



Lavenders Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	219220
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Registered person	Child Base 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?

Lavenders Day Nursery is 1 of 34 day care nurseries owned by Child Base Limited. It opened in 1990 and operates from a converted Victorian house comprising of five separate base rooms. It is situated on the outskirts of the town of Bedford. A maximum of 72 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open five days a week for 52 weeks a year between the hours of 8:00 until 18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 127 children aged from 0 to 5 years on roll. Of these 33 receive funding for nursery education. Children in attendance live locally. The nursery currently supports children who have special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 staff. Of these, 17 staff members including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are 2 staff who are currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, together with support when required, from other professional bodies in relation to children with special educational needs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through extremely well-planned daily routines. Younger children develop their understanding through watching others, discussion and through positive role modelling of the adults. Older children have an excellent awareness of how and why we wash our hands, for example, before meals, following snacks and after messy activities. They understand the importance of eradicating germs in order to sustain their health as they follow the pictorial illustrations displayed in the bathroom.

Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill, as staff rigorously abide to the nurseries health and safety procedures. For example, staff wear different colour coded aprons when changing and serving food. They take a portable first aid kit and cloths for cleaning children's hands when outside in the garden. A majority of the staff hold a current first aid qualification and there is a rolling programme to ensure this is maintained.

If children are taken ill staff ensure they are made comfortable until they are collected. First aid and emergency procedures are well documented using appropriate forms which are signed by parents.

Children benefit from an excellent well planned and presented healthy diet. The nursery work in consultation with qualified nutritionists to guide and review their dietary provision. Meals on offer cater for all individual dietary needs reflected in the choices available. Children thoroughly enjoy the meals and snacks and are encouraged to try new tastes to develop their experiences. Children remain well-hydrated as drinks are freely available throughout the day. Younger children access lidded cups whilst older children have photographic labelled sports bottles.

Children enjoy an extensive and stimulating range of equipment to promote their physical development. Staff effectively use the 'Birth to three matters' framework guidance to offer babies and young children extremely well planned physical activities both inside and outside of the nursery. For example, space is organised to enable positive movements, such as crawling, pulling to stand and walking around furniture inside, in addition to a separate sensory area in the garden. Older children

benefit from access to a wide range of physically challenging resources. Children clearly enjoy using the garden whatever the weather. They benefit in exerting their energy and developing their imagination. For example, whilst running around the garden with different coloured streamers children commented on the noise "sounding like birds feathers". This produced lots of laughter and interaction with peers. Children rest and are active in accordance to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety and welfare is paramount to the organisation of the nursery. Staff are fairly vigilant when recognising hazards and take positive steps to minimise these. However there are incidents such as, radiators being too hot for children, where staff must be more aware, as children's safety is put at risk. Risk assessments are carried out and all the staff share in the responsibility for keeping children safe. Within staff meetings health and safety is often discussed so that staff are continually reminded of their responsibility to keep children safe. Staff practice evacuation procedures with all the children on a regular basis. Fire notices are on display for everyone to see. Children are safe within the premises as access to the building is well monitored through supervision and management of the entrance area. Visitors to the nursery are requested to provide identification and to record their presence on site in the visitor's book. Parents also have to buzz an intercom system to gain access to the building.

Children use a broad range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate toys, furniture and equipment. These are extensively organised throughout the setting in child height storage units to encourage children to become independent and gain safe access to their resources. In all the rooms children are encouraged to help tidy toys away and notify an adult if something is broken. Sensitive reminders by staff encourage children to share in their responsibility for their own safety and that of others. The inside play space is spacious, bright, airy and well-organised within all the rooms making it a happy and relaxed environment for the children. Outside the children have good access to a fully enclosed area that is monitored at all times by staff. Within this area the children have a good variety of equipment that enables all areas of their physical development to be challenged.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to children's welfare. Staff are confident in their knowledge of child protection, reporting concerns appropriately to senior staff and documentation is in place to support them in the event of any concerns. The nursery has a regular training programme in place to ensure staff members' knowledge and understanding is continually up to date so children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, contented and secure throughout the nursery. They confidently access the stimulating and challenging range of activities and are forming secure relationships with staff and other children. Staff have an extensive awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this has a positive effect on the younger children's enjoyment and achievements. Staff plan activities in line with this framework and have gained a secure knowledge about children's learning. Babies and young children receive lots of cuddles and have developed strong bonds with their key worker which increases their sense of well-being and contentment. They clearly benefit from the routines which are consistent with those at home. The children enjoy exploring the sensory area which enables them to begin to develop their investigation and exploratory skills. They show wonder and surprise at what they see and feel during this activity. Younger children exhibit great delight in using paint with a feather and feeling the paint mixture.

