



Childsplay Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	650059
Inspection date	06 February 2006
Inspector	Nicola Mary Eileen Matthews
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Childsplay Day Nursery is one of 2 nurseries privately owned, and opened in Colchester in 1999. The nursery operates from a self contained and purpose built building which is adjoined to Adventure land, a children's soft play area that is also owned by the proprietors. The nursery is located very close to Colchester's North Station. The nursery is used by parents who either work in Colchester or who are commuting from the station.

The nursery is registered to provide places for 114 children aged between birth and 5 years. There are currently 100 children on roll. This includes 34 children in receipt of free nursery education. The nursery consists of 9 base rooms. The children are divided into 3 rooms for babies 0-1 year. There are 2 rooms for babies 1-2 years. There are 2 rooms for children aged 2-3 years and the 3-4 years and 4-5 years have 1 base room each. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children who have special needs and children whose first language is not English.

The day nursery is open 5 days a week for 51 weeks a year from 07.00 until 18.00.

There are 12 staff who work with the children, all of whom are qualified. There are 2 staff currently improving their child care qualification. Additional support staff are employed. The proprietors are either on site or contactable.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and very well maintained play rooms according to their age. They stay healthy because cross infection is minimised as good hygiene practices are followed throughout the setting. Children wash their hands after toileting and before snacks and meals. They know they need to use soap and ask for more when the dispensers are empty. Sick children are cared for appropriately and the policy includes information about several infectious diseases and the exclusion periods. Any infectious illness a child who attends the nursery has developed, is highlighted on the playroom doors so parents can be vigilant about their own child's health.

Children's dietary needs are met well. They enjoy nutritious snacks and lunches which are cooked on the premises by a very experienced cook. Some children bring in a packed lunch and parents provide the very young ones bottles and pureed foods. Children's meals are prepared in a well equipped clean kitchen which prevents contamination of foods so ensuring children are healthy. Older children are given independence as to when they want their snack and help themselves to the fruit and drinks provided. What children will be eating each day of the week is displayed in the entrance hall to provide information to parents about the planned menu.

Children's emotional well-being is supported by caring staff which enables them to settle quickly and be confident to explore their surroundings.

Children enjoy programmed physical activity outdoors to develop their balance and coordination. They run, push or pedal wheeled toys manoeuvring them expertly through narrow gaps. Older children climb up, through and slide down on the large static equipment. Indoors children move around freely and enjoy singing songs and listening to music as they move energetically to the rhythm especially in the two-year-olds room. Toddlers are learning to pull themselves up and develop their leg muscles and balance. They move around the room crawling from one activity to another with excitement and are supported by the staff to climb on rockers and in and

out of the ball pool.

Children are learning about healthy living as they eat nutritious meals provided for them and follow good hygiene practices. The older children experience activities where they discuss food which is good for you and food which is not so good for you.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, warm and safe environment. Their security is given high priority to ensure they are safe and cannot leave the building unaccompanied or with others not nominated by the parents. Children's safety outside is maintained well as they play in a secure quadrangle in the centre of the building where hazards have been effectively minimised. Children are able to move freely and safely in the spacious playrooms and corridor as a comprehensive risk assessment is carried out daily.

Children play with a wide range of good quality toys and resources, which are clean and safe, to support their overall development. They can access the play resources safely as boxes of toys are stored on the floor or on low level shelving within easy reach of the children.

Children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded through the nicely presented documented policies. The child protection policy is not shared adequately with parents. There is insufficient detail in the documented procedure should allegations be made against a member of staff or volunteer to ensure children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive confidently and enthusiastically start to play with the available resource. Young children's curriculum planning and developmental records follow the 'Birth to three matters' framework ensuring appropriate experiences are provided to promote their overall development. They are given a variety of experiences to explore their environment and make sense of the world around them. The babies show sustained interest in moving the beads on the baby walker and listening to the musical noise some toys make.

Toddlers enjoy handling plastic cups and plates and participate in pretend play recalling past experiences. They excitedly try to get in the ball pool and throw the balls out. Children push small cars along the floor for the staff to return to them who repeat the words, 'ready, steady, go', which encourages children's language development and listening skills. Children, just under three years old, show high levels of involvement in their play when participating in musical activities and painting. They are sensitively supported to develop their independence by staff asking simple questions giving the children some choice so they can take control of their own learning.

