



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 123574

DfES Number: 581321

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	15/03/2004
Inspector Name	Gillian Charlesworth

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Wainscot House Day Nursery
Setting Address	5 Harpenden Road St. Albans Hertfordshire AL3 5LW

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Wainscot Ltd 123574
------	---------------------

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Wainscot Ltd
Address	5 Harpenden Road St. Albans Hertfordshire AL3 5LW

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

Wainscot House Day Nursery was registered in 1992 and moved to new premises in 2002. It is situated in a large character property on 3 floors, within walking distance of St Albans City centre. Car parking is available.

Accommodation comprises of four children's base rooms on two floors. Babies are located on the ground floor and children from around 18 months to 5 years are based on the first floor. The office and staff room on the top floor are inaccessible to children. The small kitchen accommodates a full-time cook who delivers a menu of fresh and organic food daily. There is no laundry on site and an external service is used. Ground floor rooms have direct access to the outside area and older children use the stairs and main entrance. The garden is enclosed and has a fenced paved area with inaccessible water fountain; bark safety surface with large apparatus; grassed area equipped with a wooden playhouse. Further outdoor space is being developed.

The group opens 5 days a week for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are flexible from 08:00 until 18:00. There are currently 60 children from three months to five years of age on the role. This includes two funded 3 year olds and one funded 4 year old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The Nursery is owned by Julie Prowse, who is actively involved. It is managed by Julie Duffey who is qualified to Level 4 and working towards a BA Hons in Early Years. The deputy is Angela Collyer who is qualified to level 3. They are supported by a team of 11 part/full time staff who work with the children, most of whom are qualified to level 2 or above and three of whom are working towards the next level of a recognised childcare qualification. A qualified Early Years teacher oversees the Pre-School on a day-to-day basis and delivers the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Emergency cover is provided from agency staff.

How good is the Day Care?

Wainscot House Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for children.

The indoor environment is clean and well maintained. It is bright and welcoming and is well equipped with a variety of accessible resources. The staff work well as a team and provide consistency for children. They are well-qualified and encouraged in their professional development. The owner is actively involved and the manager has a hands-on approach which provides informal mentoring. Staff induction and appraisal's would benefit from a review to maintain staff knowledge of nursery procedures and improve consistency.

Staff know the children well and have developed good relationships with them. Children are happy and settled and involved in a broad range of planned activities with plenty of support. Staff are good role-models and use praise and encouragement appropriately. Strategies for dealing with behaviour management are positive in most rooms. Children's dietary needs are well catered for through a daily menu and their individual needs are given a high priority.

The Nursery has a commitment to health and hygiene and staff are vigilant about children's safety. A review of the management of health and safety documentation and procedures would ensure that systems are robust. Child protection procedures have recently undergone review and need to be cascaded to all staff.

Staff promote a relaxed and welcoming environment for families who are well informed through established communication systems. They are informed and consulted about the provision through introduction letters, newsletters and notices. Most documentation to support the management of the nursery is effective.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, there were six actions identified as follows: introduce a lifting and handling policy; acquire toys and equipment to reflect disabilities; record all incidents in the incident book; increase training in behaviour management; update child protection training and keep records securely.

Lifting and handling has been included in the risk assessment and information is available to staff in the staff room. The pre-school has been equipped with a small amount of toys to reflect disabilities and this could be further developed throughout the nursery. Incident books are provided and used in each room and need monitoring to ensure consistent completion. A training course for behaviour management was identified although cancelled and this is still outstanding. Two managers have attended advanced child protection training resulting in a review of the child protection policy and four members of staff have attended a basic course. All records, except a card index of children's information, are stored in a locked cabinet in a room inaccessible to children and parents.

What is being done well?

- Full time staff are employed between 08:00 and 18:00 which provides maximum consistency for children and parents. They work well as a team,

are well qualified and committed to professional development. All staff working with children have attained at least a level 2 qualification or are working towards this. The manager is qualified to level 4 and working towards a BA Hons in Early Years. Training for the deputy has been identified to underpin her role.

- Staff know the children well who are happy and confident. They plan a broad range of daily activities which include sensory experiences for younger children, for example, treasure baskets and heuristic play. They use a thematic approach to planning incorporating all areas of learning. Staff have supported the topic on 'ourselves' by welcoming a parent to introduce caring for a baby. The children were encouraged to strengthen their learning imaginatively, through role play.
- The environment is bright, cheerful and child centred. Attractive wall displays, posters and photographs of children at play have been displayed in every room; some at children's eye level. Reflective mobiles are positioned at low level for babies and resources are stimulating and accessible throughout the nursery.
- Meals are both healthy and nutritious and are prepared and cooked daily from a range of fresh food which includes an organic option for children under one year of age. Children's individual needs are well documented and staff are fully aware, ensuring that alternatives are provided in accordance with their needs.

What needs to be improved?

