



The Wonder Years Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255158
Inspection date	16 January 2006
Inspector	Bernadina Laverty
Setting Address	Arundel House, 50 Church Hill, Wednesbury, West Midlands, WS10 9DJ
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Registered person	Hilary Walker
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?

Wonder Years Day Nursery opened in 1997. It operates from 4 main care areas on the ground floor of the premises. It is sited in Wednesbury, Sandwell and is close to motorway connections and the town centre.

There are currently 78 children from 0-5 years on the roll. This includes 12 funded 3 year olds and 3 funded 4 year old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an

additional language. There is a waiting list for places within the nursery. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday, all year round, from 07:30 to 18:00.

There are 13 members of staff working directly with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery offers placement opportunities to students on childcare courses. The setting receives support from a teacher mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the advisor from the Special Needs Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because good health and hygiene practice is promoted by staff. Children wash their hands after using the toilet, before snacks and brush their teeth after meals. This helps them to understand the need to practise good hygiene routines. Children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident or become ill because there are detailed procedures in place. Accident records are regularly audited, helping to keep children safe.

Children have sufficient toys and equipment to play with that are clean, safe and meets the needs of all children. They enjoy physical exercise and this helps contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Babies are learning to acquire physical skills such as crawling, climbing and balance because they have regular access to a soft play area and equipment. Older children join in free play and organised activities using a wide range of indoor and outdoor equipment including scissors, paint brushes, 'play dough' cutters and bikes. Older children practise pedalling and negotiating space using bikes and scooters with skill and ease.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating because they are provided with healthy snacks and drinks such as grapes, breadsticks and milkshakes. Drinks are readily available, ensuring children have sufficient fluids. Children know that milk and water are healthy drinks and older children know that water is also known as 'H₂O'. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents and staff record details of any specific dietary requirements or allergies. Babies have personalised, individual profiles which include their photographs to ensure specific needs are catered for. Children's individual sleep needs are well respected because a quiet area for rest is provided.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment because staff are deployed effectively and are vigilant about children's safety indoors and outside. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe and developing an awareness of fire safety through regular fire drills. Children independently select activities and resources from a range of toys and equipment, which meet safety standards.

Children move freely and safely around the premises because staff carry out safety checks and risk assessments. Access to the premises is monitored and staff check identification of all visitors. Staff are appropriately vetted and qualified. However, current procedures do not ensure ongoing 'suitability' of all staff. Children's daily attendance is recorded, although it does not include times of arrival and departure of all children and is not correctly completed in all rooms, making this document unreliable in the event of an emergency.

Children are protected from potential abuse or neglect as staff understand the importance of child protection. However, reporting procedures are not clearly understood by all staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, content and settled. They enjoy their time at the nursery and show enthusiasm within their play. Children have sufficient toys and equipment because staff have a sound understanding of how to meet their needs. Children's self-esteem and confidence is enhanced by staff use of praise and encouragement. Staff organise a varied activity programme for babies and toddlers. Staff are beginning to plan and assess in accordance with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, not all staff have attended training in this area and they lack confidence in how to challenge and extend children's learning within this framework.

Babies and toddlers respond well to the stimulating environment. Babies can move freely and safely within the play room and play imaginatively with equipment, including a glockenspiel. They are developing confidence in their physical skills such as rolling, crawling and standing. Toddlers enjoy activities such as dressing-up, sand and water play. They show their enjoyment by singing 'Bob the builder' as they play. Staff respond with genuine interest to children's questions and conversations. This helps children to feel valued and appreciated.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, ensuring that children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. Staff are very calm, patient and tolerant. They have good, trusting relationships with children. A new system of planning is being introduced and covers all areas of learning in the curriculum. Staff understand children's needs and provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences to help all children make progress. However, plans are not currently evaluated to ensure learning intentions are achieved.

The level of challenge is sufficient to interest children in activities and enable them to make progress. Staff use a reasonable range of teaching methods to help children make progress. They build secure, trusting relationships with children. Staff interact effectively in children's play and ask challenging questions during a cooking activity such as, "what do you think will happen when we add the strawberries to the milk"?

Staff manage children's behaviour well. Children help each other to resolve disputes and staff use positive behaviour strategies such as negotiation and compromise. Children are well behaved and encouraged to sit and listen at story time. Staff make effective use of time and resources and work directly with children. The learning environment is inviting although resources, equipment and displays reflecting children's work and positive images of the local community and the wider world are limited.

Staff with responsibility for special needs and English as an additional language have knowledge of the procedures and develop relationships with parents and other professionals so that all children are included in all aspects of nursery life and make progress. Adequate systems are in place to observe, monitor and record children's achievements. Although, staff do not yet ensure that information gained from assessments is used to help plan the next stage in children's learning. Children's assessments and progress are now recorded using a new system called, 'Learning Journeys'. Once established, this system will give parents good, photographic evidence of their children's achievements.

Children form good relationships with staff and each other. They have opportunities to share, take turns and cooperate with each other whilst playing and are very efficient at tidying up. Children are able to select resources for themselves and work independently. However, mealtimes are not organised to maximise children's independence. Children develop a sense of belonging and respond well to having opportunities to take on responsibilities such as caring for 'Tara' the nursery bear.

Children communicate effectively, they say 'please' and 'thank you' and enjoy conversations with each other and staff. They talk freely about their home lives and are very articulate, one child talks about his dad's car being a 'Peugeot' and that he would prefer a 'Mercedes'. Children are starting to recognise letters and sounds within their names, although 'name cards' are not used effectively to reinforce this learning. Children have some opportunities to practise writing skills, although the 'writing area' is being re-developed. Older children can write their names, with many letters correctly formed.

