



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 306356

DfES Number: 534153

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	14/02/2005
Inspector Name	Elaine Murray

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Building Blocks
Setting Address	Grayson, 67 Prenton Road West Prenton CH42 9PZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Gaynor and Neil Williams
Address	67 Prenton Road West Birkenhead Merseyside CH42 9PZ

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Building Blocks Day nursery is owned by Neil and Gaynor Williams. It operates on the ground floor of a large semi-detached house in Prenton. The nursery also has the use of the enclosed back garden. The babies are accommodated at the front of the house with the older children using the rear.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 19 children aged between birth and 5 years. It operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 08.00am and 18.00pm. There are currently 34 children on roll. Of these 6 receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs 6 staff, 4 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Building Blocks Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for children.

Staff organise the available space and resources well to meet children's needs. They provide a bright and welcoming environment for children but do not always maintain an adequate temperature in the nursery. Staff provide a range of suitable toys and equipment for all children. The person in charge and most staff hold relevant qualifications which has a positive effect on the quality of care provided. At certain times of the day minimum staffing ratios are not maintained. Ofsted was not notified of recent staff changes. The setting has not provided evidence of police checks for new staff. Staff maintain all records confidentially. There are some weaknesses in written procedures relating to child protection and uncollected children.

Staff are aware of safety issues and take measures to keep children safe. They have a clear sickness policy which helps to protect children from the spread of infection. Staff provide home prepared snacks and meals which are healthy and nutritious. All children are valued and included in the activities provided. The child protection policy is shared with parents. There is no written record of the procedure to be followed

should an allegation of abuse be made against a staff member.

Staff have warm, positive relationships with children. They provide a broad range of interesting activities to develop children's learning. Staff encourage children's good behaviour through their positive approach. Children behave very well.

Staff work well with parents to meet children's needs. There are positive relationships between staff and parents. There are effective measures in place to keep parents well informed about the provision and their children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no actions raised at the last inspection.

What is being done well?

- Staff have positive , warm relationships with children. Babies and children appear happy and content in their care.
- Staff use toys and equipment well to provide a broad range of interesting practical activities which develop learning. Babies are involved in exploring different textures including sand and paint. Older children enjoy many planned activities which help them make progress towards the early learning goals.
- There are effective measures in place to inform parents. They are invited to read policies which are displayed in the entrance hall. All parents receive a written daily record of their child's activities. Parents of babies receive information regarding nappy changing, sleeping and feeding routines.
- Staff have a positive approach to managing behaviour. They make good use of praise to promote children's good behaviour. Children behave well.
- Staff make good use of the space available to meet children's needs. The baby room has a comfortable carpeted area and messy play area. There is a separate room for sleeping. The room for older children has a carpeted area, messy play area, book corner and role play area.
- Snacks and meals provided are healthy and nutritious. Meals are freshly prepared on the premises. Menus show a balanced diet provided.

What needs to be improved?

- procedures for notifying Ofsted of staff changes
- provision of evidence that new staff have been police checked
- the maintenance of minimum staffing ratios at all time
- the written record of procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member

- the written record of procedures to be followed in the event of a child not being collected
- methods for ensuring that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report since April 2004.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
1	ensure that Ofsted are informed of staff changes	01/03/2005
1	provide evidence that new staff have been vetted	01/03/2005
2	ensure that staff ratios are maintained at all times	01/03/2005
14	provide a written statement of the procedure to be followed in the event of a child not being collected	01/03/2005
14	ensure that the child protection procedure for the nursery contains details of action to be taken should an allegation of abuse be made against a staff member	01/03/2005

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
4	ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The overall quality of the nursery education at Building Blocks Day Nursery is good. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They make generally good progress in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and mathematical development.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff plan a range of interesting activities which promote much effective learning in the six areas. There are insufficient chances for children to solve simple mathematical problems, or to make marks or write for a purpose. Staff have warm, positive relationships with the children. They make good use of praise to effectively build children's confidence. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. Children behave very well. Staff have good knowledge of children's capabilities and progress and use this knowledge to inform future learning. The grouping of funded children with younger children at times limits opportunities for staff to extend children's learning and sustain their concentration. On occasions when both staff are deployed in one to one activities staff involvement is limited by the need to attend to the younger children, and learning from activities is not maximised.

