



Treetops Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253824
Inspection date	22 November 2006
Inspector	Patricia Dawes
Setting Address	Russells Hall Hospital, Pensnett Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 2HQ
Telephone number	01384 212539
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Registered person	Mrs J Carroll, Miss E Carroll & Mrs S Payne
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 good. 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?

Treetops Day Nursery is run by a private partnership. It opened in 1993 and operates from seven rooms in self-contained accommodation within the grounds of a hospital in the Pensnett area of Dudley. A maximum of 70 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:15 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 104 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these 40 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchments area.

The nursery employs 19 staff. Of these 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working toward a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical and health needs are well-supported as they gain a substantial understanding of good hygiene practices. They understand from a very early age why they must wash their hands after using the toilet, messy play activities and before eating meals. Staff follow effective procedures and practices such as wearing disposable gloves and aprons during nappy changing and when serving food. Clear and effective procedures and guidelines for sick and infectious children are in place to help prevent the spread of infection and cross contamination to keep children healthy. Accidents and medication administering are appropriately managed. Records are maintained which demonstrate clearly how information is shared with parents.

Children enjoy a varied menu and staff take very good care to ensure individual dietary needs are catered for, in order to maintain children's welfare and respect parents' wishes. All children have access to fresh drinking water which is offered frequently to younger children while older children are able to access drinks independently. Main meals are freshly prepared on site, are well-balanced and take account of the individual and cultural needs of all children. All children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables at snack time and learn about healthy foods through discussion and activities. For example, children know milk is good for their teeth and bones.

Children benefit from planned daily activities both indoors and outdoors which allows time for children to explore and develop a positive attitude to physical exercise. They know when they need a drink or a rest. Staff have a very good understanding of each child's stage of development which means younger children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment as they successfully manoeuvre through the tunnels on static outdoor equipment or use 'soft play' equipment indoors. Older children enthusiastically tackle making a 'den' out of crates or navigating the path made of worn car tyres. They show excitement as their task is accomplished!

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment in which to play and learn. Security of the premises is good and there are effective procedures for the drop off and collection of children such as staff use an intercom system at the entrance which is linked to the office which ensures no un-authorised persons can gain access. The premises are welcoming to both parents and children with displays in all rooms of children's work and information which actively promotes children's safety, welfare and well-being.

Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. All toys and equipment are thoroughly checked and cleaned to ensure they meet safety standards. Resources are well organised with the children's needs in mind. For example, babies freely and safely crawl outdoors pulling themselves up to access sand and water play, however, comfortable furniture in the baby rooms would be advantageous for staff when feeding and comforting babies. All children have equal access to resources which are not restricted.

In the main written risk assessments are completed which ensures most hazards are effectively identified and minimised; however re-occurring accidents during outdoor play are not used well to demonstrate how hazards are identified and minimised. This has the potential to compromise children's safety at times. Children learn about safe practices as adults explain about group rules. They know and comply with safety and care routines including practising regular fire evacuation routines. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and develop their knowledge of how to protect themselves from harm.

Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare. Children are protected by staff that are aware of child protection issues, understand their role and responsibilities and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice where necessary. This ensures all children are cared for and their safety and well-being are promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All areas of children's development are significantly enhanced by the quality of the staff interactions. Experienced staff are good role models and offer support to newer and less experienced staff well. All staff are developing their knowledge and understanding of the early year's framework 'Birth to three matters' to provide challenge and recognise young children's efforts and achievements. They have a very good understanding of how children learn and use curriculum planning to meet children's individual needs. Activities are adapted to ensure that all children can participate; as a result children are self-assured to try new experiences.

Babies and young children receive lots of cuddles and close contact to provide reassurance and increase their sense of well being. They are able to explore and discover through an excellent range of planned activities, for example, using sand and paint to make effective art displays. High quality adult-child interaction supports early communication skills. Babies begin to make sense of the world and express their needs as staff positively respond to their gestures and sounds.

More-able children settle into the nursery very well and are happy, confident and eager to play and learn. A newly developed key working system helps those who are new to the nursery or room to settle as staff are sensitive towards their individual needs and recognise the uniqueness of each child. Children are able to make choices about their play and there is a very good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff are keen to offer support and encourage them to build their confidence and self-esteem to try new activities such as sock pairing, pasta play with tongs and baking cakes.

Children join in all areas of play enthusiastically. They are involved in a range of stimulating activities which are interesting and fun and develop their curiosity, creativity and imagination, such as making bark rubbings of trees, painting autumn leaves and celebrating Halloween and Bonfire night. Children are confident to try new experiences and make up their own games such as observing a child listening to the beat and marching in time to music as he played with a tape recorder. Staff promote close, caring relationships which increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self.

NURSERY EDUCATION.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A strong united team of staff exists who have a very secure knowledge and combine their teaching skills well to deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum. Key workers know their children well and use a variety of methods best suited to individual children. In the main staff plan a balanced range of practical activities to help children learn and use a good range of equipment; however they do not always use these well to support children's progress in communication, language and literacy. Systems are in place to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. There are currently no children with special educational needs or who use English as an additional language attending the nursery, although there are effective systems in place to provide good support and inclusion.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. They work well together, showing care and consideration for each other and staff as they help to clear away activities and help plan the rooms for each activity. Children are well-behaved and are developing an increased independence as they access drinks and snacks in the café, select resources and take care of their own personal needs.

Children understand that print carries meaning as they develop an enjoyment of books. They handle them well while telling stories to friends or listening intently and questioning with enthusiasm as a member of staff tells a story about the moon. Some children are able to write their own names and recognise letters and labels and younger children are making attempts at writing and mark making; however the writing area is not well-set out to motivate and stimulate children's interest.

