



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 258424

DfES Number: 510466

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/07/2004
Inspector Name Alison Edwards

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Out of School Day Care, Full Day Care
Setting Name Treetops Day Nursery
Setting Address 382 Bishops Drive
Oakwood
Derby
Derbyshire
DE21 2DF

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Treetops Nurseries Limited 2538184

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Treetops Nurseries Limited
Address Dunmar Group
1 St. James Court, Friar Gate
Derby
Derbyshire
DE1 1BT

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

Treetops Day Nursery opened in 1991. It is part of the Dunmar nursery group and operates from self-contained premises in a neighbourhood shopping centre in the Oakwood area of Derby to the north east of the city centre. It provides full day care for children under five in its main nursery, morning sessional care for children aged three to five years in its kindergarten section, and out of school care for school-aged children before and after school and during school holidays. It offers nursery education for funded three- and four-year-olds.

The nursery opens on Mondays to Fridays all year from 07:30 to 18:00, with the kindergarten opening from 09:10 to 11:45 during school terms. The out of school facility offers before and after school care in term times and provides daycare in school holidays. There are 131 children aged under eight years on roll, including 30 funded three-year-olds and 23 funded four-year-olds. The nursery makes provision for children with identified special needs and with English as an additional language.

The premises consist of a main building with reception access to ground and first floor areas. There is a separate rear access from the shopping centre car park, to an undercroft housing a further childcare area. An enclosed outdoor play area behind the ground floor gives access to an adjacent self-contained soft-play area. Children under two years use a suite of three first floor rooms with a separate dining/messy play area and with a milk preparation kitchen and nappy changing area. The ground floor provides base rooms for children aged two and over, together with dining/messy play room and toileting facilities. The undercroft provides self-contained facilities for children attending the kindergarten and out of school provision.

Including the manager there are 19 childcare staff of whom 12 are qualified at level 3. The nursery receives support from the Derby Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Treetops Day Nursery at Oakwood provides satisfactory care for children. The premises provide effectively for both active play and relaxation, including use of an extensive and stimulating soft play area. Equipment and play materials include a varied selection of resources reflecting diversity, and are in good condition and generally appropriate to children's interests. There is a high proportion of qualified staff working with children. Required policies, procedures and records are in place though sometimes lack appropriate detail.

Staff offer careful supervision to children and show a sound practical awareness of safety issues, although risk assessments occasionally omit relevant aspects of the provision. There are good arrangements to provide children with balanced meals and snacks. Records and procedures relating to children's health and care needs are generally effectively used, but occasionally lack appropriate detail. Some staff lack familiarity with child protection issues and the current policy lacks appropriate detail.

A warm and friendly atmosphere helps children feel settled and secure, developing confidence in their dealings with adults and each other. They show familiarity with established routines and consistent expectations, beginning to learn what behaviour is appropriate. Children are often occupied and interested in a varied range of adult-led and child-chosen activities although organisation of resources and routines does not always promote their purposeful and sustained independent learning to best effect. Staff take active steps to support the inclusion of children with identified special needs.

Partnership with parents is good. They receive useful information about the provision and their children's activities through leaflets, newsletters and displays. There are opportunities to share information about children's progress and some useful suggestions for extending activities at home.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Following the last inspection the nursery has taken a number of steps to address issues raised. Safety and security arrangements have been improved by fitting new boundary fencing to the outdoor play area. Hazards to children have been minimised by replacing accessible heaters in the soft play area with new high-level heaters, and procedures for safe storage of cleaning materials have been reviewed. Outings and risk assessment procedures have been introduced, but do not yet cover all relevant aspects of the provision, particularly some children's use of a flight of public outdoor steps, when moving between separate areas of the premises which do not have internal access.

A number of policies and procedures have been reviewed to support the management and of the nursery. Staff clearance procedures are followed, and an Ofsted suitable person interview has been satisfactorily completed with the manager. Systems are in place to ensure that staffing ratios can be consistently met, for example over staff breaks or at the start and end of the day. Policies on equal opportunities and behaviour management have been reviewed, the latter now including a statement on the appropriate management of any instances of bullying.

