



Nature Trails Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333724
Inspection date	29 September 2006
Inspector	Tracey Marie Boland
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Registered person	Nature Trails Limited
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?

Nature Trails Day Nursery Ltd opened in 2006, having previously operated since 2004 as Nature Trails Day Nursery. It operates from five main rooms in an annex at the side of the owner's home. It is situated at the edge of the countryside, on the outskirts of Rugby. A maximum of 43 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are available from 08.00 to 12.30 and 13.00 to 18.00.

All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas and use the surrounding woodland areas. There are currently 62 children aged from four months to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel in to work in the town. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 staff, one domestic and includes a lunchtime assistant staff to work with the children. Most of the permanent staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications, with the remaining 1 member of staff working towards a qualification. There are eight relief staff, four of whom are qualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, well maintained environment which is brightly decorated and child friendly. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene through consistent reinforcement and routines and use liquid soap and paper towels to minimise any cross infection. Nappy changing routines ensure the comfort of the children. Children's individual needs are known and incorporated into the day, allowing sleep and feeding routines to be flexible and appropriate. Clear health information and records are maintained and keep parents informed of any accidents. Children's welfare is not compromised at times of minor accidents as most staff hold a valid first aid certificate and deal with the situation in a calm and confident manner. Children benefit from a written policy that the setting shares with parents informing them of illnesses that will mean their child should not attend and that they will be contacted and expected to collect their child if they are not well.

Children are provided with an excellent variety of nutritious, freshly prepared meals each day. A menu is provided and displayed, catering for individual needs and preferences. Most of the staff team hold a food hygiene certificate, some to an advanced level. Mealtimes are a social occasion and children's independence skills and manners are encouraged. Children experience tasting foods from a variety of different countries and are involved in cooking activities. During the inspection they were involved in preparing their own afternoon tea, by scooping cooked potato out of it's skin and filling it with cheese, sweetcorn and butter, then placing it back into the potato to be baked. Children learn about healthy lifestyles through topics, discussion and cooking activities. They understand the need to have regular drinks which are freely available and that exercise makes them warm and they need to drink to keep their bodies hydrated.

Children benefit from a good variety of play opportunities both indoors and outdoors that encourages their large motor skills. They climb large apparatus, work together when using a double sided swing and learn to manoeuvre bikes and scooters. There is ample space to run around, play with balls and in the sand pit. There is also a raised area within the garden that has been made into a vegetable patch where the children have grown potatoes and been involved in digging them up to eat them. They enjoy music and movement and daily walks take place for all the children down an adjoining country lane. Babies are taken in their buggies and the older children walk sensibly and complete tasks such as matching the leaves in the lane to prints of leaves on paper. Children are enthusiastic to show their peers and staff what they have found.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is welcoming, bright and well maintained. Children's art work is displayed throughout and access into the building is only via a member of staff. A doorbell alerts staff to parents and visitors who's presence is recorded within the reception area. All are asked to take off their shoes when going into the baby rooms or wear protective shoe covers to avoid germs being carried into the area where babies are crawling. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised through the effective measures in place within the setting. Clear, concise risk assessments have been completed and are accessible to all and staff are vigilant about all areas accessed by the children. Daily visual checks are completed to ensure potential risks are minimised and steps taken to remove any unsuitable items or resources. Children are cared for according to their age and staff : child ratio's are well maintained at all times throughout the day and supervision is good. Toys, equipment and furniture are safe, clean and in excellent condition. Staff are proactive in their maintenance and reinforce to the children the need to take care with them. Children are aware of the fire drill which is practised regularly and recorded. A clear fire evacuation procedure is displayed and fire safety equipment is regularly maintained.

Staff are vigilant about the outdoor play area and checks are made before use to ensure suitability. Gates and fencing are secure and well maintained. Children understand there are certain things in the garden for the wildlife and not them. For example one three year old stated that the acorns were to look at, 'they could make children's tummy's poorly' but that 'the squirrels would eat them.' Staff are proactive in their approach to safety outside of the nursery environment, for example when they are on walks in the lane leading to the woods children are able to recap the safety rules. If tractors come along they have to stop at the edge of the road. They must not touch things unless with an adult and that they have to walk together. Children understand the need to find themselves a partner and walked in two's holding hands. Staff consistently praise them for their good behaviour and for keeping themselves safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the manager and staff team demonstrated a good working knowledge of child protection. A clearly written policy is in place and shared with parents which explains their role and responsibility with regard to protecting children from abuse. Staff keep their knowledge and understanding up to date through ongoing training and staff are not left unattended with children until they have been suitably vetted. However, the policy regarding professional abuse is limited and does not sufficiently inform staff of the procedure to follow if they are concerned about a member of staff's behaviour.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well into the nursery. The provision is bright and welcoming and staff greet parents and children. Children enjoy a wide range of toys, resources and play experiences both indoors and out and have developed good relationships with the staff and each other. Clear routines throughout the day encouraged their feeling of stability and security.

Children are excited and eager to take part in the activities provided for them. Staff have a good understanding of 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage and use this to plan

an exciting curriculum that meets the ongoing needs of the children and which is adapted to meet specific individual needs of more or less able children. They are well supported in trying out new activities.

Babies access a wide range of soft toys, musical equipments, rattles, baby gyms and have lots of 1:1 time with the staff who are very responsive to their needs. Drinks and meals are given as required and sleep patterns followed throughout the day. Toddlers have activity centres, sand, water, gloop, corn flour, balls, construction play, puzzles, treasure baskets, art and craft opportunities and books which they are able to access themselves, read quietly with a member of staff or in a group. Outdoor play takes place each day and they benefit from plenty of fresh air each day through walks in the local area.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The manager has a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and she supports and encourages her staff in planning a curriculum which covers all areas of learning. Children access an excellent range of resources and play experiences that encourage and supports their development. The staff use the stepping stones effectively when planning the curriculum and complete risk assessments to ensure the safety and welfare of the children at all times. They regularly observe the children to monitor their progress and identify any learning needs. However, this information is not used effectively to plan the next stage of children's learning. Parents provide information for the staff initially about their child's development and are kept informed and up to date through newsletters, open days and daily discussion. Behaviour is very good and children are responsive to adults and their peers.

