



Old Co-operative Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253394
Inspection date	22 February 2006
Inspector	Alison Edwards
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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Old Co-operative Day Nursery opened in 1992. It is a privately-run provision which operates from converted two-storey premises in the village of Gotham in the Rushcliffe district of Nottinghamshire. It serves the village and neighbouring communities. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 30 children under 8 years at any time. School children up to the age of 11 also attend before and after school and during school holidays. The nursery offers nursery education to funded 3-

and 4-year-olds. There are currently 64 children on roll of whom 16 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery opens from 07:30 to 18:30 from Monday to Friday throughout the year, except for bank holidays and a period over Christmas. Children attend a variety of sessions. Including the proprietor there are 13 childcare staff. Of these, 8 hold recognised childcare qualifications at Level 3, and 4 hold recognised qualifications at Level 2. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and suitably maintained premises where they enjoy frequent access to fresh air during outdoor play, so helping to maintain their health and well-being. Older children routinely wash their hands after using the toilet, so helping to minimise risks of cross-infection. They often show independence in other simple self-care routines such as wiping their noses or putting on their own outdoor clothes. They show a growing awareness of how to care for themselves, for example talking about the need to wash and dry their hands to get rid of germs and stop their hands getting sore. Most appropriate procedures are followed within nappy changing routines with younger children, although there are occasional lapses in good practice resulting in possible risks of infection to children. Throughout the nursery staff liaise with parents to ensure they have access to information enabling them to meet children's individual health and dietary needs. Ready availability of first aid supplies and a high proportion of staff trained in paediatric first aid enable staff to act in children's best interests if they are unwell or injured.

Children across the age range enjoy many good opportunities to develop their hand-eye coordination. For example, younger toddlers show enjoyment and interest as staff encourage them use shape sorters or wire bead frames, whilst older children develop increasing dexterity when independently handling small tools such as scissors, tape or elastic bands to create box models. Children frequently use their large muscle skills, for example when older babies are able to pull themselves up using a mirrored wall bar, or when older children use wheeled toys or participate enthusiastically in adult-led movement games. However, large movement activities are not consistently best planned to offer optimum challenge and progression to children receiving funded nursery education.

Provision of varied home-prepared meals and snacks, regularly including nutritious ingredients such as fresh fruit and vegetables, helps children develop healthy eating habits. Children throughout the nursery are readily able to access drinking water so helping to ensure they take sufficient fluids. For example, older children independently use a water cooler or pour themselves drinks from covered jugs, whilst staff ensure that babies' covered beakers are readily accessible to them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children settle happily in the comfortable premises which provide ample indoor and outdoor space for them to experience active play or quiet rest. Staff use available space well to enable children to move freely between a range of interesting activities in clearly designated areas. Children safely and independently access a wide range of stimulating resources because they are organised well. For example younger toddlers choose simple play foods and utensils from storage drawers in their home corner, whilst older children purposefully choose from a wide range of creative materials on well-designed storage units. Children across the age range enjoy regular access to an inner playground and outer grassed and paved area, both of which can be safely secured, so enabling them to benefit from outdoor play in the fresh air.

Systematic risk assessments are regularly reviewed, so helping to identify and minimise hazards to children. A range of routine precautions are usually in place to maintain children's safety whilst at nursery, such as use of electrical socket covers and a gate at the head of the stairs just outside the first floor facilities used by school-aged children. Staff often make good use of spontaneous learning opportunities to encourage children to be aware of their own safety, for example as they talk with pre-school children about how to carry scissors safely. They recognise their responsibility to maintain children's safety in an emergency such as a fire, and are familiar with the procedures to be followed. Good staff:child ratios are maintained, helping ensure children are offered good supervision appropriate to their activities and stage of development.

