



Sandhills Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY314384
Inspection date	02 May 2006
Inspector	Rebecca Hadley
Setting Address	49 Swan Street, Alvechurch, Birmingham, West Midlands, B48 7RR
Telephone number	0121 445 1478
E-mail	
Registered person	Sandhills 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sandhills Day Nursery, an existing setting, opened under new ownership in 2005. It is one of a local chain consisting of two nurseries and one out of school club. It operates from seven rooms in converted premises in Alvechurch, a semi rural village on the outskirts of Birmingham. All children share access to an enclosed play area.

A maximum of 71 children under the age of 8 years may attend at any one time. There are currently 97 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. This

includes 19 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The nursery opens 5 days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07.30 to 18.00. Children attend from a wide catchment area. The setting supports children with special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 22 staff. There are 15 staff who hold an appropriate Early Years qualification with 4 members of staff working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene is positively promoted through well planned daily routines. Older children are beginning to understand the importance of self-care such as hand washing. They engage in discussions with staff concerning these hygiene routines and are provided with good encouragement and support. Children are comforted if they become unwell. They are well protected from infection through clear procedures. Good systems are in place to ensure that accidents and any medication required, are recorded and shared with parents. Most staff hold a valid first aid certificate to ensure children's welfare is maintained.

Children's physical development is well promoted. Babies are encouraged to climb, crawl, stretch, stand and walk with the aid of resources and staff support. Older children access outdoor play on a daily basis. Their physical skills are extended as staff expand on activities and join in with children's games.

Children are learning the importance of a healthy diet. Hot food is provided by outside caterers which meet their individual needs. Children enjoy meal times which are relaxed, social occasions. Children access drinks such as water and juice throughout the day which ensures that they do not become dehydrated. Parents wishes are respected, and effective procedures ensure that staff are aware of any dietary requirements and allergies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe as a result of the adult's good awareness of health and safety and the wide range of supporting policies and procedures. High priority is given to reducing the risk of accident or injury. Good attention is given to all aspects of safety inside and outside the setting, such as finger guards being fitted to all doors. There are good procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children. The children learn about safety within planned and unplanned play and learning activities. They are well protected through in-depth evacuation and fire safety procedures which are regularly practised and recorded.

High priority is given to ensure equipment is safety checked as it is used. Good organisation of space ensures that children can choose independently from activities, and move around freely and safely.

Children's welfare is well promoted and safeguarded because of clear and thorough child protection policies and procedures. Staff clearly understand known indicators of abuse and the procedures they should take in the event of a concern about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the good knowledge of child development held by the majority of staff. Most children are confident, well settled, happy and comfortable in their environment. Staff take time to find out what interests each child and what they can do. They build on this information to plan and provide a variety of activities and opportunities to help the children progress in all areas of learning. Positive interactions can be seen between children and adults in most areas. However, on occasions, there is a lack of enthusiasm and involvement from some staff, such as when children are playing in the sand tray, where some children's enjoyment can be hindered through the organisation of sleep time. Here children are told to be quiet to avoid disturbing others.

Babies and young children benefit from staffs implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Most children are beginning to develop independence and are interested and involved as they choose from a wide range of activities. Babies' expressions of wonder and delight can be seen as they explore jelly and cornflour, watch bubbles, and make sounds with musical instruments.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and how children learn and progress. Activities are planned to provide a broad and balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning enabling them to make progress through the stepping stones. Some evaluation and assessment is taking place but this is not always used to inform planning to meet children's individual learning needs.

Children have a positive attitude to learning. They are interested, and motivated to learn and try activities, often jumping up and down with excitement. They are becoming aware of their own needs and are forming good relationships with both adults and their peers. Children are becoming independent in all areas although they do not access the toileting facilities alone.

Children enjoy listening to stories and join in their favourite ones with excitement and vigour. They link sounds and letters and are easily able to name objects that begin with the letter of the week. For example T for tortoise and train. They see their names on placemats and displays around the room and are able to recognise and write over the letters of their own name and the names of their peers. Children are developing

good number and problem solving skills through a variety of activities which enables them to use numbers spontaneously in their play. However, these activities are not always extended to include simple calculations, which has the potential to hinder children's progress. They are able to name a variety of shapes including diamond and rectangle and compare differences such as big and little.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating new and familiar objects and often instigate these themselves. For example, they put their hands underneath a pink see-through folder to see what colour their hands turned. They easily recognise and name familiar objects from their environment, make rubbings of textures outside such as bark and bricks and look at them using a magnifying glass. Children use a wide range of equipment such as scissors, glue brushes, balls, bikes and climbing frames to develop their physical skills. They move confidently with control and co-ordination in a variety of ways including jumping, crawling and hopping. However, this is not always extended through social activities such as pouring their own drinks, which limits their ability to become independent and develop finer physical skills. Children's creative development is well promoted. They use their imagination in a variety of ways including dressing up and the role play area which is often transformed into different scenarios such as a hairdressers, train station and Chinese restaurant.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and are highly valued and respected as individuals. Children enjoy a good range of resources and activities which promote their understanding of the wider world.

Children's individual needs are identified and met very well. Children with special or additional needs are well supported. Very effective strategies are in place to identify and support children with specific needs. Other professionals are welcomed into the setting to work in partnership with parents and staff.

The children behave well as they understand clear and consistent guidelines and expectations of behaviour. They play harmoniously together and are learning to share and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Most staff are good role models and promote children's confidence and self-esteem through positive praise and encouragement. However, this is not always consistently applied throughout the setting which has the potential to lead to confusion for some children.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents speak highly about the quality of the provision, and the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff. Parents are actively encouraged to share their views through the setting's questionnaires. They receive information about their children's progress both through daily conversations with staff, a daily diary and parents evenings. They are provided with excellent information about the setting in a clear and comprehensive prospectus. The nursery provides good information to parents about the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. There are also notice boards and displays which highlight activities and themes to keep parents fully informed. The excellent partnership with parents ensures continuity between home

and nursery, so that children settle extremely well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery offers a warm and welcoming experience where children are happy and settled. Children's care is further enhanced by effective organisation and resources to support and extend their development and learning. Staff are well qualified and in the main, effectively deployed to ensure that children receive a high level of care and attention.

Comprehensive, detailed documentation is in place and regularly reviewed to ensure that requirements are met. However, children's well-being is potentially compromised as recording in the medication records and the daily diary does not always ensure that confidentiality is maintained. There is a detailed operational plan in place to ensure the smooth running of the setting.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Effective steps are taken to plan ahead, evaluate and improve the service offered. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable and well qualified. There is a policy of regular staff appraisals and ongoing training for staff to support children's development and learning.

Senior management and staff are enthusiastic and work very well together. They encourage training and offer support and advice at all times. They go into all of the rooms on a daily basis, know all of the children and their individual needs and are very supportive and encouraging to staff. They are totally committed to providing a high level of care and education for the children and are constantly looking at and implementing ways to move the setting forward. Overall, the needs of the children are met.

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.

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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 that all children are provided with appropriate activities and rest in order to meet their individual needs
- ensure that all staff are aware of and implement positive behaviour management strategies
- ensure that all documentation recorded on children is confidentially maintained.

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):

- further develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and the use of evaluation and assessment in order to ensure that all activities are fully extended to meet children's individual learning needs.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk