

Ditton Lodge Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221559
Inspection date	07 November 2007
Inspector	Lynn Clements
Setting Address	Ditton Lodge Community First School, St. Johns Avenue, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8BL
Telephone number	01638 613002
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees of Ditton Lodge Community Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Ditton Lodge Community Nursery has been established since the 1970s. It operates from a mobile building in the grounds of Ditton Lodge First School. It is situated in a residential area of Newmarket.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open five days a week from 08.45 to 11.45 during school term times. All children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 24 children on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. Children mostly come from the local area. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs six members of staff. Three of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing their understanding about the importance of personal hygiene through the satisfactory daily routines in place. Hand washing is encouraged at relevant times. Visual reminders are in place to support and remind children how to wash their hands properly. Health related documentation is in place and updated to meet children's changing needs. Staff have completed relevant first aid training enabling them to care for sick or injured children appropriately.

Satisfactory opportunities for children to learn about healthy eating are in place through snack time discussions and topics. Children have access to drinking water at all times to ensure no one remains thirsty. However, opportunities for children to further develop their self-help skills are missed, as staff prepare snacks, without involving the children. Parents share information about their child's individual dietary needs and this is recorded by staff to ensure those needs are met and respected.

Children learn how to keep their bodies healthy, for example, they have opportunities each day to engage in physical play. Members of staff support this learning, introducing discussions about keeping their bodies healthy including cleaning their teeth. Children develop their coordination and spatial awareness as they use a variety of apparatus. They use single handed tools, such as scissors, cutters, pens and paintbrushes with increasing control and competence. All children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The very good organisation of the play space along with clear daily checks of all child accessible areas ensures the environment remains safe for children. Toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned so they remain in good condition for the children to use. There is plenty of safe child height furniture enabling them to play in safety and comfort.

Children are supervised at all times. Staff take positive steps to help them understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they practise fire escape routines so everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency. A clear child collection procedure is implemented in practice. Staff never allow children to leave with any adults other than their parents or carers. If the parents or carers require another adult to collect their child, then the nursery obtains written permission and proof of identification to ensure children only leave with authorised adults. This ensures children never leave the setting with strangers and are kept safe. Security systems are in place to prevent children leaving the building unescorted and all visitors are checked prior to entry and a record is maintained to protect them from harm.

Staff have completed relevant safeguarding children training and this is updated regularly. A designated person is in place who is responsible for liaising with safeguarding children agencies and with Ofsted in any child protection situation. This ensures children's welfare is protected. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and know how to make referrals to social services, if they believe a child is at risk. Staff act in the best interests of the child at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and secure in the setting. They arrive and greet each other showing a developing sense of belonging. Staff emphasis is on free-flow play. However, opportunities for them to extend their own play and learning are limited due to the lack of child accessible storage. Children receive descriptive praise and encouragement which helps to promote positive attitudes to learning. They develop their thinking and listening skills during registration, sharing their news from home and talking about the days of the week or the weather. Children sing rhymes and listen to stories. They are able to work on their own or negotiate their ideas during role play games.

Staff plan and provide activities and play opportunities which develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Children move freely around the setting and enjoy exploring the activities the staff have organised. Children have fun at their pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn through play. They organise activities which promote children's decision making skills. Staff are interested in what the children say and do, taking time to listen and respond positively to their suggestions and ideas. Children develop confidence in their relationships with each other and members of staff.

Staff monitor children's achievements. Systems for recording their progress are in place. The recently appointed manager and existing staff team have begun planning as a whole team. This helps to provide children with a variety of different ideas and activities. However, clear learning intentions are not consistently identified and differentiation is limited. This impacts on the effectiveness of challenge for the older more able children. Information about children's educational development within the pre-school is actively shared with parents and carers through daily verbal feedback, open days and the sharing of assessment records.

Children enjoy what they do and are able to sustain interest in the good range of activities and learning experiences provided. Overall, children concentrate well. They complete puzzles or work together to organise and develop their role play games. They enjoy pretend picnics or becoming super heroes and flying around the playground. Children's self-esteem and confidence increase as they share stories from home and seek out others to show them their finished creations. They form positive relationships with each other and members of staff, as they greet each other on arrival and make room at activities. Children are learning to share and care for each other. When some children are sad, others sit with them and comfort them until they feel better.

Children are confident communicators seeking out adults to share their ideas. They join in large group of story time using the pictures in the book as clues to the text or joining in repeated refrains. However, opportunities for them to link sounds to letter or use writing for a purpose are limited.

Children make sense of the world around them as they explore and investigate information technology. They negotiate programmes on the computer and use the mouse with competence and control. Children learn about the changing seasons of the year and what the weather is

doing. They observe change while playing outside. They share their news from home, which helps them to develop their understanding about the community in which they live.

