



## Dallow Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 155769   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 18 October 2005  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Margaret Coyne   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Dallow Primary School, Dallow Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 1LZ |
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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Dallow Pre-School  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated   |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 outstanding. 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?

Dallow Community Nursery has been registered under the flying Start program since 2001 and the neighbourhood nursery opened its doors in 2003 joining the 2 nurseries together to provide both sessional and full day care. It operates from 2 purpose built buildings situated on the Dallow Primary School site and is run by a committee. The children have access to 3 main base rooms and share access to a fully enclosed playground and a garden area. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery at

any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00 until 18.00. Children attend for either sessional or full time care. The nursery is open for 50 weeks of the year.

There are currently 88 children aged from 0 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 72 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. Many of the staff speak community languages.

The nursery employs 16 staff. Of these, 10 staff, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. The remaining 6 staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from an early years teacher and the local authority. The nursery has taken part in the Pre-School Learning Alliance Quality Assurance scheme and have gained this award. The nursery has been granted Children's Centre status.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through extremely well-planned daily routines. Older children have an excellent awareness of how and why we wash our hands and when it is important to do so. For example, before meals and snacks and after messy activities. Younger children develop their understanding through watching others, discussion and through the positive role modelling of the adults. The children are protected from infection through excellent hygiene routines which are practised by the nursery. For example, the high level of well-maintained, clean toys and equipment, activities that relate to keeping healthy such as visits from the dentist, highly effective nappy changing routines and toilet training methods and the sick child policy. Overall the high standard of cleanliness throughout the nursery contributes greatly to the children's good health. Staff are well informed about children's health issues and enhanced records and documents are in place. A high level of staff hold first aid certificates and are confident to administer first aid to the children to prevent them becoming distressed or incur further infection.

Children enjoy an extensive and stimulating range of equipment to promote a healthy life and their physical development. The garden has been very well planned to incorporate different activities which encourage the children to use their bodies keeping fit and healthy. Children move with confidence and skill as they ride scooters, cars and bikes. They thoroughly enjoy manipulating hoops and can throw, spin and catch a variety of equipment. Children have access to climbing and balancing equipment and enjoy physical activities in the local park. During indoor play children take turns bouncing on the trampet and become absorbed as they bounce with growing confidence. Younger children join in activities with a mini climbing frame and use this with dexterity and confidence as their mobility develops. Children's hand and eye coordination is well developed as they play with small world figures,

manipulate playdough into balls and shapes and build towers of bricks. They glue and paint using a variety of tools and are starting to gain control using scissors. The large activity cube helps children to make rapid progress as they manipulate magnets, beads and balls around its varied paths. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' guidance well to provide a superior range of physical play experiences for younger children.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. The nursery has gained an award as part of their healthy eating campaign and continually work towards developing the superb, healthy meals and snacks. The meals on offer cater for the children's various dietary needs with a large percentage of children being of different cultures. This is reflected in the varied, extremely nutritious meals and their planning and presentation. This is also explored and promoted with cooking activities for children to gain an understanding of healthy food. For example, they enjoy making fruit kebabs and fruit salads. This is extended with trips to the local supermarket where children can choose fruit and vegetables and see the many varied and exotic fruits on offer. Children thoroughly enjoy the meals and snacks and the menu enriches their food experiences in a worthwhile manner. An extremely pleasant, happy and social occasion is created for the children to encourage them to gain social skills and manners while also trying new tastes. Reward stickers are given to encourage children to eat their meals and this is having a positive effect on their appetites. Children have opportunity to use appropriate cutlery and all children are becoming skilled using it. Staff sit with the children at meal times, they are able to eat at their own pace and are not made to feel rushed. Meals and cooking activities are extremely well planned in accordance to children's needs and any allergies or dietary requirements are complied with. Children have some opportunity to prepare some snacks for themselves which helps them gain an interest in the food and opens up new conversations about food types and healthy options. Children have access to fresh drinks throughout the day.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is paramount to the organisation of the nursery. Staff are vigilant when recognising hazards and take positive steps to minimise these. Systematic risk assessments are carried out and all staff share in the responsibility for keeping the children safe. A health and safety officer has been appointed to oversee this throughout the nursery. Each area of the setting is extremely well planned, with space for children to move freely and safely around activities and play areas. Well implemented safety and security precautions are in place to promote and safeguard the children's welfare. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe in the nursery as they explain and practise simple procedures such as emergency evacuation and the boundaries necessary to help children participate in their own safety. For example, not running inside or throwing sand and toys. All suitable safety measures are in place such as, socket covers, high handles, fire safety equipment and fire alarms. All areas within the school grounds are checked for safety to enable children to explore and take risks within a safe environment. Children have taken part in a road safety topic which has given them a clear insight

into keeping safe on the roads. They enjoy visits from the school lollipop-man and have had access to the road safety kit. The children have been invited to attend safety topics and discussions with the adjoining school and this helps them gain a clear insight into personal safety.