Although staff now receive policies, including the child protection procedure, as part of their initial induction, some lack familiarity with child protection issues and the procedure lacks some necessary detail.

What is being done well?

- The well-maintained premises are organised effectively to provide suites of rooms for each age-group offering defined areas for different types of activities such as messy play, relaxation and active play. A veranda provides a shaded area within the outdoor play area where safety hazards have been minimised by recent installation of a level low-impact surfacing. An extensive soft-play room provides stimulating and exciting opportunities for a range of large physical activities including climbing and balancing.
- An on-going programme of the purchase of equipment has provided a good range of suitable and well-designed furnishings and play materials appropriate to children's stage of development and interests. These include an interesting and well-chosen range of resources reflecting diversity, including posters, books, jigsaws and pretend play accessories which help children begin to recognise individual differences.
- The nursery places a high importance on developing good relationships with parents, several of whom comment on staff's friendliness and commitment. Parents receive useful written information on the nursery as a whole and on the routines within different rooms. Displays provide details of current planned activities, with captioned photographs also used to identify the purpose of different activities. Informal discussion with staff, daily care diaries for younger children, and termly parents' evenings provide opportunities to share information on children's progress. Parents receive some useful ideas for home-based activities linked to nursery topics.
- There is a varied and balanced range of meals and snacks, often including fresh fruit and vegetables, that takes accounts of children's individual dietary needs and preferences.

What needs to be improved?

- further development of effective organisation of routines and resources to actively support children's purposeful and sustained independent learning
- risk assessments to ensure these effectively cover all relevant aspects of the provision with particular regard to some children's use of outdoor public steps to move between areas of the premises
- development of medication records to include parental counter-signature acknowledging medication administration; arrangements to ensure a sickness exclusion policy is shared with parents
- development of staff knowledge of child protection responsibilities and review of the child protection policy to ensure this is in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures including relevant local contact details and

appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of any allegation against staff

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
3	Further develop effective deployment and organisation of resources to actively support children's play and learning.
6	Review risk assessments to ensure these effectively cover all aspects of the provision with particular regard to children's use of outdoor public steps to move between areas of the premises.
7	Ensure medication records include parental counter-signature to acknowledge actual administration and develop arrangements to ensure a sickness exclusion policy is shared with parents.
13	Develop staff knowledge of child protection responsibilities and ensure the child protection policy is in line with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, including relevant local contact details and appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of any allegation against staff.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Treetops Nursery offers good quality nursery education where children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Teaching and learning is generally good. Children are usually relaxed in their dealings with others. They often show interest and enjoyment in their activities and usually show an understanding of what behaviour is expected of them. However, current organisation of resources and daily routines sometimes does not effectively encourage their sustained, purposeful and independent extension and exploration of their ideas to the full. Long term plans generally provide balanced coverage across all aspects of learning. Staff assess and record children's progress, but do not yet use observations effectively in short-term planning to best match activities and teaching strategies to children's individual stage of development.

Leadership and management of the nursery is generally good with clearly defined organisational structures and staff responsibilities. Although an appraisal system and some opportunities for in-house and external training help support staff development, some relevant staff still lack confidence in their understanding of aspects of the nursery education programme. Involvement in a local quality assurance scheme provides opportunities for management to evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery's provision.

The partnership with parents is very good and there is a friendly and welcoming atmosphere which encourages communication with staff. Displays provide detailed information on current planned activities, with captioned photographs available, identifying the purpose of different activities. As well as informal discussion with staff about children's progress, parents can attend termly parents' evenings to comment on children's developmental records. They receive useful newsletters including ideas to make links with, and extend their children's learning at home.

What is being done well?