Staff are clear on what child abuse and neglect mean and understand their responsibility to follow up any concerns about a child, so helping them to safeguard children's welfare. However, the written child protection policy does not yet fully reflect current local and national guidance with regard to specific procedures to be followed in the event of any child protection allegations against staff. This potentially limits the nursery's ability to deal with such a situation to best effect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children across the age range are usually very settled and relaxed within the welcoming nursery. They are confident in their details with adults, and begin to develop relationships with their peers, for example as an older toddler shows a book to a younger baby. Staff working with younger children are beginning to make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support babies' and toddlers' development, planning a range of experiences to enable children to develop their confidence, communication and learning. For example they spend time listening and responding to children's gestures and sounds as they encourage them to make use of all their senses in safely supervised experiences to investigate substances such as water, flour or baked beans, or to explore how different materials look and sound. Across the age range, staff recognise and take account of children's individual preferences, for example as they involve school-aged children in planning future activities and offer children opportunities for individual or group play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for the funded nursery education programme is good. Senior staff have a sound awareness of the principles underpinning the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' providing them with a sound basis to support children's development and learning. A wide range of stimulating activities and experiences enable children to develop their social, physical, thinking and imaginative skills providing them with a broad range of learning opportunities. However long-term planning systems are not yet fully effective in ensuring that all aspects of learning identified in the 'Curriculum guidance' receive fully balanced coverage. Staff value children's self-chosen play and are able to make good use of unplanned learning opportunities to develop children's interests and knowledge. For example when one child makes a rattle for a younger sibling, they successfully build on other children's interest by spontaneously encouraging them to experiment with different materials to make rain sticks. Adult-led group times are also usually well-organised, demonstrating staff's ability to make effective use of varied teaching methods to support children's learning. For example, during group times, younger and more able children confidently sing and sign songs linking initial sounds and letters. Effective systems are in place to help all children feel valued and included, for example through working with relevant professionals to enable children with special needs to participate fully in activities and experiences. Staff are beginning to make detailed observations of children's activities and link these to their progress through the stepping stones to the early learning goals. However, these assessments are not yet organised to best effect to provide staff and parents with an overview of children's development or to help ensure that activities, experiences and resources are well planned and presented to help children progress to the next stage of learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. Children feel valued because adults are consistent and positive in their dealings with them. This helps them feel confident in their daily activities and routines, for example as they negotiate how many children can play in the role play area. Children often spontaneously take responsibility for their actions, for example, independently sweeping up spilt sand. They often show purposeful interest in their play, as when two children talk about the patterns toy lorry tyres make in the flour tray. They begin to show care and concern for each other, for example as an older child pours a drink for a younger child at the snack table.

Children's spoken language is developing well. They are often confident to express their own views in a group, and begin to listen to each other's contributions. They start to use spoken language to explain things, for example when a child identifies that a sticking-out staple can scratch. They develop growing awareness of how initial sounds and letters are linked, for example as staff encourage them to identify animal puppets such as gorgeous, galloping gazelles. They enjoy listening to stories and begin to anticipate what will happen next, taking account of rhythm and rhyme. They enjoy many opportunities to make marks and sometimes use purposeful writing within their play, for example when taking orders in a pretend shop.

Children often reliably use number names and count in sequence up to 20 in group activities, for example when counting how many children are present. They sometimes begin to combine and compare smaller numbers, for example when

playing with different sized plastic animals. They have many opportunities to explore pattern, measurement and 2 and 3D shapes. For example they thread with coloured beads, build with construction sets or fill and empty containers in the sand. However practical mathematical activities are not always best presented to fully extend and challenge children's learning.

Planned activities introduce children to a wide range of creative materials and techniques such as collage or different types of painting, so helping them learn about colour, texture and form. Children enjoy many well-resourced opportunities to explore and develop their own creative ideas, for example as they independently use cotton wool, feathers and elastic bands to create hatching eggs. Children regularly enjoy singing a variety of songs and are able to experience various types of music, for example when handling simple percussion instruments. They begin to act out fantasy play or their own experiences in the role play area, for example when pretending to be a superhero or going to a burger bar at the fair.

A varied range of adult-led and child-chosen activities helps children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example they begin to become familiar with small tools and some aspects of everyday technology as they use items such as pencil sharpeners or a simple tape recorder. They investigate how substances behave as they use materials such as wet or dry sand. They begin to learn about different cultures as they mark different festivals such as Chinese New Year by tasting different foods or creating a dragon dance. They learn about time and place through topic-based activities, for example as they explore historical and legendary events in their locality.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The welcoming environment incorporates a fair range of posters, books and resources reflecting different cultures and lifestyles, so helping children feel a sense of belonging and begin to learn about their own and the wider community. From an early age children learn to take account of people's individual needs through daily routines and activities, for example as they are introduced to simple signing, or use play people with mobility aids such as wheelchairs. Some inclusion of stories and creative activities linked to different religions and festivals helps children recognise and respect different beliefs. They begin to show excitement and wonder at aspects of the natural world, such as hailstones and snowflakes. Effective systems are in place to support the inclusion of children with identified special needs.

