



Treetops Nursery (LMC Lancaster)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 309613

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Inspector Lisa Patterson

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Registered person Lancaster and Morecambe College

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?

Lancaster and Morecambe College Nursery is run by a management committee from the college and operates from a detached single-storey building located on the main college site. It has been registered for 10 years. Facilities include a large main playroom with wet-play area, two adjoining playrooms, office, bathroom and nappy changing areas, and kitchen. There is a large enclosed outdoor play area adjoining the nursery building containing a variety of fixed play equipment alongside mature

trees with bark flooring.

Opening hours are from 08.30 to 17.15 from Monday to Friday for 40 weeks of the year. Current registration is for 40 children aged 2 to 5 years, and there are presently 83 children on-roll; of which 39 are in receipt of government funding. Both full and sessional places are available with priority given to children of students attending the college. There are two children who have been identified as having Special Educational Needs and no children for whom English is an additional language.

There is a fully qualified staff team and the nursery supports students on placement. Nursery staff work closely with the Early Years Teacher Support Team in meeting the needs of children within the Foundation Stage of Learning. The nursery have received Investors in People and the Charter Mark for Customer Service as part of services provided by the college.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current health and hygiene guidelines, for example, washing hands prior to handling food during snack-times. Children are actively learning how to keep themselves healthy through daily routine activities, such as washing hands, using tissues, covering their mouths when coughing to prevent the spread of infection and participating in topics, such as 'Healthy Eating'. Children enjoy a wide variety of physical activities and fresh air on a daily basis, and use the outside area at least twice each day. In addition to this they enjoy short walks into the local community. Children do not have appropriate space in which to sleep or rest without disturbance, which will hamper their overall wellbeing.

Children are nourished because they enjoy regular snacks of fruit and biscuits. They are offered a choice from meals prepared by the college canteen, which are healthy and nutritious in full consultation with parents. Children can, alternatively, bring their own packed lunches. Children have their health and dietary needs well met because the details sheets provided prior to attending the nursery contain all relevant details. If children have specific dietary requirements they are written up in the kitchen for reference by the person on duty for preparing meals and snacks. This gives reassurance to parents and maintains the child's health. Variety at snack time for the younger children is insufficient and does not cater for all of their likes and dislikes, and children could go without a snack until lunch.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing in warm, welcoming and stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. The rooms are bright and airy and offer space for children to independently access resources and activities from well organised and appropriate

storage. Separate spaces are available for free play and directed activities, and the main play-area has space for messy play, role-play and construction among others. Examples of children's work adorn the walls of all the rooms and is actively used in stimulating their learning and understanding. Children play with suitable and safe equipment because regular checks are carried out by staff. Resources are rotated and carefully planned with regards to the likes and dislikes of the children.

Children are safe both in and outside the nursery because staff implement clear guidelines for securing the premises, counting children and maintaining the premises appropriately. Children learn to keep themselves safe through having regard for rules and boundaries. Staff remind them of the need to not run in the building and explain why, promoting their responsibility. Children's safety on outings is maintained through staff following procedures, both prior to going and when out and about. This promotes the children's welfare. Fire drills have been carried out and a record has been developed, which is used to inform future practice, although this was not the case for drills carried out in September. This presents a risk to children.

Children are protected because staff have a secure understanding about their role within the child protection procedure and are able to put it into practice where necessary. They are clear about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and know who the designated child protection staff member is. Children are cared for by people who have been appropriately vetted and have relevant experience and knowledge. The nursery offers placements for students on childcare courses who are never left unsupervised with the children and have a specific mentor should they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children experience a good range of play opportunities which promote their all round development and learning. They develop confidence and self-esteem through free-play activities which are independently accessed. Staff encourage sharing and turn taking and they learn to tidy away and respect equipment and other people. Children show an interest in what they do and staff monitor the resources which have been well used, and use this knowledge to rotate the toys appropriately. They play for extended periods of time and change activity at by their own will. Older children move between three rooms; a free-playroom, a structured adult-directed room and a structured playroom, in which activities are laid out with specific learning goals in mind. They are encouraged to ask questions to extend their learning. This ensures that they take an active part in their own learning and are secure in the care of the staff.

Children use their initiative when exploring their environment and staff build on their learning by offering learning opportunities which extend the current theme. For example, extending the Christmas nativity play, by children playing in the role-play with the costumes and acting out the story independently. Children experience a wide range of learning experiences, both planned and free-play. Snack-time is also used as a learning opportunity, for example, by having colour themed snacks.

Children's knowledge and skills are developed through direct experiences, for example, trips into the local community to post letters and visits from community members, such as the ice-cream man. They respond well to challenge and participate in the activities on offer with enthusiasm. Their needs are well supported by staff and they receive lots of praise and encouragement, which increases their self-esteem and helps them to succeed.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Staff have a good knowledge of the foundation stage. They provide a broad and balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning. They are enthusiastic and motivate the children through their innovative ideas, such as getting into role to promote the children's play and to challenge their understanding. Very good use is made of the outdoor area in promoting learning in all areas, such as, letter hunts and shapes trails. Activities are very well introduced to the children, giving clear instructions about the aims of the session for role-play, free play and directed activities and children participate with interest in all areas. Management of behaviour is very good and the children respond well to the requests of staff and show respect for their peers and adults. Planning includes differentiated activities based on the needs of the children. Ongoing assessment relates to the stepping stones, however, staff do not make full use of this in planning the next steps. Parents are encouraged to participate in the assessment which gives a view of the whole child.