Children use a broad range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate toys, furniture and equipment. These are extensively organised throughout the setting in child height storage units to encourage children to become independent and gain safe access to their resources. Children play an active role in their own safety. They help to tidy toys away and notify an adult if something is broken. Sensitive reminders by staff encourage children to share in the responsibility for their own safety and that of others. For example, asking a child to pick up toys from the floor in case someone trips over them and clear rules about how many children may play at an activity. Equipment and activities are attractively presented to help children learn to respect and look after their resources. For example, imaginative play areas are well resourced and interesting. This helps children gain an awareness of safety and take some responsibility for looking after their equipment. High adult to child ratios ensure an exemplary level of supervision is maintained to support the children.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through current policies and procedures for the protection of children. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about child protection and all procedures are in place and implemented. The nursery's good practise ensures any concerns are dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. There is a procedure in place to clearly show the steps taken in the event of any allegations made against a member of staff.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy, contented and secure throughout the nursery. They confidently access the stimulating and challenging range of activities and are forming secure relationships with staff and other children. Staff have an extensive awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this has a positive effect on the younger children's enjoyment and achievements. Staff plan activities in line with this framework and have gained a secure knowledge about what children can learn. Babies and young children receive lots of cuddles and have developed strong bonds with their key workers which increases their sense of well-being and contentment. They clearly benefit from the routines which are consistent with those at home. They enjoy the various activities such as messy play and children immensely enjoy the feel of sand on bare feet. Younger children exhibit great delight when playing with brightly coloured toys and those which make a noise. Great fun was had with the climbing frame and activity centre as they experiment how different sections work. Children develop their communication skills as they respond to others around them. With the use of verbal and non-verbal language they make their needs known to staff who are adept at interpreting these needs. Younger children are animated and eager to take part. Their mobility is extended through the first hand support offered by staff as they move freely and easily around the room. Children enjoy dancing using their own natural rhythm and style. Children of all ages and abilities use a range of creative

materials such as paint, sticking, playdough, and other messy activities. Children learn through these experiences and are directly involved and interested in their play. Children learn about responsibilities and are allowed to make errors, decisions and choices as they select activities and share their play with others.

Children exhibit high levels of confidence and security and this has been achieved by the consistent support and direction of staff. Older children are able to resolve their differences when any conflicts arise. They are encouraged to talk about it and find their own solutions. This provides children with tools to become aware of the needs of others and negotiate differences. Younger children often seek out staff to share experiences with or to gain support for an activity.

Attractive displays all around the nursery gives children pride in their work. Staff throughout the nursery make the experiences enjoyable and meaningful for the children which in turn aids their confidence to participate. Children are receptive to the constant praise and encouragement that is provided by staff. This has a clear impact on their self-esteem and encourages them to try new tasks and participate in activities. Children of all ages and abilities develop a concept of counting, sorting, shape, colour and problem solving through the very well planned and managed activities on offer.

#### Nursery Education

Children are absorbed, engaged and happy in the activities provided. Many children are new starters this term and also speak English as their second language. Staff are skilled at extending the range of activities which supports the children's learning and enables them to make progress. Children have a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and seek out friends to share play with. Behaviour is generally good as the children are getting to know the routines and what is expected of them. Children show concern for others and this was demonstrated well during a role play session as children showed genuine care and concern for others. Older children recognise that they can make mistakes, but through high levels of encouragement staff help them develop coping skills which aids them to move forward from these. Staff ensure children have extensive opportunities to learn through play and often start at a child's base line to encourage them to develop the skills required.

