

Seesaws Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224859
Inspection date	21 February 2008
Inspector	Karen Cooper
Setting Address	1 Riley Crescent, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV3 7DR
Telephone number	01902 341 676
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Registered person	Seesaws Day Nurserys 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Seesaws Day Nursery opened in 1998. It operates from a converted house in Wolverhampton. Children have access to six playrooms, a communal imaginative play area and three enclosed gardens. Facilities also include a kitchen, laundry, toilets, office and staff room. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 60 children from 3 months to 8 years on roll. This includes 11 funded 3-year-olds and 2 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday.

There are nine staff employed to work with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from a teacher/mentor from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet their physical, nutritional and health needs. The children's understanding and awareness of good health is well-promoted through well-planned daily routines. They learn good hygiene and self-care practices through appropriate staff support and guidance, for example, older children are aware and automatically wash their hands before eating, after toileting and after messy play. They independently use the toilet, wash their hands using liquid soap and paper towels to dry their hands. The children understand the importance of carrying out these routines and explain that they have to get the germs off their hands. Younger children are given appropriate adult support and nappy changing routines ensure children's individual needs are met. Children's medical and specific health needs are well met. All staff are trained in administering first aid and there are rigorous procedures in place for dealing with accidents and administering any medication if required. Children's individual care needs are well met because very detailed information is obtained from their parents and carers at registration which includes medical information and details of any allergies.

Staff take a range of positive actions to encourage healthy eating. Through planned topics children are encouraged to enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. Meal times are relaxed social occasions when staff and children sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Menus are produced to provide parents with information about meal choices. Children have a choice of milk, juice or water to drink with their meals and also have independent access to fresh drinking water throughout the day to ensure they are kept well hydrated. The staff have a clear understanding of children's dietary needs and any food items provided by them are in accordance with parental wishes.

Children constantly develop and test their physical skills through taking part in stimulating, vigorous daily indoor and outdoor physical play. The outdoor areas have been creatively organised to offer a wealth of activities for children to experience lots of fun. The adventure play areas provides children with many physical challenges, for example, they can dig in the soil, create obstacle courses, climb using the various size slides and play with bats, balls and hoops. Currently staff are in the process of creating a sensory area where children can enjoy digging and planting a range of plants and vegetables which the children will be able to tend to.

Children enjoy regular walks around the local community and enjoy taking part in projects such as 'mini beasts' when they collect insects and leaves. If the weather is such that children cannot go outside, they enjoy indoor exercise and regularly take part in action rhymes which enables them to move in a variety of ways such as 'Five current buns'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained environment, where they move about freely and safely in well-organised rooms. The environment is bright, welcoming and enhanced by attractive displays of children's work and photographs. However, children's well-being is potentially compromised because room temperatures are not monitored. Toys and resources are stored

on low-level shelves and in boxes which are easily accessible to the children, promoting their independence and ability to make choices about what they want to do.

Risks of accidental injury to children are effectively minimised because staff constantly complete comprehensive risk assessments and take immediate action to ensure the environment is safe. They are committed to ensuring children are well looked after and are vigilant in supervising them. Effective security systems ensure that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and there are clear procedures to ensure only authorised people collect them. Children are efficient at clearing up after themselves and understand why daily routines need to be carried out such as pushing chairs back under tables so that other children and staff do not trip over them. Staff can effectively manage any emergencies as all children are involved in regular evacuation drills. Children learn from experience how to keep themselves safe, for example, they are aware not to walk round whilst holding scissors and how to safely use the outdoor play equipment.

All members of staff have been carefully vetted. They are aware of signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child. However, some staff are not familiar with procedures to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff. Child protection training is regularly updated and senior managers are fully conversant with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's caring attitude and enthusiasm for providing a good quality service. The staff are motivated and enthusiastic about their role in supporting children; using the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to plan a good range of activities and provide lots of opportunities for the children to make their own decisions and choices, thereby encouraging independence. Key workers ensure young children's learning needs are identified and targeted and provide a caring and supportive atmosphere that helps them to settle quickly and begin to grow in confidence.

