



Nursery Thymes

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Valerie Thomas

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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

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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?

Nursery Thymes is one of three settings run by the same provider. It opened in 2005 and operates from four rooms within a detached single storey building in Biddulph, Staffordshire. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these,

11 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 17 members of staff. Of these, 12 staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery has achieved the National Day Nurseries Association 'Quality Counts' accreditation and has a Healthy Eating award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well planned routines. They know that they need to wash their hands because 'they have germs on them' after going to the toilet. In addition children brush their teeth after lunch and know that 'it gets all of the food out of your teeth'. Good procedures such as staff wearing protective clothing for nappy changing and cleaning all areas after use sustain appropriate levels of hygiene. This helps reduce the risk of cross contamination. Clear procedures for sick and infectious children help prevent the spread of infection. This helps to keep children healthy.

There is a good level of staff who have a current first aid certificate. However, written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not in place for all children. This does not ensure their needs can be fully met if a medical emergency arose.

The setting works in partnership with parents to meet children's individual dietary needs. Staff are very attentive to the young babies' needs, implementing their individual routines which are discussed and recorded in detail with parents. This helps the transition from home to nursery care. The snacks and meals offered throughout the day offer healthy choices. Children enjoy eating the apples and cheese at snack time and lunches are healthy and nutritional. Children know that if they eat all of their dinner 'it makes you big and strong'. This encourages children to develop a positive approach to healthy eating.

Children enjoy good opportunities for physical exercise. Younger children enjoy trundling along on the sit and ride toys and pull themselves up by the climbing frame outside. Older ones have lots of fun taking part in the obstacle course, jumping on the trampoline, balancing along the blocks and climbing in and out of the frames. The good range of activities provided helps children to develop their physical skills and encourages a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and well organised environment. Staff monitor

access to the group at all times and the nursery can only be accessed by an electronic device. The outdoor areas have a safety surface fitted to enable children to play safely when using the climbing equipment. Risk assessments are completed regularly and daily safety checks are made. Fire evacuation procedures are fully understood by staff and are practised with the children. Children know that they need to go out of the door and stand by the wall when they hear the bell for the fire drill. This helps children remain safe.

Children use a wide and varied range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. They are organised well to ensure suitable accessibility for children and ensure they can make decisions about their play.

Staff explain safe practices to children such as not climbing on the fence as they may hurt themselves and not to throw sand as it may go in someone's face. Children know that they need to be careful when riding the bikes as they may fall. This helps children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children are protected by staff who have a suitable understanding of child protection issues and the correct procedures to follow if they suspect child abuse. However all staff are not fully aware of the national guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'. Consequently, children's welfare is not fully promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident in the setting's welcoming and caring environment. Staff are beginning to implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework to guide their planning and recording of progress. Babies enjoy the positive interaction they receive from the staff and their independence is encouraged well as they learn to feed themselves at lunch time. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home and staff are very attentive to their needs. Children enjoy developing their senses as they paint their father's day cards having lots of fun putting their hands in the paint and showing them to staff. They develop early communication skills as they look at the books with the staff. Children make animal sounds saying 'wo-wo' when staff ask them what the dog says and calling out 'moo' for the noise of the cow.

Children in the 'tweenies' room have positive relationships with staff and receive comfort and attention when they need support. They play happily together and get excited when they have one of their favourite books read to them. They count out 'one, two, three' as they count how many cows there are and enjoy finding the lion behind the flap as they make roaring sounds. They enjoy the many activities provided and have a good time as they join in with singing sessions moving their arms around as they sing 'The wheels on the bus'. Weekly sessions are held in the nursery for 'rhythm time'. Children show good enthusiasm as they respond to the teacher banging the sticks loudly and softly on the floor to the song and repeat 'ba, ba, ba' patterns as they talk into the microphone. As a result children play well, show good interest and are keen to take part in activities.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a good understanding of how young children learn and progress. Consequently, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Planning provides suitable guidance for staff to ensure a wide range of activities and experiences are provided for children to extend their learning in all areas. However, it does not differentiate for younger and older children and therefore it does not fully inform staff of how activities may need to be adapted. Staff use good methods to maintain children's interest. They sit with children in small groups and on a one to one asking questions and extending their play. For example, staff encourage children's thinking as they ask children to explain what magnetic means. Staff help raise children's awareness of diversity well and there is a good range of resources to promote this. Staff have a good understanding of the Special Needs Code of Practice and how to use this to meet children's needs.

Assessment systems are completed regularly and daily observations of individual children and evaluations of activities take place to inform progress records. However, progress is not clearly assessed against the full range of stepping stones. Behaviour is managed well and this results in a calm and caring environment for children. The indoor area is organised well and offers a stimulating environment with a good range of accessible resources to promote children's learning. The outdoor play area is used well to promote physical development but is not extended to promote learning in other areas.

