



Acklam Children's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	508441
Inspection date	17 October 2006
Inspector	Ann Doubleday / Josephine Ann Northend
Setting Address	Acklam Road, Acklam, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS5 4EB
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Registered person	Nunthorpe Nurseries Group 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 satisfactory. 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?

Acklam Children's Day Nursery is part of the Nunthorpe Nursery private chain of nurseries. It opened October 1991 and operates from three main childcare rooms in a self contained building, close to the centre of Middlesbrough. A maximum of 59 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 07.30 to 18.00 all year round.

There are currently 41 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes two children receiving funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community.

The nursery employs nine full time staff and a nursery cook; eight of the staff hold a relevant childcare qualification. One member of staff is working towards a childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's physical development is supported well, with opportunities to play outdoors each day. Each room has their own enclosed dedicated outdoor play space. Outdoor activities for pre-school children are planned around the topic, for example, children learn about road safety as they pedal their tricycles and learn what traffic lights mean. Children can rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Many staff hold first aid certificates. Appropriate sick children, accident and medication procedures are in place and parents are aware of the procedures; this ensures children's health needs are satisfactorily met. However, some medication is out of date, although it has not been used for some time, and medication records do not always include the actual time that the medication was administered.

Staff promote some good personal hygiene routines as they wear protective aprons for nappy changing and food preparation and encourage children to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. They are beginning to understand why they need to do so, as staff gently reinforce this throughout the day. However, good hygiene practices are not fully promoted. For example, soap is not always used for hand washing and blankets used at sleep time are re-used by different children during the week, therefore increasing the risk of cross infection.

The staff are aware of the need to promote healthy eating. Children receive a varied and generally nutritious range of meals and snacks including fresh fruit and vegetables. Meal times are a social occasion as children sit together and chat about their day. Staff work appropriately with parents to ensure they are aware of and meet any special dietary requirements. Children are offered drinks with their meals and have direct access to fresh drinking water at other times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally clean and welcoming environment, however, the floor in the pre-school room is sometimes dirty, due to outdoor equipment having to be stored in this area overnight. Risk assessments are carried out in each area used by children, but are not sufficiently robust. The outdoor area is not always checked sufficiently prior to use, a plastic carrier bag from the play dough was left within children's reach and the nursery rooms are not always maintained at an appropriate temperature; radiators in some rooms become too hot and pose a hazard, when this is addressed other rooms become too cold. This means the premises do not fully promote children's welfare and safety. There is a clear health and safety statement in place and staff give priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about road safety during their topic and are taught not to run around inside the nursery rooms.

The security of the premises is good and there are clear lost and uncollected child policies in place. There is a good range of developmentally appropriate resources, which are well-organised

in child-height furniture to encourage independent access. Rooms are set out appropriately in order for children to move around freely. The high adult to child ratios ensure children are well supervised and support children's safety.

The welfare of children is satisfactorily protected. Staff have a sound understanding of their role and responsibilities under child protection. There are clear policies and procedures in place and staff have received training in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. They arrive happy, separate from their carers well and are eager to participate. Close and caring relationships with staff increase the children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. For example, children and staff share chatter during nappy change procedures. Babies receive lots of individual attention. Staff have attended training and use the Birth to three matters programme well. For example, children explore with natural materials as they choose to sit in the sand tray and listen to the sounds they make with musical instruments. Children are developing good relationships with each other and their communication skills are well supported through good adult to child interactions.

Children move around their room freely. Their individual routines are catered for and babies wake up from their sleep happy and keen to participate. Children select their own activities and take part in adult directed activities. They show excitement as they try out new experiences, for example, toddlers squeal with delight when playing with custard powder. Play opportunities are purposeful and developmentally appropriate, resulting in children being motivated and interested. This is evident in the good planning and evaluation of activities.

There are clear settling in procedures in place for children, which include gaining information from parents about their child's routines and care. This is handled sensitively and informally by staff during the child's visits. Staff are aware of and meet children's individual needs well. Children behave well and are developing a sense of right and wrong. They respond well to staff who clearly explain why they should not do something.

Children that attend at the beginning and the end of the school day enjoy their time to rest or be active according to their individual needs. Age appropriate activities are available for them and they integrate well with the children in the pre-school room.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy their time at the nursery and achieve well because staff use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide good quality nursery education. Key staff have attended Foundation Stage training and are confident in the delivery of the curriculum. They plan and prepare well an interesting programme of activities across the six areas of learning, in order to meet children's individual learning needs. However, they do not always consider seating arrangements at story time in order to make sure all children can see. Staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the planning and delivery of focused activities. Assessment systems are in place and are completed regularly.

They are used when planning activities in order to provide appropriate challenge. However, some everyday routines do not always extend the older and more able children, for example, all the coat pegs have a picture as well as the child's name. Assessments link clearly to the Foundation Stage curriculum and show how children are progressing. Parents contribute to their child's initial assessment. The daily plan includes key vocabulary and resources to be used which supports the learning opportunities offered to children. Staff use good questioning skills to further extend children's thoughts and ideas. They involve themselves appropriately in children's activities and offer good support and praise to them.

Children are confident in their play and learning and persist for extended periods of time at activities. They show pride in their own achievements and help each other with tasks, for example, an older child helps a younger child to count three fingers. They are well-behaved and participate well at tidy up time. Children show good interest in their environment and living things, for example, they know the moon comes out at night and describe it as a crescent shape. They explore well with their senses using a variety of materials, such as sand, water and play dough. They talk about their own families and are developing a good understanding of other cultures and beliefs through the use of interesting resources, visitors to the setting and well planned activities. Children are developing some self-care skills. For example, they learn to wash their own hands, pour their own drinks and serve their own meals. However, they do not always put on their own coats to play outside. They are developing a secure knowledge of health and bodily awareness, for example, they understand why they need to wash their hands before eating and know the effects of exercise on their bodies. They know that milk is good for them and that they have a 'love heart' in their bodies which beats faster after exercise.