- procedures for induction and appraisals to ensure they inform practice and work effectively
- consistency and accuracy of documentation
- effectiveness of risk assessments on a daily basis

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

Std	Recommendation
2	Review the induction and appraisal systems to ensure that staff are fully aware of and can implement nursery procedures, (this includes child protection, behaviour management and health records) and that timely reviews take place.
6	Ensure that risks and hazards are effectively monitored and minimised on a daily basis. This refers to electrical sockets; high shelves and cupboard locks.
14	Ensure that documentation throughout the nursery meets the required regulations. This refers to vetting; daily register of attendance; accident, incident and medication records.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Wainscot House Day Nursery is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals within all six areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Planning of the programme is effective in ensuring all six areas of learning are included. However, plans do not always show how they are to challenge children who are more or less able or regularly encompass all elements within the areas of physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff offer interesting activities and valuable praise and encouragement to support the children.

Regular assessments are made of all the children, however, these do not show the children's progression towards the early learning goals.

The leadership and management of the nursery is generally good. A committed manager has been in post over two years and has worked within the setting for the past five years. She influences practice, leads the team effectively and has a positive approach to monitoring and evaluating the provision. The staff work well as a team and meet regularly to discuss aspects of the provision. Training needs have been identified for staff working within the Foundation Stage. However, the system and frequency of staff appraisals and probation is not clearly communicated with staff or consistently implemented.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are happy with the care and education offered and are encouraged to support monthly themes. Reading books are sent home for parents to be involved in their child's learning. Parents and staff regularly communicate, exchanging information regarding the children's progress.

What is being done well?

- The nursery is warm and welcoming to children and their parents. Parents are supplied with effective information regarding current themes, activities, routines and the wellbeing of their child. Parents are encouraged to support their child's reading at home and feel that staff are caring, friendly and approachable.
- Children's creative development is effectively promoted. A stimulating range of activities and resources enhance children's sensory development. Children are confident to explore and use their imaginations within their role-play, for example the baby clinic, travel agents and French Café.
- Children are learning the benefits of working co-operatively, exploring feelings, friendships and relationships. Children are encouraged to share,

take turns and respect their environment. Children are happy and settled and enjoy adult interaction.

- Children are being introduced to a broad range of topics, cultures and beliefs, they are gaining increasing knowledge of themselves and the wider environment.

What needs to be improved?

- staff's planning and organisation of activities, to ensure plans highlight how children are being appropriately challenged
- staff's management of assessment, enabling children's progression and achievements to be evaluated and monitored towards the early learning goals
- children's opportunities to regularly explore and develop technology skills in knowledge and understanding of the world
- opportunities for older and more able children to progress towards more complex physical skills and challenges, with or without equipment.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made generally good progress since the last inspection. They were to increase the short term plans to ensure activities and resources provide opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and abilities. Effective long and medium term plans show planning and learning intentions linking to the early learning goals and some scope exists to highlight differentiation, however, short term plans still need to be developed to ensure children are being appropriately challenged with all areas of learning.

The nursery was to use the information from the assessment to plan what children need to learn next. Staff observe and monitor children's achievements through the use of workbooks, developmental charts and child profiles, the knowledge gained from these help staff to plan further related activities, although the assessment is not directly linked to the early learning goals.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children are happy, relaxed and enjoy attending the nursery. They are confident to talk within the group during organised sessions and their own play. Staff consistently promote an awareness of right and wrong behaviour. Children's independence is promoted through personal hygiene and daily leader responsibilities, although opportunities to develop independence could be exploited further to allow children to operate to their full potential.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children attentively listen during story sessions. Children enjoy books and handle these with care. They can communicate effectively with their peers during role-play. A well themed area provides good opportunities for children to act out situations and utilise materials incorporated into the home corner to attempt writing, such as records in baby clinic. Staff maximise opportunities to introduce new vocabulary to the children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children use numbers for counting and can count to ten and beyond. They access a range of equipment to compare size, shape, weight and length. Valuable work is done on enlarging children's mathematical vocabulary through referencing by staff to terms that describe size, for example, comparing features of a baby to that of themselves, weighing and measuring different dolls in the baby clinic role play area. They are encouraged to identify which doll is 'bigger' or 'lighter'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

As part of the topic 'ourselves', children can recognise their own abilities and compare those to a newborn baby. Children were enthusiastic to help feed the visiting baby. Plans give children good opportunities to develop concepts of the wider world. Good scope exists for children to use various materials and equipment, although access to and use of equipment to promote the understanding of technology is limited and an area that needs some developing.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Good work takes place in improving children's manual dexterity and hand-eye co-ordination, such as threading, pouring, rolling and writing materials. Children are aware of the importance of staying healthy, a recent project promoted healthy eating and children's hygiene, for example keeping clean, brushing teeth and bathing dolls. However, planning does not highlight how children progress towards large motor skills or more complex physical activities.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
Effective work is done to enhance children's sensory development, such as: cooking, water play, music and play dough. Good opportunities exist for children to play creatively, explore colour, use their imagination as they participate in role-play and manipulate various items of equipment. They cradle their sick babies in the baby clinic, weigh them and give them medicine to make them better.	
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 staff's planning and organisation of activities, to ensure plans highlight how children are being appropriately challenged within all six areas of learning
- develop staff's management of assessment, enabling children's progression and achievements to be evaluated and monitored towards the early learning goals
- increase children's opportunities to regularly explore and develop technology skills in knowledge and understanding of the world
- improve opportunities for older and more able children to progress towards more complex physical skills and challenges, with or without equipment.

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.