Children are becoming skilful communicators as staff use attentive body language and clarify, repeat and echo their vocalisations which attracts the children's attention and encourages them to participate in a reciprocal relationship.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals as they participate in a variety of interesting activities readily available. However, there is an overreliance on the use of work sheets to support children's mathematical development and letter recognition which leaves them no independent choice or creativity within this didactic method of teaching. Children's experiences are planned using a clear format linked to the stepping stones in the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Similarly the assessment records are also linked to these. Children's progress is clearly documented using the assessment records and their next step is discussed regularly to ensure activities are provided to support their development.

Children experience a range of resources, which are easily accessible to support their learning in all six areas of the curriculum indoors. They have programmed outdoor play which in the winter months is dominated by developing their physical skills. They miss valuable opportunities to explore activities in other areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Children are developing their spoken language skills well as they confidently initiate conversations with staff and each other. They recognise their own name and participate in activities to practise large circular movements when using the chalk boards. Children handle books appropriately but cannot become attentive listeners in large group stories as other children are disruptive, especially in the three-year-old room. They enjoy drawing activities but do not practice writing for a purpose for example making shopping lists in the pretend shop and taking messages when playing with the telephone. Children have few opportunities to recognise rhythm in words and listen to familiar letter sounds.

Children recognise simple shapes and can reliably count to five. However, they miss many opportunities during their independently chosen play to use number and record their observations using mathematical solutions. Children enjoy using the computer and expertly manoeuvre and use the mouse to move from one screen to another.

Children eagerly participate in celebrating each other's birthday and several different cultural festivals. They are developing an awareness of similarities and differences as they explore the good quality resources which show positive images of a multicultural society. Children enjoy recalling where they have been with their family the night before. They look after the pet goldfish and care for plants which promotes a caring attitude towards living things.

Children enjoy participating in cultural craft activities for example, making dragons to celebrate Chinese New Year using 3D and 2D materials on a large scale. They show good levels of participation when playing with the sand, exploring the media as they add more and more water. Children use descriptive language when talking about the properties of the very wet sand saying, 'it is yucky and disgusting'. They confidently

explore colour using a variety of painting techniques and spend time making colourful collages with scrunched-up tissue paper.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children experience a meaningful range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. For example, the good quality jigsaws depicting children from ethnic minority families shows positive images of different races and provides a basis for discussion. Children take one of four teddies on holiday with them and send postcards back to the nursery which are then displayed on the attractive world map in the corridor. Many children bring in photographs of the teddies on their travels which are also displayed around the map which promotes their sense of belonging. Children celebrate different cultural festivals which are reflected in their art and craft. They enjoy celebrating each other's birthdays which fosters their self-esteem.

Children with special educational needs are well-cared for. Their development is closely monitored and the staff work well with other agencies to ensure the child can participate in all activities to enable them to progress in their learning.

Children play harmoniously alongside each other, they share and take turns amicably. However, some children demonstrate disruptive behaviour during the day which has an impact on the concentration of others and their own learning. Children play imaginatively in small groups and are making friendships as they seek out a preferred playmate.

Children demonstrate good levels of independence in personal care and take responsibility for their own learning in confidently self-selecting activities. Children show a sense of wonder when sequins are added to the water play and as they participate in music and movement to preferred musical tapes. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive clear information about their child's progress. Those children in receipt of free nursery education have their progress discussed with parents twice a year. Children's records are also made available to their parents at any time. The younger children's parents are given a daily information sheet explaining eating, sleeping, and nappy changing habits throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's early education by providing collage items from home. For example, empty food packaging for the display about healthy and not so healthy foods. They see what children are doing through attractive wall displays of their children's work and reading the curriculum plans displayed in each room. There are weaknesses in the recording of complaints since October 2005.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Systems are in place to ensure staff working with the children are safe to do so. The recruitment procedure is robust and parents can easily recognise staff as they see named photographs displayed in the entrance hall. The staff team work well together to create and maintain a caring environment for children. Each member of staff undergoes an annual appraisal where their professional development is discussed. Children benefit from a qualified team of staff who are encouraged to attend further training and implement new learning into the nursery to enhance the care and education of the children for example, the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager and her deputy work closely with the Early Years Development Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) to improve the nursery education for children. The planned curriculum is monitored however, some areas of children's learning is not well supported.