Staff are adept at providing opportunities to help children succeed in simple ways. For example, giving them clues when discussing the days of the week. This in turn helps children build their confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy using language in their imaginative play and during group discussion. Staff have a variety of multi-lingual skills and will talk to children in English then their first language and return to English thus giving children a purposeful awareness of language. Children spend time discovering their mark-making skills and are starting to enjoy books and stories. Simple labels around the room develop children's early word recognition. However, at present, limited emphasis is given to practising the sounds of letters in familiar words. Children are confident counters and can recognise some written numbers of personal significance. For example, children could relate their age to the numbers on the telephone. Children have a growing concept of matching, sorting, size, shape and simple problem skills. These are gradually introduced through a range of well-planned activities as the children are ready. Staff provide children with

opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They explore their local environment enjoying trips to the cinema, the farm, the library, fire station, the park, supermarket and post office where they have posted themselves a letter expressing great delight when the postman delivers it. They are able to explore nature first hand as they collect leaves and grow seeds and bulbs. Activities with caterpillars, butterflies and making their own playdough provides children with opportunity to see how things grow and change. Children show curiosity and interest as they explore how things work. Children gave detailed directions about how a telephone works. Role-play provides children with opportunity to express themselves during familiar and unfamiliar experiences. Groups of children play happily in the home corner making tea and food, while others enjoy themselves in the 'jungle' dressing up as lions and tigers moving through the creepers and vines and extending this into the room as they roar and prowls around others. Other creative activities give children a sense of achievement as they are able to create spontaneously using their own imaginations and skills. Children ask for musical instruments and had fun creating their own music and rhythm. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in singing and action songs. Children with less confidence also take part doing the actions to the songs even when not sure of the words.

Children's achievements are clearly linked to the stepping stones. Staff use on-going observations extremely well to plan the next steps in children's learning. A new system has recently been introduced to identify children's entry profile and base line before moving them forward. This is being particularly successful in the nursery with so many children starting this term and with the high level of multi cultural children attending. The assessments give clear evidence of the children's progress and achievements and any gaps can be quickly identified to inform future planning.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff enrich the experiences for all children with well-planned activities and resources. They have a good awareness of children's starting points and use this to plan the next steps in their development. Consistent staff impacts on children's high levels of confidence and security. Sensitive settling in procedures builds on this giving children confidence to participate. Children enjoy circle time and some are confident to join in discussions. However, in the larger group this can get disruptive at story time and children are unable to concentrate. It is an area that has been identified by managers and different methods are being practised to resolve this with the different languages and cultures of the children being taken into consideration. Staff are getting to know the children well, know when to step back and let the children take over an activity creating a realistic balance between adult-led and child-initiated play. This gives children the skills to succeed in most given tasks. However, some use of pre-printed activity sheets provide limited challenge for children. Staff are excellent role models and inspire, praise and encourage children to try things for themselves. They encourage children to gain the confidence to succeed and support them well as they aspire to do so. Staff are skilled when motivating the children and know how to capture their interest by involving them in activities they can extend for themselves. For example the jungle imaginative play theme. Children are progressing well, supported by the staff's team confidence and secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and their many, varied skills and expertise to deliver a sound educational program to the children. Planning is detailed and covers all areas of

learning comprehensively. This gives a clear picture of the aims and objectives of each activity. Evaluation of the activities has been developed to ensure the activities are meeting the needs of all children. Staff are enthusiastic, patient and caring and this impacts greatly on the children's enjoyment and learning. Extra care is being taken this term to ease the children into some structure. With so many new starters, staff start each child's learning from their own base point and build their skills from this.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children have access to a meaningful range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity. Children take part in a range of activities of both familiar and unfamiliar festivals and celebrations. For example, Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year and Diwali. Staff reflect the wide cultural diversity of the nursery and community and are able to bring a wealth of wonderful experiences for the children to enjoy. Parents are invited to share experiences and celebrations with the children. For example, to show different food, decoration and dance customs. Staff have outstanding, positive attitudes and present themselves as sensitive role models. This helps children relate to others and gain a secure understanding of the needs of others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. This supports the educational program the older children receive. All children are valued and respected as individuals and all their needs are well documented and implemented. Children thrive in their environment where they are engaged and nurtured free from any type of stereotyping. Staff recognise that at some time all children will exhibit a 'special need'. This could be a developmental need or personal need. Staff are clearly committed to supporting each and every child in order to meet their needs. Detailed pre-registration forms gain full information from parents about each child in order to fully meet their needs. Children attending at present with a special need are included in all activities and happily take part with great confidence and sense of well-being.