Staff are attentive, join in with children's activities and playfully respond to children's actions and expressions. As a result, young children learn to socialise well, and are busy and engaged in stimulating and challenging activities. The younger children have a wealth of opportunities to develop and build on their existing skills and knowledge as they play alongside each other. Children have the freedom to explore and are purposely occupied, for example, they enthusiastically play with large boxes, shredded paper, paint on large boards and use their fingers to make marks in the sand.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are motivated and eager to learn, however, staff do not consistently question and encourage them to think for themselves and to develop their skills. The playroom is divided into a series of play areas to ensure activities from all six areas of learning are accessible to the children. However, the role play area is not effectively organised to ensure that children are encouraged to develop their imaginative skills. The children have the freedom to move between areas which allows them to have independence and choice.

Staff plan a variety of interesting activities which cover all areas of learning. Plans are linked to the stepping stones and reflect learning intentions for the focussed activities. There is a good balance between adult and child-led activities. Staff have an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and work hard to ensure that children have a broad and exciting range of age-appropriate resources which offer challenge and motivate children to explore and extend their experiences. Planning is evaluated by staff who ensure that children are offered a range of rich experiences in all areas of learning. Regular observations are carried out each child's development, however, the information gained is not used effectively to ensure each individual child is able to move on to the next stage of learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is appropriately promoted because of the experiences provided for them. Children are encouraged to make informed decisions about their play which gives them confidence as they are able to choose their own activities and resources. They are constantly busy and engaged in their chosen activity. They separate well from parents and carers and play happily. They are learning to co-operate with each other and eagerly join in the activities, for example, during circle time they willingly make space for each other when sitting on the mat and confidently repeat letter sounds made by staff. Children's self-care and independence is appropriately supported and the children show skill in dressing themselves for outside play and managing their own personal care. They behave well, responding positively to the clear instructions and praise from staff that encourages them to work together harmoniously.

Children's language skills are developing well. Most children are able to communicate easily with each other and staff. They enthusiastically join in songs and action rhymes such as 'Wind the bobbin up' and 'Bob the builder'. They have daily opportunities to practise their mark-making skills and with adult support they are developing an understanding of sounds and letters. However, opportunities are missed during daily activities and routines for children to see their name in print. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories and eagerly join in with familiar ones such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar'.

Children are becoming confident in using their mathematical skills. They practise and refine their counting skills with a range of stimulating first-hand experiences, for example, counting the cups and plates at lunch time, each other at registration time and joining in actions rhymes such as 'Five current buns'. As a result, some children are able to count to 10 or more and are beginning to solve simple practical number problems such as counting in a descending order when one current bun is taken away. Children see numbers, match, sort and count at every opportunity and show an awareness of shape and size such as circle, square, big and small. They learn about their own and other cultures through discussion with staff and planned activities. They are keen and interested in information technology and regularly use the computer. Most are able to navigate around the learning programme using the mouse with ease and confidence.

Children participate in a variety of craft activities and photographic evidence provides many examples such as water play, collage, printing, modelling and cooking. Children use and handle a range of small tools appropriately such as crayons, paint brushes, pencils and scissors. They carefully cut around the lines of their butterfly pictures showing great delight when completed. They are provided with daily opportunities to take part in physical play. They move confidently around the inside of the nursery and the outdoor area is designed to offer challenges such as climbing and balancing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children understand their own needs and are beginning to respect the needs of others because they have access to a range of positive image resources and cover topics that look at other cultures and celebrations including Diwali and Chinese New Year. The arrangements for helping children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure that all children are fully included in all aspects of nursery life and staff work collaboratively with both parents and outside professionals to gain the best possible support for each child in their care.

Children play well together and respond to the staff's positive behaviour management strategies. Staff have attended behaviour management training and as a result clear explanations and consistent boundaries help children learn what is acceptable. Distraction is frequently used to avoid confrontation with younger children and good behaviour is rewarded with praise. Children receive stickers for their efforts and special achievements which help to promote good behaviour and makes children feel proud. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff work closely with parents, discussing and agreeing all aspects of their children's individual needs and requirements. However, the current arrangement for sharing this information does not ensure that the information is shared on a need to know basis. Parents are well informed about the setting's policies and practices through written documentation and regular discussions. Settling in sessions are used to support children effectively in the transition from home to nursery. Time at the beginning of each session is made available for parents to settle their children and talk with staff. All parents know their child's key worker and share information with them about their children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Staff welcome parents into the setting and strive to establish positive partnerships. A comprehensive range of relevant information about the day to day organisation of the nursery and educational programme is displayed and shared with all parents. Staff encourage parents to share what they know about their children's learning and to work together to help them make progress in their development. Regular newsletters, parent evenings and display boards ensure parents are well informed of the activities on offer and of the progress their children are making towards the six areas of learning. It is evident from speaking to several parents as part of this inspection how pleased they are with the care and service offered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery is well organised and staff have created a child-centred environment which makes children feel welcome. Children's artwork and photographs are displayed throughout the nursery and toys are attractively presented to encourage children to become engaged in activities as soon as they arrive. Staff are committed to ongoing training and development which has a positive impact on children's overall learning and development. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensures children are cared for by suitable and qualified staff.