Staff are excellent at letting the children explore their world through various play activities. Children develop their communication skills as they respond to others around them. With the use of verbal and non-verbal language they make their needs known to staff who are adept at interpreting these needs. Younger children are animated and eager to take part. Their mobility is extended through first hand support offered by staff as they move freely and easily around the room. Children learn through experiences and are directly involved and interested in their play. Children learn about responsibilities and are allowed to make errors, decisions and choices as they select activities and share their play with others.

Children exhibit high levels of confidence and security and this has been achieved by the consistent support and direction of staff. Older children are able to resolve their differences when any conflicts arise. They are encouraged to talk about it and find their own solutions. This provides children with tools to become aware of the needs of others and negotiate differences. Younger children often seek out staff to share experiences with or to gain support for an activity.

Attractive displays all around the nursery give children pride in their work. Staff throughout the nursery make the experiences enjoyable and meaningful for the children which in turn aids their confidence to participate. Children are receptive to the constant praise and encouragement that is provided by staff. This has a clear impact on their self-esteem and encourages them to try new tasks and participate in activities. Children of all ages and abilities develop a concept of counting, sorting, shape and colour and problem solving through the very well planned and managed activities on offer.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff members' excellent knowledge of the foundation stage enables the use of on-going observations and extremely highly effective planning to devise the next steps in children's learning. Children's achievements are clearly linked to the stepping stones. The assessments give clear evidence of children's progress and achievements and any gaps can be quickly identified to inform future planning.

Staff are very skilled at enriching the experiences for all children with exceptionally

well organised and planned activities and resources. They have a very good awareness of children's starting points and use this to plan the next steps in their development. Consistent staff impacts on children's high levels of confidence and security. Sensitive settling in procedures build on this giving children confidence to participate. Children enjoy circle time and some are confident to join in discussions. For example, talking about the weather and things they have done at home. Staff are getting to know the children well and know when to step back and let children take over an activity, creating a realistic balance between adult-led and child-initiated play. For example, the children were talking about having a birthday party, so extra resources were found to help the children extend their use of their imagination.

Staff are excellent role models and inspire, praise and encourage children to try things for themselves. They encourage children to gain the confidence to succeed and support them well as they aspire to do so. Staff are extremely skilled when motivating the children and know how to capture their interest by involving them in activities they can extend for themselves. Children are progressing well, supported by a highly motivated and able staff team who are confident in their abilities to develop and challenge children's learning accordingly.

Children are absorbed and happy in the activities provided. Staff are extremely well skilled at extending the range of activities which supports the children's learning and enables them to make progress. Children have a strong sense of belonging as they have an awareness of routine, for example where to hang their coats when they arrive, the lay out of the room and choice of play materials. They are developing friendships and seek out friends to share activities with. Behaviour is good. Children respond well to direction, more able children resolve their own conflicts and some will seek support. For example, when two children were fighting over a blanket staff got down and talked quietly to the children who said sorry to each other and then carried on playing their game. Older children recognise that they can make mistakes, but through high levels of encouragement staff enable the children to develop coping skills which aids them to move forward.

Staff ensure children have extensive opportunities to learn through play and start at a child's base line to encourage them to develop the skills required. Staff are adept at providing opportunities to help encourage children to succeed in simple ways. For example, giving clues when discussing the days of the week. This in turn helps children build their confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy using language in their imaginative play and during group discussion. For example, the children talked about pretending to be at the sea side and what they would need to take with them, such as sun hats and suntan cream to protect them from the sun. Children spend time discovering their mark-making skills and are starting to enjoy books and stories. Simple labels around the room and seeing their names on their mats at snack and meal times develop children's early word recognition. Children are confident counters and have excellent opportunities to practice these skills. For example, during counting songs and counting objects within an activity such as counting out the money in the shoe shop. Children have a growing concept of matching, sorting, size, shape and simple problem skills. These are gradually introduced through a range of well planned activities, as the children are ready. Staff provide children with opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The children are able to explore nature first hand in their garden, they also have a

growing area where the children take part in planting things to grow such as vegetables. Creative activities give children a sense of achievement, as they are able to create spontaneously using their imaginations and skills. Children thoroughly enjoy taking part in music and movement as well as singing and action songs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children attend from a variety of backgrounds and abilities. All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. The staff team ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. This helps children develop a positive attitude to others as well as a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity. Children learn through a range of activities and resources that reflect both familiar and unfamiliar festivals. For example, Halloween, Chinese New Year, Easter, Christmas and Diwali.