Children are gaining a worthwhile understanding of the boundaries within the nursery and respond to direction from adults in a positive fashion. They eagerly respond to the consistent approach followed by all adults and this impacts clearly on their security and confidence as they know what is expected of them. With the high level of new starters this term boundaries have been based at the children's level so they can quickly gain a respect for their friends, staff and environment. Children develop high levels of self-esteem and are beginning to resolve differences and gain an understanding between right and wrong. This also has the effect of building their managing skills and self-reliance. Highly effective behaviour management defuses situations and distracts and engages children in worthwhile activities. Children share in the responsibility for their own behaviour as they learn to listen to others, share and wait turns and being kind to our friends. Simple methods are employed to help children wait for turns, such as having two hats at the sand pit to indicate how many children can take part in this activity. Staff are caring role models for the children, creating a calm, positive, fun and interesting environment in which they thrive. Children are heard to use the same positive language in their play and discussions

with each other. For example, when more than two children want to play in the sand tray they negotiate turns and some will watch while waiting for a turn. Staff have high expectations for all children and are consistent in their behaviour management.

Partnership with parents' is outstanding. This has been developed and contributes significantly to the children's sense of belonging, security and well-being. Parents' play an active role in their child's care and a two way sharing of information is encouraged with the use of daily communication sheets and verbal discussions with key staff. Parents' are invited to regular open days and events and have appointment times for more formal exchange of information about their child's progress and achievements. Their involvement impacts greatly on the children's good health, safety, care and learning. Staff are extremely approachable and friendly, making them feel secure and at ease, confident with the care provided for their child. Parents' have been informed about the 'Birth to three matters' format and how the nursery implements this. Parents speak knowingly and enthusiastically about the nursery and the care and support provided for their children. Some parents stay to help settle their child in and quickly begin to take part in some activities themselves. They have opportunity to attend innovative family sessions where they learn to support their children through play. The nursery has an open-door policy where parents' can visit their child during sessions. Information about the foundation stage and curriculum is available to them so they gain an understanding how their child will make progress and to support this at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the superb quality of organisation. Leadership and management is outstanding. This benefits the children as they move through the nursery from baby room to pre-school. The project manager and nursery manager continually enhance their knowledge through extensive training and provide a thorough training program for all staff. The management team and committee are responsible for all aspects of the nursery including staff supervision and employment, ratios and deployment, operational plan, staff training and qualifications. All staff have a considerable knowledge of the National Standards which they are committed to applying throughout the nursery. This is enhanced with their knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework. High regard for the well being of the children, their group sizes, adult support and well planned activities, contribute to children's well-being, enjoyment and achievements. The committee, managers and room leaders work extremely well together and have built a positive, motivated, and dedicated staff team. The organisation of staff across the nursery includes a sensitive mix between young and mature staff and enables them to share experiences and enrich and promote the care and learning experiences provided for the children. An inclusive environment has been created which clearly shows that each child matters.

Extremely well organised premises with both indoor and outdoor space effectively arranged to maximize the play opportunities for children. This leads to the extensive, imaginative and safe environment the children enjoy. Excellent use of low level storage units enables children to develop independence and contribute to the safe

organisation of their own environment.

Highly effective organisation of all records and documents ensures children's welfare and enables parents to play an active role in their child's care. All staff are committed to the continuous evaluation and improvement of their practice. They regularly monitor and improve the quality of their care through comprehensive evaluations and meetings. All complaints are logged and procedures are met in a robust manner. The managers work closely together to revise policies and procedures for the nursery and to ensure these are implemented throughout. The nursery has exciting methods to ensure they reflect the needs of the community as a whole and work closely with the school to achieve this. The reception class teacher visits the children and arranges visits to the school to help them become comfortable when it is time to move into the main school. The leadership and management team have a robust and rigorous system in place to ensure the children are cared for by staff with appropriate qualifications and experience and a highly effective induction and assessment system is an integral part of this process. The overall team spirit and moral is superb throughout the nursery with the high levels of support and pastoral care provided by the management team. Some minor areas for improvement have been identified by the management team in their educational program and they are developing varied methods to ensure these can be met in all areas and work closely with staff to ensure suitable strategies are in place. This is due to the high level of new starters this term and the large majority of children who speak English as a second language. The management team have a clear vision of how to improve and extend the educational program for the children. The nursery has been granted Children's Centre status and plans are being incorporated to extend and enhance the nursery as a whole.

Overall the needs of the children attending are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the nursery have improved their policies and procedures including one containing the procedure to follow in the event of a lost or uncollected child. They have also purchased a number of buggies to safely transport less mobile children when going on outings or visiting places within the local community.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection

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 outstanding. 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**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

##### **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):

- enable children to develop their concentration skills during group story sessions
- develop staffs understanding of the balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities with the use of pre-printed work sheets and pre-cut shapes
- extend children's early reading skills with emphasis on the sounds of letters in familiar words.

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