The standard of records is good. Personal documentation, to ensure the safety and well-being of children, is stored confidentially and the current policies and procedures are attractively displayed and made available for parents to read. Overall the range of the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was given actions; to improve the safety of the setting and to ensure staff are trained in health and safety issues, to update and implement in practice policies and procedures, to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice and treatment in the future for their children, to introduce a key worker system and to ensure the manager and deputy manager were appropriately trained and experienced for their roles. The manager and deputy have undergone health and safety training and a comprehensive risk assessment is now conducted regularly, which includes aspects identified at the last inspection as unsafe, which ensures the children's safety at all times. These two members of staff have been newly appointed since the last inspection and both have a level three qualification in child care and previous experience to ensure they are suitable for the post they hold.

The documentation has been vastly improved to include all relevant policies and procedures required to ensure the safety and well-being of the children. The administration of medication is conducted according to the settings policy and procedures ensuring children are safe and well-cared for. Parents have given their written permission for the setting to seek emergency advice and treatment in the future. A key worker system has been introduced which enables staff to effectively meet the children's individual needs and work in partnership with the parents.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to several recommendations; to ensure craft activities allow children's own natural curiosity to be fostered, to implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework, to provide domestic furniture in the under two year olds rooms and to update the behaviour policy. Children explore paint and gluing activities where they creatively express their own ideas most of the time. They experience activities that have been planned using the 'Birth to three matters' framework which ensures the play is suitable for the age range of the children. The

framework is also used to record the younger children's development and progress. Babies are cuddled when being fed as the staff member sits in a comfortable arm chair ensuring children feel secure and emotionally supported as they feed.

The behaviour policy has been updated to include the procedure to follow in the event bullying occurs to effectively make sure children's self-esteem remains intact.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to some key issues; to enable children to build on their existing knowledge and understanding, to use the assessment records to inform future planning and to help children progress in their learning, to encourage the parents to contribute what they know about their child to the assessment records, to inform parents of the planned curriculum and that the educational provision is effectively monitored. The staff identify children's next step from the assessment records and discuss individual children's learning needs and preferences to include these in the future planning so children can build on what they know and progress in their development. The curriculum plans are monitored by the manager who adapts them when necessary to enhance the children's experiences. The manager and deputy manager work closely with the EYDCP to enhance the nursery education provision for three and four year olds.

Parents are given a section in the assessment records to record their knowledge of their child's progress when they attend the twice yearly planned meetings with staff. They see what their children are experiencing from the detailed curriculum plans on the notice board which enables them to take an active part in their child's early education if they so wish.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 1 of April 2004 Ofsted has received 4 complaints.

Ofsted received information which raised concerns under National Standards 2 (Organisation), 6 (Safety), 7 (Health), and 12 (Working in partnership with parents). We asked the provider to investigate and report back to Ofsted within 10 working days. The provider confirmed their nappy changing and bathroom cleaning rotas, and that they had agreed an action plan with the parent that children will be more closely supervised in the toilet area following the concerns raised. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns and the provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received information from the provision about an incident under National Standard 6 (Safety) that occurred on 11 November 2004 in which a child's thumb was badly damaged. Ofsted visited the provision on 12 November 2004 to investigate the concerns. Upon investigation Ofsted is satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns and the provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received information that the criteria for suitably qualified staff and adult:child ratios were not being met and that staff were sometimes not professional in their conduct in front of parents. There were also concerns that the radiator in the soft play

area caused accidents. These concerns relate to Standard 2 (Organisation) and Standard 6 (Safety). Ofsted investigated these concerns by making an unannounced visit to the nursery on 16 March 2005. The childcare inspectors found that staffing requirements were being met and that staff had been made aware of the potential risk to children banging their heads on the radiator guard near the soft play area. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person was meeting the requirements and remains qualified for registration

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about a staff member's suitability to work with children which relates to National Standard 1 (Suitability). The concerns were investigated by an outside agency. Ofsted is satisfied that the provision took appropriate action in response to the concerns. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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 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):

- develop the child protection policy and procedure to ensure the regulating body are informed of allegations against a member of staff or volunteer, also effectively share the policy and procedure with new parents
- develop the complaints procedure to reflect current legislation.

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):

- manage children's behaviour so all children can progress in their learning effectively
- provide appropriate meaningful activities and support to enable children to be

challenged and sustain their interest to help them progress in their mathematical development, early reading and writing skills

- develop the outdoors are to include learning opportunities in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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