Children's behaviour can vary considerably within the nursery; however good role models and outstanding staff support for the children ensures any incident is dealt with calmly and with consideration for all involved. There is an excellent team spirit throughout the nursery with children getting on with one another, playing happily together, being respectful of each other and sharing resources. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All children are valued and respected as individuals and all their needs are well documented and implemented. Staff recognise that some children will need extra care and attention, this could be developmental need or personal need. Detailed registration forms gain full information from parents about each child in order for the nursery to fully meet their needs.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. This contributes significantly to children's sense of belonging, security and well-being. Parents and carers are warmly welcomed into the nursery where staff are on hand to discuss any issues and share information. For example, being invited to regular open days and having appointment times for more formal exchange of information about their child's progress and achievements helps parents and carers understand their children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents and carers receive information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum and 'Birth to three matters' framework. The availability of informative documentation and notice boards extends the nurseries effectiveness in keeping parents and carers well informed. Parents speak knowingly and enthusiastically about the nursery and like the open door policy that the nursery has.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. Children's care is greatly enhanced by the strong management and committed and dedicated staff team. This benefits all the children as they move through the nursery from baby room to pre-school. The nursery management and staff team continually enhance their

knowledge through extensive training. The management team are responsible for all aspects of the nursery including staff supervision and employment, ratios and deployment, operational plan, staff training and qualifications. All staff have considerable knowledge of the National Standards which they are committed to apply throughout the nursery. This is enhanced by their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage Curriculum. High regard for the well-being of the children, their group sizes, adult support, enjoyment and achievements contributes to the overall effectiveness of the organisation of the nursery.

The premises are extremely well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is set out to ensure children obtain the maximum enjoyment and play opportunities that will enhance all areas of their development and learning. Children arrive and are keen to participate in the nursery lifestyle and freely move around talking to staff and their peers about home experiences. Staff work effectively as a team, moving with the flow of the children where they can actively involve themselves in the children's play.

Well organised records and documents ensures children's welfare and enables parents to play an active role in their child's care. The required documentation is very well organised and in place to support the management and efficient running of the setting. There are very informative notice boards and leaflets for parents as well as excellent day to day communication to share information about their children.

Staff are extremely knowledgeable and have a very good understanding of child development. Most of the staff hold relevant childcare qualifications and extend their own professional development through access to training and childcare literature, for example, having outside agencies come in and do training with the staff such as child protection. They continue to constantly develop their practice and knowledge of 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage Curriculum. This enables them to extend, challenge and further enhance children's learning and development. However there are times when staffs observations and recordings are not monitored effectively, to ensure there is clear recordings as well developing and challenging opportunities for children's learning. Overall the provision meets the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure that all children have access to drinking water at all times and that good hygiene is promoted. This refers to the use of individual flannels and bedding for each child to minimise potential cross infection. All children throughout the nursery can access drinking water either by photos on bottles for the babies and younger children and named cups for older children. All children have individual bedding so that potential cross infection is minimised. The provider was asked to ensure children can safely access a sufficient range of suitable, age appropriate and challenging resources. This refers to equipment and resources for children under the age of two years and the range of outdoor equipment available for all children. When inspecting the nursery it was found that the children had a good supply of toys and play materials that would stimulate and challenge their play opportunities both inside and outside. They were

asked to increase and develop staff's awareness of health and safety issues when preparing, organising and providing activities for children.

The whole team is very health and safety aware as they covered this within their in-house training and team meetings.

The provider was also asked to improve the organisation of care for all children to ensure children's needs are given full priority. At all times the staff were observed to be giving the children their full attention and meeting their needs. They have also reviewed and improved current contingency arrangements to effectively minimise any disruption to the quality of care for the children.

The nursery has a full staff team and has good contingency plans to cover staff sickness and leave. This ensures staff ratios are correct at all times.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection a complaint was investigated under standards 8 and 12 of the National Standards, in relation to parental concerns as to the quality and quantity of food provided by the nursery as well as its ability to meet individual needs. An investigation took place, where no evidence was found to support the complaint and no further action was taken. The nursery has substantial procedures in place to support the implementation of high quality food programme. In addition there are effective systems in place to monitor and control quantity and quality and individual dietary needs. This provision remains registered.

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 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 all hazards to children on the premises are minimised (radiator

temperature)

- ensure children's details are recorded correctly on documentation (Ladybirds photo records of children's observations)

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):

- ensure staff further develop their monitoring and evaluation practices to enable children's learning to be challenged and developed.

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