



Bloxcidge House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	255133
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Patricia Dawes
Setting Address	Bloxcidge House, Bloxcidge Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B68 8QH
Telephone number	0121 544 7335
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Registered person	Landmark Traders Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Bloxidge Day Nursery opened in 1990 and is run by a private organisation Landmark traders Ltd. It is situated in a large converted Victorian detached house in a residential area of Oldbury, West Midlands. A maximum of 59 children may attend the setting at any one time. This includes children from 4 to 8 years who attend the Cascades Out of School Club. The setting is open each weekday from 07:15 to 18:30 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 63 children aged from birth to under 8 years on roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel in to work on or around the local area..

The nursery employs 16 staff. 12 of the staff, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications and four staff are working toward a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain an excellent understanding of effective hygiene practices and personal care through daily routines. They understand from a very early age, why they must wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating snacks and meals. Comprehensive, clear procedures for sick and infectious children are used to help prevent the spread of infection. Cleaning procedures in the nappy changing areas are very meticulous. Staff use disposable gloves and aprons and changing mats are cleaned thoroughly after each use which help reduce the risk of cross-contamination and keep children healthy.

Children benefit from very healthy and nutritional meals and snacks which are imaginatively prepared and presented to encourage children to eat a variety of different foods. Menus are displayed and all dietary requirements are discussed with parents. Children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day and enjoy a range of fresh fruit, vegetables and finger foods at snack time. Excellent interaction between the staff and children promotes their social skills as they are given time to savour their food. All of these help to ensure children remain healthy.

Focused activities and the use of an extensive range of outdoor equipment promote children's physical development well. Opportunities to explore test and develop physical control are provided daily such as two-year-olds are thrilled as they successfully use a three-wheeled tricycle with adult help or as more able children rise to the challenges of competing with each other using a large Connect Four game, playing with a parachute or flying paper aeroplanes. All of which they tackle enthusiastically. Suitable and sufficient equipment where children can rest and have quiet times is available in all rooms. As a result, all children have a positive attitude to exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for its purpose. Regular communication with parents contributes to children's safety such as information given regarding ensuring the front door is secure when leaving or entering the nursery. Staff give considerable priority to encouraging children's freedom and setting limits to maintain their safety as they create an environment where babies have a safe space to roll, crawl and sit with support. Older children are encouraged to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, such as not running indoors, holding the banister rail when coming down or going upstairs and carrying scissors and other equipment correctly. This ensures risks of accidental injury to children are minimised.

Children use high quality equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. All toys and equipment are thoroughly checked and maintained to ensure they meet safety standards. Toys are made easily accessible at the children's level so they can independently select resources. Written risk assessments are completed and used well to reduce potential hazards. Children regularly practise fire safety routines and these are recorded; however the record does not clearly show the time taken to evacuate the building. The impact of this is that children and staff are unable to demonstrate how they improve or maintain their practice.

Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place with regard to child protection and these are shared with parents. Most staff have an acceptable understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures; however some staff are unsure of their role and responsibilities to report concerns without delay. This has the potential to impact on safeguarding children's welfare

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle into the environment exceptionally well and are happy, confident and eager to play and learn. Staff have a very good understanding of how children learn and use the 'Birth to three matters' framework and curriculum planning well to meet children's individual needs. They have a competent awareness of how activities can be adapted; so that all children take part which results in children being confident to try new experiences.

All areas of children's development is significantly enhanced by the quality of the staff interactions. Babies and young children receive lots of cuddles and close contact to provide reassurance and increase their sense of well-being. Children are listened to and their communication skills are well-promoted as the staff positively respond to their gestures, sounds and facial expressions.

Staff involve all children in a stimulating range of activities which are interesting and fun and develops their curiosity, and imagination. Children's regular use of creative materials enable them to develop a wealth of imaginative, exploratory and sensory experiences such as using their bodies to paint producing some effective art work, playing with shredded paper, balloons or making empty plastic bottles into shakers using feathers, pom-poms glitter, rice and paint. Planned activities such as walks in the local community or outings to Twycross Zoo enable children to have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the local community.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. The key member of staff demonstrates a very sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, planning and delivering a varied and interesting range of activities and learning opportunities. Other staff are developing their confidence and knowledge in this area which results in some inconsistency in the overall delivery of the programme. Staff take time to find out about children's skills, interests and needs and build on this information effectively to help children achieve as much as they can. A flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff

are perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and they use questions successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills. 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.

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 plan the room for each activity. Children are very well-behaved and are developing increasing independence as they serve themselves with drinks and snacks, select resources and take care of their own personal needs. All children are self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences.

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 a pesky rat. More able children write their own names skilfully and recognise letters, symbols and labels as they draw interesting and informative maps of the garden for the inspector. Younger children are making attempts at writing and mark making during colouring and painting activities.