Children use mathematical language such as 'tall' and 'bigger' when building a tower of bricks. They count confidently and use their fingers to represent numbers during number songs and when they talk about needing '3 stickers' today. Children can access resources to develop mathematical ideas such as sorting equipment, although the 'maths' area is being re-developed and lacks displays or number charts to help children see mathematics represented as objects or data. Children can describe the properties of shapes and talk about two triangles joining together to make a 'brick'. Children explore patterns through threading and weaving activities.

Children are interested in investigating and enjoy looking at changes. They comment on the weather whilst playing outside. They use their senses during a 'smoothie' making activity. Children show interest in technology as they have access to a computer, which they use competently although opportunities for using the computer are infrequent. Children are developing a sense of time and remember using 'hundreds and thousands' during a previous cooking activity. Children can identify features of living things as photographs show children confidently handling snakes

during a visit from the 'Animal Man'. However, they do not currently help to take responsibility for caring for the nursery fish or growing plants.

Children learn to move in a variety of ways such as walk, run, jump, and hop. They can adjust their speed when playing outside and avoid obstacles and each other. They are developing an awareness of their bodies and talk about their noses helping them to smell. Another child says, "My belly is full" after lunch.

Children have opportunities to be creative through activities such as junk modelling, painting and music. Children use music, dance and role play to communicate ideas. They use a good range of instruments to look at rhythm, tempo and beat. Children recognise instruments such as; 'Maracas' and can repeat sound patterns and match movements to music. Children are learning to differentiate between colours through activities and can sing the 'rainbow song'. They talk about red and white making pink during a cooking activity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing self-confidence and self-esteem because staff value their contributions and achievements, although small and large scale displays of children's work are limited. Children play well together. They work harmoniously and share equipment during cooking activities and games. Children develop respect for others because they talk about being kind to their friends. Children are well behaved and encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions with adult support. Children help each other resolve disputes. Good behaviour is rewarded through a 'sticker system', which is very effective in encouraging children to behave well and collect stickers.

Children are learning to respect diversity through a small range of toys and resources that reflect positive images. Children are aware of others and are learning that they may have differing beliefs, cultures and traditions. This ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is fostered.

Partnership with parents regarding nursery education is satisfactory. Information is shared with parents at initial visits, on a daily basis and at parents' evenings. Regular newsletters and leaflets help keep parents informed of the activities and events on offer for children. However, information regarding children's progress within the 'Birth to three matters' framework and towards the early learning goals is currently limited, due to the implementation of new planning and assessment systems.

Staff and parents work sufficiently well together throughout the rest of the nursery to meet children's needs. This ensures that children are happy and content during their time at nursery. Children's daily routines are discussed regularly, ensuring their children's needs are well met. Staff welcome parents into the setting. They attend social evenings, training workshops and participate in fund raising events for charity. Staff seek parent's views through detailed discussions and questionnaires. Policies, procedures and other relevant information are available to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from attending this welcoming, friendly nursery. Children enjoy and participate fully in activities because space and resources are well organised. Staff have access to good training opportunities and staff ratios and group size support children's learning and play. Children's personal information is stored securely, which helps to maintain confidentiality. All required documentation is in place which ensures that parents are kept informed about their child's achievements.

Leadership and management is good. This contributes to children making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The organisation of the nursery is currently undergoing significant review and change, with new initiatives and systems being introduced gradually. As a result, staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of childcare. The Pre-school room has recently been taken over by new staff, who are very motivated and dedicated. Their knowledge of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

The recruitment process is very effective and ensures that staff are appropriately vetted, qualified and experienced. Staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and work well together as a team. The management team and staff are very committed to continuous improvement and development of the service. They are booked to attend further training and have drawn up a detailed action plan with target dates for review, to address areas for improvement.

The management team promote strong leadership and have a very clear vision about the future for the nursery. They have prioritised the refurbishment of the outdoor play area, quality issues, staff training and team building so as to enhance and improve the overall quality of care. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The nursery has made good progress in addressing the recommendations requested by reviewing all aspects of the nursery and compiling an action plan to address areas for improvement. A new manager has been appointed with specific responsibility for monitoring quality.

All policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated including equal opportunities, incident recording and child protection. This helps to ensure that children's individual needs are monitored and well catered for. Children are now well protected because the child protection procedures at the nursery comply with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures although reporting procedures are not clearly understood by all staff. This has been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

The system for recording children's attendance has been reviewed although it is not correctly completed in all play rooms, making this document unreliable in the event of

an emergency. This has been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

The nursery have re-organised the baby and toddler rooms to ensure their developmental needs are well catered for. A new system for planning and assessing all children's progress has been introduced and is in its 'infancy'. This has been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

Staff have regular opportunities to improve their personal development and address training needs and are due to attend training on the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' framework. This has been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

One complaint reported since April 2004.

Concerns were raised regarding staff deployment and recording systems. This relates to National Standard 2: Organisation. We conducted a visit and asked the provider to complete an action plan and report back to Ofsted within 10 working days. The group reported that they fully understood the National Standards in relation to Standard 2 and have reviewed policies and procedures relating to staff deployment and recording systems. The group remains qualified for registration.

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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 staff are familiar with child protection reporting procedures and know the relevant contact numbers
- ensure attendance records are accurate and up to date and staff records indicate that all suitability checks have been completed
- ensure staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children by providing more resources and displays reflecting

positive images and children's work.

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):

- increase staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' framework to enable them to plan activities in all areas of learning that sufficiently challenge and extend children's learning
- evaluate planning and children's developmental assessments in childcare and education, to ensure information gained is used to help staff plan for the next steps of learning for all children in all areas of learning.

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