Children develop simple mathematical concepts as they use positional language while playing. They explore shapes and colours and learn about big and small. Children engage in opportunities to build on their calculation skills as they join in simple number rhymes and songs or count the candles on the nursery birthday cake when children are celebrating their birthday. Children explore repeating patterns as they create wiggly worm and snake models while threading coloured reels.

Children engage in a good range of physical activities which help them to develop their confidence, skill and coordination. They move around safely demonstrating spatial awareness as they avoid obstacles or each other. Children develop their fine motor skills as they use single handed tools and utensils with increasing competence. They learn about the importance of physical exercise and how it can help them to stay fit and healthy.

Children express their individual creativity through a range of craft activities. For example, they freely paint and create pictures. Children enjoy experimenting with different textures as they explore sand, water or sticky glue. They make three dimensional models from boxes using previous ideas, such as copying the builders they saw when they were playing outside. Children join in role play games, developing their ideas based on real and imagined experiences. They become characters based on their favourite comics, such as spider man. Staff work closely as a team, praising and encouraging children to develop their personal independence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff work closely with parents and carers to meet children's individual needs and ensure they are included in the life of the nursery. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs during topics and discussions, examining artefacts, exploring books and tasting foods from around the world. Staff ensure that there is no bias in their practice in relation to gender, race or disability. Staff set up the classroom each day and adapt activities when required to ensure they are accessible to all.

Clear procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff adopt a multi-agency approach in the best interests of the child. They work closely with families to ensure children's particular needs are met well. Attention is also paid to developing and sharing information with the feeder primary school to support smooth transitions and ensure appropriate support is in place prior to placement.

Staff throughout the nursery work together to provide a consistent approach to behaviour management. Children and staff discuss their nursery rules and devise ways of making the atmosphere pleasant and welcoming. Children learn to share, take turns and negotiate with each other independently. They demonstrate a sense of place as they hang up their belongings on child height pegs, see to their personal needs and greet staff and friends on arrival. Staff create an environment that encourages children to behave well.

The setting develops positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents, carers and children are greeted warmly as they arrive each day. Verbal feedback is shared at the end of each session. Well-maintained notice boards are kept up to date with clear information about forthcoming

events, funding, health and safety issues and general nursery business and committee information.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education funding is good. Parents and carers have access to the planning displayed in the entrance. Information about the Foundation Stage is available in the nursery's prospectus. Open evenings are organised to provide clear information about how play opportunities and activities are linked to the six areas of learning. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's records of assessment, writing in comments and observations of their children's achievements at home. This provides valuable opportunities for parents and carers to become involved in their child's formative nursery education.

Children are learning to share and help each other. They encourage others to join in their games and make room for them at activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are satisfactory systems in place for the employment of staff. Criminal record bureau checks are made to ensure children remain protected from harm. Registration systems are maintained to ensure that all staff and children are appropriately accounted for on a daily basis and that ratios are met. The majority of staff hold relevant early years qualifications and experience. Space and resources are organised to meet the children's individual needs. Staff induction and appraisal systems are conducted to support new and existing members of staff. This ensures they are working appropriately with the children.

There is an operational plan in place which is currently being reviewed and updated by the recently appointed manager and committee. Policies and procedures are in place. However, these are not regularly updated to meet current legislative requirements. This impacts on the efficient and safe management of the provision and welfare of the children. All records are stored securely and confidentiality is maintained. Overall children's needs are met.

Leadership and management of early education is good. The recently appointed manager is developing relationships within the existing staff team. She has accessed support from the local authority to develop the delivery and monitoring of the Foundation Stage. The manager appraises staff to draw on their strengths and interests and ensure that the delivery of early education enables all children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Clear aims are in place enabling the new team to build on what children know and can do and ensure they continue to provide broad learning opportunities to spark children's interest and participation.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection the provider has improved outcomes for children. Children can now help themselves to drinks as and when they need to. This ensures that no child is left thirsty.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to increase opportunities for children to design and construct. Children now have a wide variety of opportunities to develop their construction skills and imagination. They build and construct using their own imagination

creating models using a variety of different boxes and containers. They build tall towers using various plastic shapes or create sand dunes while playing in the sand pit.

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.

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 snack time system to encourage independence through choice and self service
- ensure the organisation of resources are readily accessible to children in order for them to extend on their independent play and learning
- ensure records, policies and procedures which are required for efficient and safe management of the provision and welfare of children are maintained, this refers to the safeguarding children procedure and complaints policies.

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):

- develop the current planning systems to ensure it is based on observations of what children know and can do in all six areas of learning; ensure clear learning intentions are identified and that adaptation is included to challenge all children effectively
- increase opportunities in communication, language and literacy enabling children to link sounds and letters and use writing for a purpose.

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