Staff are able to make effective use of a range of strategies to help children learn to behave appropriately. For example, consistent and positive attention helps younger toddlers learn how to handle toys and books appropriately, whilst staff working with older children involve them in establishing agreed boundaries for behaviour in the out of school club. Children begin to learn to manage their own behaviour as staff give them time to calm down from any minor outbursts and offer them positive choices of activities. Children are often encouraged to develop independence in some simple

self-care tasks such as getting their own drinks.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive useful initial information about the nursery's aims, staffing and routines, so helping them understand how children's care is organised. Newsletters and displays help inform them of significant changes and help them understand how different activities and experiences contribute to their children's development and learning. Parents and staff share necessary information about children's individual care, dietary and health needs, enabling these to be met. Systems to respond to and log any parental concerns are in place, but these are not yet fully in line with current national guidance. Parents of children receiving funded nursery education are provided with regular progress reports and have ready access to detailed observation notes, although the latter are not yet organised to best effect to provide a clear overview of children's developmental progress. There are varied opportunities for parents to make links with the nursery and their children's learning, for example through use of a parents' library or through contributing ideas for specific topics and themes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A low turnover rate helps create an established staff team who work well together to create a stable and secure environment where children are settled and confident and enjoy their time at nursery. Good adult:child ratios enable staff to spend time working closely with children as individuals or in small groups, so helping establish secure relationships. Qualified leaders are knowledgeable about children's needs and how they learn. They take active steps to extend their awareness of good practice, for example through attendance at in-house and local training, or by participation in higher level professional courses. Staff and management regularly meet to discuss good practice, for example in managing children's behaviour, so helping them develop consistency and skills. They have a practical awareness of how to implement policies and procedures which are generally clear and appropriate, though occasionally lack specific detail. Appropriate contact and personal details are methodically maintained, enabling staff to take account of children's individual care needs.

Leadership and management of the funded nursery education programme is good. Staff and management communicate well with each other through informal discussion. Regular appraisals ensure there is a shared understanding of responsibilities and identify some areas for on-going professional development. Some arrangements are in place for staff to evaluate the effectiveness of particular activities in supporting children's development and learning and for management to monitor the overall effectiveness of the nursery education programme. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of day care the nursery was asked to improve staff knowledge of good hygiene procedures, with particular reference to children's handwashing

before meals and storage of children's toothbrushes. Staff now show consistent awareness of the importance of encouraging handwashing before meals, and have implemented arrangements to ensure toothbrushes are stored individually, so minimising risks of cross-infection from these issues. However occasional lapses in good hygiene procedures with regard to nappy changing result in some remaining risk of cross-infection. A further recommendation has therefore been raised in relation to this specific issue. The nursery was also asked to update written procedures to be followed regarding uncollected children and child protection. Staff are now able to use the procedures regarding uncollected children to identify appropriate procedures to be followed to in such a situation. However, the child protection policy does not yet sufficiently clearly identify procedures reflecting current local and national guidance which are to be followed in the event of any child protection allegations against staff, so potentially compromising the nursery's ability to safeguard children's welfare to best effect in such a situation. A further recommendation has therefore been raised regarding this issue.

At the last inspection of funded nursery education the nursery was asked to develop opportunities for 4-year-olds to recognise and write their names and other familiar words through practical activities, and to link letter sounds with letter recognition. It was also asked use evaluations of topics and activities to inform staff when planning for children's next steps in learning. Children now have many opportunities to link sounds and letters, for example through use of posters and wall displays, and through planned games and activities with staff. They become familiar with their names and other familiar words through use of cards and labels, and have a variety of opportunities to make marks and begin to write. Staff have established some systems to evaluate topics and activities and are reviewing ways of using these effectively in planning for the next stages of children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to 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.

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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):

- review complaints procedure and recording systems to ensure these are fully in line with current guidance
- ensure all staff are aware of and consistently implement good hygiene practices in nappy changing routines to minimise the risk of infection
- ensure the written child protection procedure is fully in line with current national and local guidance with regard to any allegations against staff

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):

- review methods of using information gained from assessments of children's development to best effect in short term planning to ensure that activities and resources are well used to promote progression and challenge in children's learning
- develop use of long term planning to more effectively identify how all aspects of learning receive fully balanced coverage.

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