The leadership and management of the nursery is generally good. Staff are clear about their roles and work well together to plan activities. They are committed to improving their provision and have attended recent courses to improve their knowledge and the quality of children's learning. The monitoring of planning is not fully effective in identifying areas for improvement or ensuring that a balance of activities is provided.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. Parents are well informed about the provision and children's progress. They are effectively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Staff have positive, warm relationships with children. they make good use of praise to effectively build children's confidence and self esteem.
- Children behave very well in response to staff's high expectations and positive approach.
- Staff develop children's speaking skills and letter sound recognition effectively. Children are learning to express themselves clearly through daily opportunities to talk to the group and to staff. They are becoming familiar with a range of letter sounds through daily chances to introduce and reinforce this learning.

- A very good partnership is fostered with parents and carers. Parents receive a good level of information about the nursery and its provision through the parents brochure and information available in the entrance hall. They are well informed about their children's progress through regular chances to see their child's assessments, an annual parents evening and information provided in daily diaries completed by staff for each child. This strong partnership has a positive effect on the quality of children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- Planning to ensure that children have more chances to solve simple mathematical problems and to make marks or write for a purpose.
- Grouping of children to ensure that older and more able children are extended and that children's concentration is sustained
- Staff deployment to ensure that learning form activities is maximised.
- The monitoring of planning to ensure that gaps are identified and a balance of activities is provided.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made very good progress in meeting the key issues identified at the previous inspection. These required the nursery to further develop children's knowledge and understanding of sounds, improve opportunities for parents to share what they know about their child and improve the information available to parents about planned activities.

Staff provide daily opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds. Children make very good progress in this aspect of learning.

Parents are able to share what they know about their children through adding their own comments in the daily diary which staff complete for each child, and through talks with staff. Parents are well informed about planned activities as weekly plans are clearly displayed for them to see. These measures have had a positive effect on the quality of the partnership with parents and children's learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children relate positively to staff and each other. They show confidence as they select their own activities and talk to the group. Children behave very well. They co operate happily in role play and take turns in a baking activity. Children demonstrate a good level of personal independence as they put on coats and lay the table for lunch. Children concentrate well on threading activities. Their concentration and interest in activities is not always sustained due to inappropriate grouping.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children are effectively learning to link sounds and letters. They are confident to suggest different objects beginning with a certain letter sound. Children are learning to express themselves clearly as they speak to the group at circle time. They happily choose books to look at and show a good understanding of how books work. They are learning to form letters correctly and write their names. They have insufficient chances to write or make marks for different purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children make very good progress in learning to count and recognise numbers to 10. They identify numbers and hold up the correct number of fingers at circle time. Children confidently recognise some simple shapes as they make biscuits. They are learning to use mathematical language as they talk about 'big' and 'small' strawberries at snack time. Children have few chances to develop skills solving simple mathematical problems.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are learning to observe change through baking activities and discussions about the weather. They show curiosity as they talk about the similarities and differences between a baby rabbit and guineas pig brought in to nursery. Children are developing a good sense of time as they regularly discuss what they did yesterday or last week. They are effectively learning to use a computer to support their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children use outdoor climbing equipment and wheeled toys with confidence. They are developing skills using balls to throw and catch. Children show a good awareness of space as they move around the small indoor area. They show proficiency in threading activities and are developing good pencil control. Children are developing an awareness of the importance of keeping healthy through discussion and topic work.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Very Good
Children show good imagination in role play as they develop scenarios in the 'home corner'. They are able to express themselves in art work using paint and collage and are developing a good awareness of colour. Children respond well as they discuss the different fruits they are tasting and talk about how baking mixture looks and feels. They are learning to explore sound as they use instruments to make loud or quiet sounds. Children enjoy singing a range of familiar songs.	
Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve planning to ensure that children have more chances to solve simple mathematical problems and to make marks or write for a purpose.
- adapt grouping of children to ensure that older and more able children are extended and that children's concentration is sustained
- adapt staff deployment to ensure that learning from activities is maximised.
- improve the monitoring of planning to ensure that gaps are identified and a balance of activities is provided.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.