The children are progressing well through the stepping stones and some are achieving high standards. Children are taught according to their individual needs and the staff showed a good understanding of the learning styles of individual children. They receive a broad-balanced curriculum because the manager monitors which areas of learning have been covered at all times to ensure that none are missed. Children enjoy their time at nursery and show an interest in what they do. They are able to concentrate for extended periods, such as during circle time, and are developing self-care skills, such as dressing themselves prior to going outside and pouring their own drinks at snack-time. They are confident when talking in small and larger groups and are learning to listen when someone else is speaking. They are developing an understanding of number and count proficiently to ten, some beyond, and many can recognise some number symbols to five. The children experience simple mathematical calculations on a daily basis during routine activities, which develops their understanding in this area. They learn to care for living things through feeding the fish and looking after the pet gerbil. Their physical development is good and they are able to use implements with increasing control, and have a good awareness of space, for example, when dancing and moving around the setting, both in and out of doors. They enjoy singing and playing musical instruments and become engrossed in the well resourced role-play areas, through which they develop their imagination, writing skills and communication.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are extremely well met because the setting promotes inclusion through admissions procedures, activities and support for those with specific needs. Staff have a clear understanding of individual requirements through close and regular communication with parents from the outset and keeping records of progress. Provision for children with Special Educational Needs is very effective and staff work closely with each other, the child's parents and other relevant professionals in ensuring that their needs are fully understood and appropriate levels of attention and intervention can be provided. Children have access to a broad range of resources, innovative play opportunities and activities, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. For example, a topic about Africa incorporated experiencing walking in bare feet through various road surfaces (mud, sand and leaves), role-play in a mud hut and going on safari in the outdoor area looking for animals in the trees. The nursery is extremely well resourced in this area which helps children to positively embrace diversity.

Children are kind, considerate and thoughtful to staff and peers and are able to share and take turns with increasing self-control. They are showered with praise and encouragement at all times which increases their self-esteem and encourages children to behave appropriately. Children are given clear boundaries which include respect for each other and for equipment, which they understand and self-regulate within their groups, for example, when tidying away. Music is used to good effect to promote good behaviour, for example during tidy-up-time.

Children are cared for according to their parent's wishes and are included fully into the life of the setting because staff work extremely hard to consult with them fully; from their child first attending the nursery. Parents receive a wealth of information about the setting and their child's progress, such as a prospectus, regular newsletters, daily diaries and notice boards. In addition to this, staff make weekly written observations of each child, which parents are encouraged to take home at regular intervals and are always stored in their child's drawer. This gives opportunities for other interested adults to take part in the child's nursery life.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Supportive leadership and management enhance the levels of care and learning offered by staff. All regulatory required documentation which contributes to children's welfare is in order, though some incident recording does not maintain confidentiality. Children are well protected because recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and staff have appropriate knowledge and understanding of child development. There is a wide range of effectively implemented procedures which enable staff, volunteers, trainees and parents to know how the setting operates. Induction training is provided to all staff members and trainees and rotas are clearly displayed in the main play area to ensure that all are aware of their roles and responsibilities on a daily basis.

Space and resources are organised imaginatively to allow freedom of movement between activities and independent access to toys and equipment. Adult-child ratios

positively support children's care and learning experiences in the nursery. High ratios are maintained to ensure that adequate individual attention can be given where needed. For example, where a child may have a specific need or when accompanying children to the toilet. Group sizes remain low which enhances the learning opportunities, enables staff to build effective relationships with children and contributes to their safety.

The manager motivates her staff team through regular monitoring and appraisal and encouraging further professional development through attendance on short courses. This benefits the children looked after. The effectiveness of the nursery is regularly monitored through staff meetings and formal reviews of practice which impacts positively on the children present.

The provision meet the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection the provider was asked to develop the range of resources and activities which promote an awareness of diversity, keep a record of fire drills, provide appropriate sleeping facilities, provide opportunities for the children to access Information Technology equipment, produce differentiated planning, extend children's learning during snack time and organise activities to ensure that they are not rushed.

The nursery has a wide selection of resources and activities which promote an awareness of diversity, ensuring that children are positively aware of society. A record of fire drills has been created, although not all drills have been entered which presents a risk to children. Sleeping facilities have been developed, although further attention is to be paid to this area to provide a quiet space in which sleeping or resting children will not be disturbed. Children access Information Technology equipment and programmable toys on a daily basis, which promotes their development in this area. Planning is differentiated, however, insufficient use is made of assessments to inform this planning for specific children. Staff use snack times as learning opportunities for counting, calculating, letter recognition and self-care skills. Time and space is organised to ensure activities are not rushed and children are able to maintain interest for extended periods.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints received by 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- provide a wider selection of snacks to ensure the children have choice when they do not like certain fruits
- provide more appropriate sleeping arrangements for children
- carry out and keep records of regular fire drills.

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):

- make more effective use of current observation and assessment practice to show how all children are progressing through the stepping stones in order to identify their next steps in learning

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