



**Office for Standards
in Education**

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 205295

DfES Number: 543100

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/10/2004
Inspector Name	Saida Cummings

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Playhouse Nursery
Setting Address	24 Abbey Road Malvern Worcestershire WR14 3HD

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Mrs Lorraine Walker
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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

Playhouse Nursery opened in 1986 and operates from a large Victorian semi-detached villa. The setting is situated in the centre of Malvern, Worcestershire, and serves children from Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Children use the first four floors of the property consisting of various play rooms for the different ages cared for. They also have access to a specifically adapted fully-enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 63 children aged from 6 months to 4 years on roll. Of these 12 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting has facilities in place for supporting children who have a special need and for whom English is not a first language. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 12 part-time and full-time staff who work with the children. Nine of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications NVQ level 2 or 3. Two staff are currently working towards a recognised childcare qualification. There is also an accredited NVQ assessment centre housed within the premises, which is co-managed by the provider. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). They also attend local EYDCP forum and partnership meetings. The nursery are currently working towards the Growing Together quality assurance award.

How good is the Day Care?

Playhouse Nursery provides good care for children. Staff arrange the outdoor area, playrooms and resources imaginatively to encourage the children to make decisions and to be independent. There is a warm and welcoming environment with children's work displayed. Staff are experienced and regularly update their knowledge by attending appropriate training.

Children's interest is captured because staff provide many varied and exciting activities. They encourage and praise children ensuring their individual

developmental needs and confidence are nurtured. Children are able to self-select from a wide variety of toys and materials, which are set up within their easy access. They are interested in and want to play with what is available. This includes resources and activities to promote their awareness of diversity. Children relate well to other children and adults in the setting.

There are well-organised snack and meal times which are also used as social times, with all children and staff included. Children are provided with nutritious and healthy food which is freshly prepared on a daily basis. There are good hygiene procedures in place which all staff, children and parents are made aware of, thereby reducing risks to children. Staff are pro-active in ensuring all areas used by children are safe. There are well-managed strategies and procedures in place for dealing with behavioural management issues. This includes full discussion and consultation with parents to ensure consistency is practised.

Staff have a good relationship with parents, ensuring children are cared for according to their wishes. They ensure parents are kept well informed of their children's activities, events and any issues. However, parents have not been made aware of how to contact Ofsted. There are comprehensive written policies and procedures in place which are implemented by all staff. However, some details are missing from the child protection policy.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable, as there were no actions raised at the previous inspection.

What is being done well?

- Staff provide an interesting and stimulating balance of activities, allowing for more active play and relaxing activities. Children's physical skills are promoted effectively through a stimulating range of indoor and outdoor activities. Play equipment is adapted for different uses to offer stimulating and fun sessions.
- There are good strategies and procedures in place concerning the care of children with special needs. Staff work in partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure children gain as much as possible from the sessions. Children with special needs are included in all activities.
- Staff are deployed effectively during indoor and outdoor activities to ensure risks to children are minimised. There are good systems in place concerning the safe arrival and collection of children. Parents are informed of the guidelines concerning sick children to ensure they are made fully aware of the procedures.
- A high priority is given to meeting children's individual needs and regular discussions are held with parents concerning all aspects of care. Very good user-friendly information is made available to parents which outline the organisation and procedures of the setting. This includes a specifically adapted portfolio for use with parents during home visits, which would be

made available if required prior to children registering with the nursery.

What needs to be improved?

- the documentation to ensure parents are made aware of how to contact Ofsted
- the written details concerning the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member or volunteer.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

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

Std	Recommendation
12	Update the complaints procedure, to include making parents aware of how to contact Ofsted.
13	Review existing policies to ensure they fully explain, in writing, the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member or volunteer.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Playhouse Nursery provides very good nursery education. Children are making very good progress in all six areas of learning.

Teaching is very good. Staff work well together. They know the children and have a good rapport with them. Children's individual needs are effectively supported and realistic targets set for their development. Children with special educational needs take an active part in all activities and experiences. Whilst the nursery has experience of looking after children who are bilingual, there are no formal procedures regarding provision for children with English as an additional language. Plans clearly identify where children need additional help and identify strategies to ensure differentiation. Staff are adept at adapting activities and resources to suit children's specific learning needs and interests. Good use is made of explanations, open ended questions, opportunities for choice and sensory experiences to extend children's understanding and to aid their thinking and enjoyment.