Comprehensive, detailed documentation is in place which is regularly reviewed to ensure that requirements are met. Policies and procedures are clear and concise and work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The management team and staff are enthusiastic, dedicated and work well together as a supportive team. They effectively monitor and evaluate the nursery education curriculum, and are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and areas for further improvement. The management team is committed to continued improvement and welcomes support from other agencies, including the local authority advisory teacher in supporting children's learning. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was requested to conduct a risk assessment on the outside play area to identify action to be taken to minimize hazards; develop a procedure to be followed in the event of an uncollected child; ensure Ofsted's phone number and address appears on the complaints procedure and ensure the child protection policy includes the procedure for allegations made against staff.

Risks of accidental injury to children are effectively minimised because staff constantly complete comprehensive risk assessments and take immediate action to ensure the environment is safe in and outdoors. Comprehensive, detailed documentation is in place which is regularly reviewed to ensure that requirements are met. Policies and procedures are clear and concise and work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been three complaints made to Ofsted.

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.

Concerns were raised 16th August 2007 which related to National Standard 2: Organisation regarding numbers of children on the premises, ratios and staff deployment and National Standard 13: Child protection. An unannounced visit was carried out, as a result of the visit, Ofsted took no further action. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised 21st September 2006 regarding unvetted persons having access to children, staff to children ratios, nappy changing, cleanliness, inappropriate food and the complaints procedure. These concerns relate to National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 3: Care, learning and play, National Standard 8: Food and drink and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers.

In order to investigate these concerns a Childcare Inspector visited the provider unannounced. During the visit the inspector interviewed the provider, made observations and reviewed policies and procedures. As a result of the enquiries made and evidence gathered six actions were set; National Standard 1, to ensure persons having access to the children are suitable to do so. National Standard 3, to ensure staff meet children's individual needs and promote their welfare. National Standard 7, to ensure staff promote the children's good health through keeping the premises and equipment clean. National Standard 8, to ensure meals provided are properly prepared, nutritious and meets the children's individual needs. National Standard 12, to ensure there is an appropriate and efficient nappy changing procedure and to ensure appropriate and prompt action is taken on any concerns raised and a record of all complaints maintained. The provider was required to address these actions within a set timeframe. The actions response

was received and has been reviewed by a Childcare Inspector Team Manager who is satisfied that the actions response meets the National Standards. Ofsted can confirm the provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised 3rd November 2006 regarding staff to children ratios, staff suitability, hygiene, out of date food and inappropriately being served and behaviour management. These concerns relate to National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 7: Health, National Standard 8: Food and drink, National Standard 11: Behaviour and National Standard 13: Child protection.

In order to investigate these concerns, a Childcare Inspector visited the provider unannounced. During the visit the inspector interviewed the provider, made observations and reviewed policies and procedures. As a result of the enquiries made and evidence gathered, a Childcare Inspector Team Manager is satisfied appropriate policies and procedures are in place with regard to Suitable person, Organisation, Food and drink, Behaviour and Child protection. However, an action was set under National Standard 7: Health, to ensure the procedures for food safety and storage comply with the local environmental health department guidance and regulations. A further action was set under National Standard 4: Physical environment, to ensure the premises are clean and well maintained; this is with particular reference to the kitchen. The Provider is required to have addressed these actions within a set timeframe and Ofsted will monitor the Provider's response. Ofsted can confirm that the provider remains qualified for registration.

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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 rooms are monitored to maintain an adequate temperature
- improve staff's knowledge of child protection procedures with regard to an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff
- ensure staff are aware of the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality.

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):

- make better use of the learning opportunities to ensure staff question and challenge the children effectively

- review the recording of children's progress to show how the information gained from observations is used to move children's learning to the next step
- improve the daily routine and activities to encourage children to develop their imagination through role play and to see their name in print.

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