play, select their own resources and independently access the toilet and wash their hands. They show an interest in books and story but they are not always able to concentrate effectively at whole group times as they are often distracted by the younger ones. They demonstrate good language skills. For example, they readily describe the texture and taste of food at snack time. They confidently recognise their own name as they identify their coat peg, put their work in their drawer and find their name card at meal times.

All children use their imagination well. For example, they use small world resources such as a farm when they pretend to feed animals and use role play resources as they pretend to go shopping. They join in enthusiastically with songs and confidently use a range of instruments to accompany their singing. They develop their design and making skills as they confidently use manufactured materials to make buildings and vehicles and take part in box modelling. They are very interested in how things work. For example, they understand how to use telephones as they key in numbers and pretend to hold conversations and skilfully use the nursery computer to complete various programmes.

Children work well together. For example, the younger ones learn about washing their hands following the guidance of the older children. They gain confidence in using numbers as they count how many animals they have during small world play. They match cups to plates correctly at snack time and identify when the jug is empty as they help to pour their drinks. They often help to count the number present at registration and are beginning to sequence numbers correctly. For example, they correctly identify how old they will be at their next birthday. Their physical skills are developing well. They confidently move about the premises, use a range of cutlery at lunch time and have access to a range of resources such as wheeled toys in the outdoor area to help them develop their large motor skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. Staff value each child's individuality and meet their needs well. Children's behaviour is good. Staff support the youngest ones very well in sharing and turn taking and set consistent boundaries for the 3 to 5 year olds which helps them to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Their understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to care for the nursery resources and each other.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the wider world and their local environment through a range of activities. For example, they learn about festivals such as Diwali, go for walks in the local area and visit the nearby park. They are encouraged to take the nursery bear on holiday with them and benefit greatly from visitors to the nursery such as fire fighters and police officers who share their skills with them. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children under 3 years benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with their parents. Babies settle well because staff work closely with their parents to ensure they follow their home routine. Staff share important information about the children's care needs and the activities they have been involved in each day. The partnership with parents of the children who receive nursery education is good. Plans of activities are displayed so that parents know what topics are being followed and the children's records of progress are readily available. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in their learning. For example, they are able to borrow books to read together at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is organised effectively in most areas and the leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The premises are well organised with indoor and outdoor space laid out to maximise play opportunities for the children. All legally required documentation, which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed.

There are clear recruitment, vetting and induction procedures and the majority of staff are well qualified and experienced. However, many of the staff who work with the 2 to 5 year olds are new to the nursery and they are not always clear of their role and responsibilities or effectively deployed. A clear appraisal system is in place and on the whole is used effectively to monitor their performance and identify any training needs. Systems are in place to monitor the quality of the care and education. For example, staff meetings and nursery forum meetings that the parents attend are held regularly and the nursery is working towards an accredited quality assurance award. However, activities are not always planned or evaluated effectively. Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the nursery has improved the safety and organisation. The use of portable electric fans has been risk assessed and the presentation of resources improved so that children can access these independently in all areas. More opportunities are now offered for the children to use mark making, develop their spontaneous creativity and use the computer. For example, they are able to use the computer independently throughout the day and choose from a range of resources such as collage materials, glue and scissors to develop their design and making skills.

Complaints 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.

There are no complaints to report.

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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 there are effective procedures to check that any medication, which is kept on site to meet children's individual health conditions is in date
- improve the planning of activities for the two to three-year-olds to ensure these are appropriate to their age and stage of development
- review and improve the deployment of staff who work with the two to five-year-olds to ensure children are well supported at all times and their needs met effectively

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):

- improving the planning and organisation of focused activities to ensure the intended learning outcome is clearly identified
- review and improve the deployment of staff during focused activities and the management of whole group activities to ensure children are well supported and able to sustain their concentration
- improve the evaluation of focused activities to show what individual children have achieved and use this information to plan for the next steps in their learning.

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