Children are confident speakers and enthusiastically respond to questions about the weather and appropriate clothing to wear because it's 'drizzly' and 'cloudy' and they don't want to get wet when outside. Some children need support when dressing themselves, others are confident and are able to do coats, wellies and hats. Children confidently answer their name at circle time and say good morning to their peers and the staff and any visitors present. They enjoy looking at books individually and seek support from staff to read favourites with them. More able children can recognise and write letters and some are learning to write their names. They link sounds to letters in circle time.

Children are able to count in sequence, some to 19. They use language such as large, big, enormous when looking for leaves and reflect on watching the farmer cutting the corn in the field and how he put it into bales that were taken away. They use correct mathematical language in their play and planned activities and learn to weigh, measure and use calculation in their songs and cooking activities.

Children have ample opportunities to investigate and explore, especially in the outdoors. They learn how vegetables and plants grow and are able to dig them up when ready to eat. Their understanding of the natural world is nurtured through the opportunities provided for them to look for bugs and animals and observe them through magnifying glasses. Children spontaneously complete bark rubbings on the trees and encourage their peers to become involved. They chat excitedly to each other about what they are doing. Children have regular

opportunities to develop their skills on the computer and some confidently use the mouse to manoeuvre around the activities available to them.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills on a daily basis. They participate in energetic activities and have good opportunities to balance, climb, jump, throw, catch and use wheeled toys. They learn about health and body awareness through daily routines and topics and use scissors, pens, glue and pencils daily. They enjoy music and movement and follow the requests to skip, hop, move like a horse and sway like leaves and flutter to the ground. The children clap and cheer excitedly when they have completed the activity. They are gaining a good awareness of space and move around with control so not to bump into each other.

The children have good opportunities to explore their own creativity within planned and spontaneous activities. They express themselves through role-play, dressing up, music and musical instruments, singing, dance and action rhymes. Children use a variety of interesting musical instruments and are gaining control and only using them in time to specific songs or activities. They are able to start and stop when requests are made of them. Children use a variety of interesting musical instruments and are gaining control and only using them in time to specific songs or activities. They are able to start and stop, and staff praise them for their achievements. Activities are organised to encourage and develop the children's imagination and self expression. They use a range of medias to create pictures and explore texture, colour and design.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and parents are welcomed into the nursery. Their individual needs and preferences are well known by the staff as time taken with parents at the beginning of their placement enables them to become familiar with each child's needs and requirements. Children's understanding of diversity and the wider community is enhanced by a good range of resources which positively reflect race, culture, gender and disability, including books, puzzles, role play equipment and small world figures. Children learn about each others similarities and differences and take part in topics and activities that include the celebration of festivals throughout the year. Children of all abilities are welcomed into the nursery and the manager has a good understanding of her role as special needs coordinator and takes steps to positively encourage children to meet their full potential and ensure inclusion. Therefore, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through this positive approach.

Partnership with parents is good. Very good relationships have been formed with parents. A well written prospectus is given to them which includes policies and procedures that are in place within the setting. Staff work closely with them to ensure their child's home routines are known and incorporated into the day. A gradual settling in period builds their child's feeling of security and belonging. Parents are kept informed of progress and development through the use of a daily diary and open days are incorporated into the year. Information regarding the funding of nursery education for three and four year olds is given through a power point display and newsletters keep them informed and involved in activities taking place within the setting.

Behaviour within the nursery is excellent and the older children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They are kind to their peers and learn to take turns and share. They respond positively to praise and are eager to share their achievements with adults. Staff are calm and consistent with the children which compounds their feelings of security. They are good role models and take account of the differing levels of the children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn in a relaxed, child focused environment. Staff greet the children each day and the rooms are brightly decorated with the children's art work. The rooms are well organised to allow ample play opportunities and children move around them freely and safely. Clear daily routines compound the children's feeling of security and help them settle quickly into nursery life. Staff are deployed effectively and key worker groups are in operation. Good daily communication takes place with parents and daily diaries are completed to keep them informed and up to date with their child's day and any progress.

Clear, concise and informative policy documents are available for parents and more detailed policies for staff. Policies include a settling in policy, parents as partners, arrivals and departures, emergency collection procedures and exclusion through illness. Documentation and records are well organised and held within the boundaries of confidentiality. However, although there is a policy which relates to comments and compliments it does not include the new guidelines for parents who wish to make a complaint. Therefore, they are not aware of the procedures to follow.

Leadership and management is good. All childcare staff, bar one, hold a recognised early years qualification and demonstrated a commitment to updating their knowledge through training both 'in house' and through the local authority. Excellent procedures are in place for the recruitment and selection of staff and good systems are in place to ensure cover for lunch time, holiday and sickness. An operational plan is in place for the setting and updated each year with a plan of action for the management and staff team. Each year this is assessed to see if all of their objectives and plans have been addressed. The manager has had responsibility for the overall planning of the curriculum, although other key staff are now developing their skills and knowledge in that area. She has a firm understanding of the stepping stones and a clear focus on how children will move towards the early learning outcomes.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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 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):

- develop the current child protection policy to include procedures following allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer
- develop the current comments and compliments policy to include the new requirements with regard to dealing with complaints

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):

- review systems for assessing progress and use this information to inform planning for individual children.

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