Leadership and management is very good. The setting is also an early years' training provider and proactive in developing staff's skills, knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Managers and staff work together to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education programme. Evaluations of activities and children's responses inform progress records and future plans. Good use is made of in-house monitoring, training and staff meetings to develop procedures, including recent and ongoing initiatives which have had a positive impact on observations, assessments and planning.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents receive good quality information about the setting, plans and forthcoming topics, and their child's achievements. Their views on their child's skills and interests are welcomed, but there are fewer opportunities for them to be involved in other ways in their children's learning.

What is being done well?

- Children enjoy all aspects of the nursery's education programme. They have a good relationship with the staff who create a relaxed, calm and reassuring learning environment, ensuring that individual needs are well met. Children have good opportunities to make choices, to develop independence, to concentrate and persevere.
- Children have many worthwhile opportunities to learn through first hand and sensory experiences. They really enjoy experimenting with natural materials such as wet and dry sand, playing with water including splashing in puddles, and collecting leaves and twigs for collages. Children make play dough, explore different painting techniques and find out how things work through model making and construction play.

- Comprehensive focus activity plans include clear learning objectives and reflect individual children's learning needs noted in their assessment records. Plans identify where children need additional help or where more able children's skills need extending. In their practice, staff demonstrate their knowledge of each child, and effectively promote learning at each child's level of understanding, through questioning, explanations and by using toys and resources of differing degrees of difficulty.
- There is a warm rapport between parents and staff which reflects the aims of the setting's parental involvement procedures. Parents' views on their children's skills are positively sought and acknowledged through informal discussions and input into their children's progress records. Staff ensure parents have regular feedback on how their children have spent their day. Parents are encouraged to settle their children in, and they have access to user-friendly information about the nursery's educational provision, including long and short term plans and topics.

What needs to be improved?

- the information about sources of advice and support for children with English as an additional language
- the range of opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are eager to join in activities and are often busily engaged. They can concentrate and persevere, with effective support given to anyone who is easily distracted. Children have good opportunities to make choices, and to develop their independence during activities, self-care routines and meal times. Children relate well to each other and are encouraged to be polite, to take turns and share. They are becoming aware of others' needs, often showing concern and kindness to their peers.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy looking at books, handling them carefully. They listen attentively to stories, and join in discussions about these. During play, children talk to each other and tell adults about what they are doing. They use expressive language to describe ideas, what they see or feel, and to recall experiences. Children make links between individual letters and sounds, and many can recognise their own or others' names. They enjoy mark-making with opportunities to use a range of writing tools.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children count confidently, and enjoyable numeracy games and practical activities help their number recognition. Children's thinking and problem solving skills are actively encouraged. They attempt number problems such as 'how many do we need' during play and routines, and are introduced to simple number operations, especially during action rhymes. Children often use mathematical terms appropriately, and they compare items according to shape, size and weight.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy experimenting with a range of natural materials and art and craft media. They are adept at making models from a range of construction toys, with opportunities to follow simple designs and plans, and they find out how equipment such as telephones and tape recorders work. Children recall past experiences from their own lives and in the nursery, and they discuss features of their homes and families, including daily routines such as shopping or getting ready for bed.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are adventurous and energetic when using equipment or moving freely. They like to practise climbing, balancing and jumping. They are developing an awareness of space as they move around and often negotiate amongst themselves, for example as they steer and manoeuvre sturdy wheeled toys. Good support is given to less confident or able children. They learn about good hygiene, including cleaning their teeth, and healthy eating. Children handle a variety of tools and equipment well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children show an appreciation of colour and texture during opportunities to experiment with different media and painting techniques. They are imaginative, acting out different scenarios during role play, and when representing their ideas through their drawings, paintings, models and collage. They use expressive language, describing how things look or feel. Children enjoy songs, music and movement and have an awareness of different sounds, rhythms and beat.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very 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

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

- there are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- the ways in which parents can be encouraged to follow up activities or learning experiences with their children
- the information about the setting's procedures and sources of advice and support for children with English as an additional language.

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.