Children are interested and excited when working with numbers. All children are able to recognise numbers 1-10; older children have increasing knowledge of higher numbers. Children use their fingers to add and subtract and develop a sound understanding as they gain confidence and respond enthusiastically during number rhymes. Opportunities to extend their skills in early calculation and problem solving through daily routines are well-used. Children use various tools and resources for measuring and comparing shape, position and size such as tape measures and rulers.

Regular visitors such as policemen and the local librarian and visits to the hospital and park help children to develop a sense of community and the wider world. Children make sense of the world around them through discussions about holiday places they have visited with their families taking Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny or the Tasmanian devil. They learn about other cultures and beliefs as they enjoy celebrating different festivals throughout the year such as Diwali, Halloween, Bonfire night and Christmas. Children have increasing awareness of technology as they access a computer daily to complete painting by number pictures with their friends and staff..

Children move confidently when playing inside as they practice and improve their physical skills through a variety of experiences, including a soft play obstacle course and dance and movement sessions. Children enjoy a range of activities during outdoor play such as searching with torches, making dens, and digging for worms. Opportunities for more able children to further develop

their physical skills in climbing and balancing are limited and do not offer challenge as they are too small.

Children's creative development is promoted well with daily opportunities to paint, draw and use collage. Children demonstrate skill and control when using small and large tools and equipment as they explore and investigate by mixing paint colours, painting with large brushes and water outside or chalking on the wall or slabs. They experiment with 'sand mousse' and 'gloop' which provides opportunities to use their senses and look closely at changes. All children play imaginatively, adapting available resources for their role play. Children recognise sound patterns and match movements to music and rhythms during outdoor play with musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made thoroughly welcome in the nursery because staff value and respect their individuality. Staff have a high regard for each child's individual needs to ensure their time is spent purposefully. All children have choices in their play which ensures that they are interested in what they do. Activities are stimulating, interesting and pleasurable, and children play a full part as they benefit from developing positive relationships with staff and their peers.

Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through imaginatively planned activities such as visits from the local police service, librarian, nurses and outings to a local park and hospital. Good quality resources which show positive images of diversity and celebrating various festivals including Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year ensure children have numerous opportunities to learn about themselves and learn to respect others in today's society.

Clear and consistent boundaries and positive role models set by the staff help children understand the difference between right and wrong. They have high expectations and set realistic boundaries for the children, which helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children's behaviour is good as staff support and offer guidance to help children share and take turns and this is continually re-enforced through daily routines and practices such as caring for each other and tidying away toys after use. Staff use praise and encouragement on arrival and constantly throughout the day. All children are valued and respected as individuals and their confidence and self-esteem are developed well.

A good partnership with parents contributes to the children's well-being in the nursery. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through the prospectus. Parent's views about their children's needs and interests are sought before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff work very closely with parents to ensure their child's individual needs are met, this means children make significant progress in all areas of their development. Daily verbal and written exchanges of information keeps parents fully informed of their child's well-being. They are informed of topics and operational changes on the parents' notice board and monthly newsletters however parents are not receiving current information should they wish to complain about any aspect of the service as there is no new format or procedure available to log complaints.

Partnership with parents of children in receipt of nursery funding is good. Parents receive detailed information such as details on the educational programme, open afternoons and evenings, newsletters, and regular written developmental reports. Parents and carers views are regularly sought through the use of questionnaires and an 'open door' policy. They are invited to become actively involved in providing resources and joining in with activities for their children. Parents are given ideas to help with their child's learning at home and the staff value their contributions to improve practice. This enhances all areas of the children's development and learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Rigorous and robust recruitment procedures verify staff are appropriately qualified and vetted and ensures staffing ratios are maintained. Good induction training and appropriate policies and procedures work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Staff are motivated and committed to improve and develop their knowledge and practice through regular and ongoing training. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and have a positive impact on children's safety and well-being.

Children benefit from premises that are well organised. A varied programme of activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development opportunities. Staff regularly attend training to up-date and increase their knowledge and understanding of child development. This means children are happy, comfortable and well-supported in a warm and caring environment where their individual needs are fully met.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and have a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. Documentation is effectively maintained and there are clear systems in place for recording medication and attendance. Policies and procedures are continually undergoing review and update to reflect the progressive improvement of the operational practice.

Leadership and management of the setting is good. Children benefit from a committed staff team who are effectively inducted and supervised. The high staffing levels allows staff to be deployed appropriately meeting the individual needs of children. There is a commitment from the whole staff team to continuous improvement and development. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education through working with the early years advisor. Staff display a enthusiastic, stimulating commitment to extending the quality of the provision.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection a number of recommendations were raised with regard to staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum, the Code of Practice for the Assessment of Special Needs, managing children's behaviour and the responsibilities of the management team.

The registered persons have ensured that staff have had opportunities to attend training with regard to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and Foundation Stage Curriculum. This has had a very positive outcome for children's care learning and play. Senior management have introduced a key-working system for children and staff. Parents now have opportunity to discuss their children's individual needs with an identified member of staff. The manager now works closely with staff to offer support, guidance, monitor progress and identify training needs. Staff have updated and extended their knowledge of managing children's behaviour through attending relevant training. The behaviour management policy has been discussed, reviewed and up-dated to ensure staff are able to manage children's behaviour with consistency. As a result, children's care and learning are sufficiently well-addressed.

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.

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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):

- improve the environment for staff when feeding and holding babies to ensure safety and comfort for all
- update staff knowledge of how to use the information in the accident record to inform risk assessments and effectively minimise risks
- keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken.

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):

- improve the opportunities and range of resources available for children to develop their skills in mark-making and writing

- extend the range of outdoor resources to offer greater physical challenge to more-able children.(This also applies to care).

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