- An effective partnership with parents helps develop links between nursery-based learning activities and children's experiences at home. Parents receive useful information including explanations of the purpose of some nursery activities, and ideas to extend their children's interest, including some suggestions for practical home-based activities linked to themes and topics.
- Frequent access to an extensive soft play facility, as well as a secure outdoor play area, provides good scope for children to develop their confidence in use of exciting and stimulating equipment enabling them to negotiate space and practise movement skills, such as balancing climbing, swinging and sliding.
- The friendly and warm atmosphere in both the kindergarten and pre-school room helps children feel relaxed and develop a positive approach to their

learning. Within the kindergarten a calm and orderly approach helps children quickly understand what is expected of them and begin to show care and concern for their surroundings, for example by helping put equipment away.

What needs to be improved?

- effective use of observations and assessments to inform short-term planning, ensuring activities and teaching strategies are well-matched to children's stage of development and provide effective challenge and progression, particularly in relation to mathematical and physical development
- effective organisation and use of resources and daily routines, to provide more well-planned and purposeful opportunities for children to operate independently, and extend and consolidate their learning, and explore their own ideas to the full
- arrangements to ensure all relevant staff have a confident and secure understanding of the different aspects of learning and the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, to enable them to support children's learning to best effect.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The nursery has made generally good progress since the last inspection of funded nursery education when it was asked to continue to develop planning to ensure children were working towards the early learning goals, and to further develop assessments to ensure children's progress was regularly monitored. The qualified teacher responsible for running the part-time kindergarten takes responsibility for drawing up long-term topic-based plans identifying relevant aspects of learning. These are used within the kindergarten and by staff, in the separate pre-school room, to provide the basis of a programme of activities generally offering balanced coverage across the areas of learning.

A recently-introduced assessment schedule, drawn up for use across the Treetops chain, is now being used to monitor children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in each area of learning. However, as yet staff do not make full use of this information to ensure their short-term planning effectively matches activities and teaching strategies, to children's individual stages of development to provide sufficient challenge and progression.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are usually relaxed in their dealings with adults and peers. The calm and orderly kindergarten environment helps them understand what behaviour is expected and begin to show care for their surroundings. A good selection of activities and resources helps them learn about different cultures and lifestyles. They are often interested in their activities, but organisation of routines and resources does not always extend their purposeful, focussed and independent learning to best effect.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children begin to make marks and symbols with increasing control, and sometimes use purposeful writing in their play. Staff help children extend their understanding of new words, and begin to help children link sounds and letters. Children enjoy familiar songs and stories, responding well to rhyme and rhythm, although group times, especially in the pre-school, are sometimes not best organised to promote sustained attention.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children often recognise and use numbers up to and beyond ten in planned activities and in daily routines. They explore shape, space, pattern and measurement in their play and various adult-led activities. Although children take part in activities involving simple calculation and problem-solving, these are not always well-matched to children's individual stages of development to provide effective challenge and progression.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Topic-based activities introduce children to aspects of time, different cultures and the environment and enable them to examine and talk about materials and living things. They build with construction sets and use simple joining techniques in craft activities. They begin to learn about technology in office play or by using a computer. However, resources and routines are sometimes not organised to best effect to extend children's independent and purposeful decision making and critical thinking.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children often handle small tools such as brushes, pencils and cutlery with increasing control. They begin to learn about their bodies, hygiene and healthy eating through planned activities and daily routines. They enjoy frequent use of equipment such as wheeled toys and an exciting range of soft play resources for activities such as climbing and sliding. However at present activities are often not effectively planned to extend purposeful challenge and progression in large movement skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy familiar songs and are introduced to a range of music and instruments. They are introduced to different art and craft materials and techniques, beginning to learn about colour, texture and shape and sometimes explore their own creative ideas. They begin to use their imagination in role play activities, although these are not consistently well-organised to support extended play.

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

- develop use of observations and assessments to inform short-term planning and ensure activities and teaching strategies are well-matched to children's stage of development and provide effective challenge and progression, particularly in relation to mathematical and physical development
- develop organisation and use of resources and daily routines, to provide more well-planned and purposeful opportunities for children to operate independently, and extend and consolidate their learning and explore their own ideas to the full
- continue to develop all relevant staff's confident and secure understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, and all aspects of children's learning

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.