Children are interested and excited when working with numbers. They respond enthusiastically to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills during planned activities and daily routines such as, lining up to use the bathroom or counting the chairs required for lunch. Younger children are beginning to recognise numbers 1-10; older children have increasing knowledge of higher numbers. Children use various tools and resources for measuring and comparing shape, position and size such as cut outs of their foot prints.

Children make sense of the world around them through discussions about holiday destinations and transport, followed by role play where children made passports, luggage labels, and constructed a departure lounge complete with refreshments! 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 younger children learn how to operate the computer following guidance from staff, while more able children are confident and very proficient.

Children move confidently and are developing an awareness of space when playing indoors as they practise negotiating and judging their own body space through a variety of experiences, including a soft play obstacle course climbing through holes and tunnels and music and movement sessions. Frequent use of the outdoor area helps children develop their physical skills as they enjoy sand and water play, riding trikes, scooters and bikes.

Children's creative development is promoted well with daily opportunities to paint, draw, and use collage. They demonstrate growing skills and control when using small and large tools as they explore and investigate mixing paint to make different colours, which has produced some very effective art work. All children play imaginatively, adapting available resources for their role play. Children show interest in what they see, hear, smell and touch and use these senses to further explore different textures such as during cooking activities, playing with dough, foam and gloop.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in the nursery's caring environment, where they are constantly praised for their efforts, and for showing kindness to each other. They learn to share and take turns with resources, such as waiting for their turn on the computer. They treat each other with courtesy, for example when they wait at the table until everyone has finished eating. They learn to value cultural differences, as they play with excellent multicultural resources, such as dressing up clothes, books and small world figures. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered as the staff know children very well and effectively work together to meet their individual needs.

Children are exceptionally independent in managing their personal care. They confidently organise their own coats and shoes, pour their own drinks, serve their food, tidy away their plates and cups, and wipe their mats after snack and meals. Staff and children form strong bonds very quickly which results in children being calm and very well settled. They thoroughly enjoy attending and are purposefully engaged at all times as the nursery operates like a close family. Children receive lots of positive praise from staff. As a result they are extremely confident and self-assured.

All children are valued and cared for according to their individual needs. They learn and follow the nursery's clear routines because they are consistently applied by staff that explain and help them understand the reasons for rules of behaviour. Younger children are helped, gently but firmly, to respond to and high expectations of behaviour. All children enjoy copious praise and develop warm relationships with staff. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary.

Children benefit greatly from the strong partnership between their parents and staff. Staff always make time to talk to the parents, ensuring that they are kept fully informed of their child's progress. Information linked to the 'Birth to three' framework and the Foundation Stage is clearly displayed on the parents' notice board. Daily activities are highlighted, ensuring the parents are completely aware of the experiences their children are having. Parents can have access to their child's records at any time; formal meetings are arranged twice a year. Parents' views are sought through a questionnaire distributed by the parent representative. Positive comments are noted such as 'you can't put a price on the age and experience of staff, they are exceptional!'

Partnership with parents of children in receipt of nursery funding is outstanding. Staff work extremely hard to involve parents in their children's learning such as using the newsletter as a way to promote parents' understanding of some of the experiences their children are having such as 'back to front, topsy-turvy day', a pyjama party or celebrating 16 years of the setting. Requests are made for parents to use their skills and to join in some of the fun and learning sessions covering a wide range of topics from healthy eating to making maths fun, supporting parents, sharing and understanding how they can support their child at home. All of this promotes children's well-being and self-esteem and ensures their individual needs are exceedingly well met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Rigorous and robust recruitment procedures certify staff are appropriately qualified and vetted. Good induction, ensuring staffing ratios are maintained and a staff group who are motivated and committed to improve and develop their knowledge and practice through regular and ongoing training at work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare.

The premises are well-organised, indoor and outdoor space is laid out to take full advantage of play opportunities. Children are well supported by staff; they are happy, comfortable and settled in a warm caring environment. All children spend their time purposefully and activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development opportunities. As a result children's individual needs are met well.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and have a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. All documentation is effectively maintained and there are clear systems in place for recording accidents, medication and attendance. Policies and procedures are continually undergoing review and updated to reflect the continuing improvements in the operational practice.

The leadership and management of the setting is good as children benefit from the care of a staff team who are highly motivated and keen to increase their knowledge of good practice. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education through working with the Early Years Team. High staffing levels allow staff to be deployed appropriately meeting the individual needs of all children. Focussed planning and effective use of assessment charts to record children's progress enable children to make good progress in all areas of their development.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations raised at the previous inspection for either element of care or nursery education.

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):

- ensure the fire evacuation record clearly shows the time to evacuate the building to demonstrate how practice can improve
- ensure staff are aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and are able to put these into practice.

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):

- continue to develop staffs knowledge of the Foundation Stage to ensure a consistent delivery of the programme by all staff involved.

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