Children are interested and their attitude to learning is good. They show good concentration as they complete the jigsaws and sit and listen to the story. Children are confident and enjoy completing tasks such as putting their name on the door and setting out the plates and cups for lunch. Children behave well responding positively to the boundaries standing on the black line as they wait to go outside. They play well together as they make and eat their dinner together in the home corner. Children's language skills are good. Children speak clearly and confidently and are able to express their needs. They learn new words like 'pterodactyls' as they name the dinosaur and are confident to sing songs to the group. In addition children are learning sign language. They know that to make the 'L' sign they use 'Peter pointer' and put him on the bed. Children recognise their name card at circle time and older children are beginning to link sounds and letters and most know what letter their name begins with. Writing skills are developing and older children show good control as they colour their picture and attempt to write their name.

Children understand and use numbers well. Most children count confidently up to 14 and older ones are able to match number to object as they count the number of bears they have in the dish. Children demonstrate that they understand shape and size well. Younger children are able to sort and match shapes as they match them to the pictures. Older children are able to name the basic shapes such as triangle and square and know that two diamonds and two triangles can make a hexagon shape. They are able to distinguish between big, medium and little as they match the 'compare bears' to the picture cards. Children learn about time as they say what day it is and know that the month is June and the year is 2006. They develop good exploration and investigation skills as they learn about change when mixing the flour, eggs and butter to make the cakes. Children use the computer confidently and know how to switch it on and that they need to click the mouse to make the pictures move.

They learn about the features of living things as they visit country parks touching the donkeys, pigs and sheep. Children have many opportunities to develop a sense of where they live as they visit the local shops to buy the ingredients for making cakes and fruit and vegetables for the nursery.

Children's physical skills are developing well. Older children use one-handed tools competently as they write their name and colour the rosettes for the father's day card. Children climb and slide down the frames with confidence and bounce well on the hopper. They are competent at pedalling the bikes and are able to negotiate a pathway in and around the equipment. In addition children have swimming lessons on a weekly basis. They are able to express themselves freely through painting and enjoy exploring many different textures such as sand, clay and play dough. Children's imaginative skills are developing well as they make the dinner and feed the babies in the home corner and express their thoughts confidently at story time when answering questions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. All children are valued and respected as individuals. Their confidence and self-esteem is developed well by staff with good use of praise and encouragement given to children during their play throughout the session. Staff tell children how beautiful their pictures are and tell them they are excellent when they sit well for stories. There is a good range of resources available that positively represent different cultures, gender and disability. Festivals are celebrated and children learn how to use chopsticks to eat the noodles. Children are taken on visits into the community such as 'Lakemore Country Park'. This helps to raise children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. The setting's policies promote inclusion for all children. Staff have a good understanding of how to provide appropriate support to children with learning difficulties and disabilities and are clear in their roles. Consequently, children's needs are met well in partnership with parents.

Children behave well and respond positively to boundaries set by staff. They stop hitting another child when asked by staff and tell them that they are 'sorry'. Children work together well as they help to tidy the toys away. They share and take turns well as they play in the sand and wait for their turn with the golf clubs. This promotes a harmonious environment for children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Children settle well because the staff work closely with parents to ensure their child's needs are met. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through discussion with staff. In addition, they are given a prospectus which includes all relevant policies and procedures. Children's individual needs are discussed and recorded and babies' individual routines are discussed and recorded in detail to help the transition from home to nursery care. Younger children have daily diaries completed to keep parents informed of their child's well-being and daily discussion is

used for older ones. This helps children to settle quickly and enables staff to fully meet the child's needs.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Newsletters are sent home to inform parents of the topic for the month and the activities the children will be involved in. In addition, they are given ideas for activities that they can provide at home. Methods to keep parents informed of children's progress are good. Staff inform parents daily of achievements the child has made and progress reports are sent home regularly. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There are effective recruitment procedures which ensure staff are appropriately vetted. There is a good training programme implemented for staff and many training courses have been attended. These include 'Birth to three matters', assessment for the Foundation Stage and equal opportunities. In addition all staff have attended first aid. This helps to broaden children's experiences and contributes to the quality of care provided.

The nursery is well organised to meet the needs of the children. Good support is given to the children by the staff and the key worker system is used to monitor children's progress, meet their individual needs and liaise with parents. Staff are caring and attentive to children's needs offering comfort when needed and continually extending their learning. Consequently, children are settled, happy and enjoy their time in the setting.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. Clear guidance is given by the management to ensure that the educational programme is delivered effectively through regular staff and room meetings. Monitoring of practices takes place through the appraisal system and reviews with an early years advisor. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is monitored and ensures their learning is extended. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- develop all staff knowledge of the national guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.

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 improve the planning to ensure it differentiates for the younger and older children and that assessment records are more clearly evaluated against the stepping stones to show how children can progress further
- improve the outdoor area to ensure that children can access the six areas of learning when playing outside.

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