Children are developing good communication skills. They show confidence in speaking to others and hold a conversation for extended periods of time and talk about what they are doing. They initiate conversations and ask simple questions. Children are developing a sense of time, as they remember what they did yesterday. They are developing good writing skills and hold pencils correctly as they make good use of the mark making area. Children form recognisable marks and letters and some can write their own names. Although they have opportunities to recognise their own names, differentiation is not always used well, resulting in the activity being too easy for the older children. They are becoming aware of the initial letter sounds in words, particularly as they learn the sound of the letter of the week. Children have good access to books and listen attentively to stories, joining in with familiar phrases.

Children use a computer well. They control the mouse and complete simple programs confidently. They also use other programmable equipment well, for example, they turn down the sound on the compact disc player. They are developing their understanding of number and count reliably up to eight and beyond. They are beginning to understand the order of numerals, for example, they know zero is before one and two is after one. They can write many numerals. Children recognise and name shapes confidently and know how many sides many shapes have and that a circle has no sides. Children understand and are using size language well. They have some opportunities to use problem solving and calculating, for example, as they work out which piece of track they need to construct a bridge, but this is not always extended into everyday routines and activities.

Children are developing some sense of space as they sit on the mat for circle and story time. They show good control as they move confidently around the room. They handle tools and equipment well and develop good levels of hand-eye co-ordination, for example, as they skilfully use hoops and throw and catch balls. Children have many opportunities for large physical exercise in order to develop their gross motor skills. For example, they pedal tricycles around cones competently.

Children recognise and can name many colours and describe a star as being shiny. They have access to a range of creative resources and use their imagination well in role play. Children use a range of resources to construct with a purpose in mind and build three-dimensional structures confidently. They join in and enjoy familiar songs, they sing spontaneously throughout the day and have good access to musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed and staff ensure the rooms are set up for their arrival. There is a range of resources available reflecting other cultures and races. Planned activities are undertaken that positively represent the local and wider community, for example, children visit the local museum and library. This helps increase their awareness of diversity and develop a positive attitude to others. The staff's understanding of each child's needs is used well to encourage a sense of security and belonging, for example, children are moved into the next room when it is appropriate to their stage of development rather than at an exact age. There is a clear special needs statement in place and there are two identified special needs co-ordinators; one co-ordinator has completed in-depth training and the other has started this. All staff have received some relevant training.

Children are well-behaved and polite in response to the expectations of staff. They take turns and are beginning to show care and concern for others. Older children are involved in setting their rules and these are displayed on a poster. Children's understanding of right and wrong is increased through the good example set and gentle reminders they receive from staff. This means children's spiritual moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the two-way sharing of information. Parents receive regular newsletters and information about the Foundation Stage and further information is displayed around the setting for their attention. They are involved in the initial assessments of their child. Parents receive regular formal feedback on their child's developmental progress through written reports and open evenings. They are encouraged to continue their child's learning at home, for example, through topic information and the use of the book lending system.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel at home and at ease within the childcare environment and are grouped appropriately. This means they are confident to initiate their own play and learning. Space is

organised well to support play opportunities for children. All staff currently employed at the setting have been appropriately vetted and there are clear staff recruitment procedures in place. Staff receive an induction to the setting. Adult to child ratios are well maintained.

Required documents are available and they are stored confidentially. An accurate record is kept of children's and staff's attendance. The policies and procedures in place support practice, are shared with staff and are made available to parents. However, a policy file in the office does not contain all of the relevant policies. There is a clear complaints procedure, a record is kept of all complaints received but is too detailed to be shared with parents and maintain confidentiality. There are clear systems in place for the sharing of information with parents about the service and their child's activities.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager has developed her own knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Most staff have an early years qualification and there is always a member of staff on duty with an up to date first aid certificate. The manager encourages staff to attend relevant training. The knowledge gained by staff is used to further support children's care and welfare. Staff's experience and knowledge of the Foundation Stage is good and teaching supports children's learning. Regular staff meetings are held and there is a staff appraisal system in place. The manager is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and is pro-active in addressing identified weaknesses.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection actions were raised in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable person and National Standard 14: Organisation. Vetting procedures are now rigorous enough to ensure that all staff are appropriately vetted. Many of the staff have now completed a first aid course of the required length. This ensures there is always a member of staff on duty with an appropriate first aid qualification. This safeguards children's welfare. Risk assessments are now completed within each room and the risks identified at the last inspection have been minimised, however, the system in place is not yet rigorous enough to ensure all risk are identified and minimised. This means children are not always kept fully safe.

Recommendations were agreed in relation to the nursery education. The reading area has now been developed so that it is more welcoming and accessible to children, mark making opportunities are now provided in all activity areas and some problem solving is included within play and daily routines. However, this is not yet fully developed. Assessment records are now used when planning, to provide more appropriate challenge. The manager has now developed a more rigorous system for monitoring the provision of nursery education and is identifying and addressing weaknesses more effectively. The information displayed for parents about the nursery education is kept up to date and a sheet detailing the topic is provided, which includes ways of continuing the child's learning at home.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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 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):

- assess the risks to children in relation to the temperature of the radiators and the outdoor play areas and take action to minimise these
- ensure that any prescribed medication stored at nursery is within date and records include the actual times that medication is given
- make sure that blankets provided for sleep times do not pose a health risk through cross contamination
- develop the log of complaints to ensure a summary is available for parents.

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):

- further develop the opportunities for children to use simple calculation and problem solving in every day activities
- further develop opportunities to extend activities for the older and more able children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk