

Nanny Jo's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335573
Inspection date	14 March 2007
Inspector	Lynn Denise Smith
Setting Address	Elm Barns, 3 Frinton Road, Thorp-le-Soken, Essex, CO16 0JE
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Registered person	Elm Barns Ltd
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Nanny Jo's Day Nursery is privately owned and run by Elm Barns Ltd. It opened in 2006 and operates from converted barns. It is situated Thorpe-Le-Soken. A maximum of 56 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open 08:00 to 18:00 each weekday for 52 weeks of the year. All children share an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 83 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these 31 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 15 members of staff, 12 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery also employs support staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health needs are extremely well-met within this nursery as staff practice meticulously high standards of cleanliness and hygiene to ensure that children are healthy. Staff are proud of their exciting new nursery and take care to ensure that children are cared for in an extremely hygienic environment. Children develop a superb grasp of why practices such as washing their hands after using the toilet are essential; they articulate their understanding of germs and how these can be passed on when they enter into lively discussions with the staff on this subject.

Exceedingly clear procedures are in place to support children when they reach the appropriate stage of development to begin 'potty training'. The emphasis is very much on the individual child and staff work closely with the parents to ensure the child is ready for this new challenge before commencing.

Children who have accidents or incidents within the nursery are superbly comforted by caring and professional staff. Their injuries are dealt with by one of the many qualified first aiders who work at the setting each day. Clear and effective records are made of the accident and shared with parents. The accident record is also transferred to the computer system and mapped onto software. The software provides a regular spreadsheet showing how, where, when and whom was present when the accident happened. The health and safety officer reviews this information to check whether there are any areas of the nursery causing recurring problems. Children who fall unwell within the setting take a rest on one of the comfortable beds or on a member of staff's lap. Their parents are contacted and staff follow the parents wishes regarding their child's well-being. If medication is to be administered staff consult the children's written medical details for permission to administer it and make a clear record of what and when it has been given.

Children's dietary needs are exceptionally well-met as the nursery thoroughly encourages children to follow a healthy, well-balanced diet. Children have excellent opportunities to share all meals with their friends, breakfast, mid session snack, lunch and a cooked tea. Every meal is cooked and prepared using fresh, wholesome ingredients. The cooking is done on site in a well-organised and meticulously clean kitchen. Daily menus are displayed in every room enabling parents to see what their child will be having throughout the day and also as a reminder for staff to inform the children about their meals. Children sit together at snack and mealtimes and share quiet conversation, they participate in setting the table and helping to cut and prepare fruit at snack time. They develop independence by choosing and pouring their own drinks. Fresh drinking water is available at all times for children throughout the nursery. Children who have allergies or special dietary requirements have their needs expertly met. Staff are alerted to the fact that they have a special diet through the specific colour of their handmade, laminated place mat, which discretely details the relevant information on the back. This ensures that new staff or students working in the room are made fully aware of every child's needs.

Children enthusiastically experience fresh air on a daily basis when they freely use the large and well-equipped nursery garden. They are encouraged to participate in free flow play throughout their nursery day, making clear decisions about whether they play and learn indoors or outdoors. Children also go for walks in the local area and explore their surroundings when they go to the shops or for local walks.

Children's opportunities to explore physical play are exciting, stimulating and imaginative. They develop a good understanding of spatial awareness as they move out of each other's way when running and riding bikes. Children enjoy being challenged as they experiment on the large climbing frame and run up and down the grassed mound at the far end of the garden. They are superbly supported by staff who are on hand to assist them. They develop excellent physical skills as staff are continuously playing with them, encouraging them to throw with balls and beanbags, catch balls, kick balls, roll hoops and shovel sand and stones into buckets. An enormous sand pit enables children to dig with an excellent selection of different sized and shape shovels and to build super sand castles with the help of their adult friends. When older children wish to play in a physical way indoors, they are encouraged to make use of the 'movement area' within the pre-school room. The area is sectioned off from the rest of the room by room dividers and equipped with an exciting selection of tunnels, tents and soft flooring. Children are able to enthusiastically express themselves in a safe and contained area, for example when they are acting out favourite stories or wish to practise 'rolly-poly's'. Children develop excellent fine motor skills such as drawing and cutting as they freely access a superb selection of resources from the range available to them. They use tools effectively, both indoors and outdoors. They proficiently use scissors, water play equipment, cutters, dough rollers, puzzles and an extensive range of different sized paintbrushes. Children place the small world figures and furniture in appropriate places in the dolls house and complete quite intricate puzzles.

Staff superbly meet the needs of younger children enabling them to become a healthy child as they demonstrate a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They ensure that children's emotional well-being is extremely well-met, by providing them with a safe and stable environment. They sit in comfortable chairs to bottle feed them and make excellent eye contact with young babies, chatting to them and reassuring them at all times. Staff who work with the babies decide what consistency their food needs to be offered to them by pureeing the prepared foods in a food blender or mashing it until it provides them with just the right amount of challenge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children and parents enter this newly converted nursery through one main door. They initially enter a small foyer and wait for a member of staff to recognise them and allow them entry through the security doors into the indoor courtyard. Through the second set of doors children enter a magical area with a large fibre glass tree in the centre. The tree is regularly decorated to reflect the changing seasons, for example, at present it is covered in pretty pink blossom to represent Springtime. The perimeter of the tree base has been planted with flowers and bulbs for springtime. A range of soft toy animals live in and around the tree, such as, squirrels and various birds. Playing in the background to this area is calm and relaxing music, which is regularly changed, but usually comprises of bird song, waves, panpipes and gentle music from other countries. A safe water feature allows a trickle of water to flow down a rock face attached to the wall. To the left of this area is a discovery cottage, a small room made into the outside of a cottage, containing sensory lights and equipment, a variety of objects with different smells and a good range of items to feel and explore. All of the nursery rooms lead from the main indoor courtyard area.

Children are grouped according to their age and stage of ability. There is a room for babies, one to two-year-olds, two to three-year-olds, and three to five-year-olds. All of the rooms are bright and attractive and are beautifully decorated with exciting pictures and collages that the

children have made on the walls. Children who are cared for in the baby room and one to two-year-old room, freely access an undercover outdoor area directly from their rooms. They make good use of this area throughout the year and can even use it when the darker evenings draw in as lighting has been fitted to enable this to happen. Children who are cared for in the older two rooms freely access the large and well-equipped garden. All children can use either area and staff are currently in the process of developing a third garden which is accessed through the library/resources room.

Children safely access an extensive range of fun and exciting toys and resources. All of which are presented at the children's height in well organised, clear storage containers. Children play with clean and well-maintained resources as staff follow stringent cleaning routines and record when the toys and equipment have been washed. The range of equipment is regularly alternated around the nursery and with the resources in the library to provide children with exciting and stimulating experiences.

Children are extremely safe within this nursery as staff follow the setting's clear and effective written procedures on keeping the environment safe and free from hazards. Highly effective procedures are in place for monitoring visitors to the premises and staff are able to refuse entry past the first set of doors, if the person is not known to them. Staff are easily identifiable as they wear colour coded uniforms which show whether they are management, room leaders, nursery assistants or students. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as they follow the staff's clear directions and enter into lively discussions about safety, for example, when they are encouraged to take their very active game into the 'movement area' as it is soft and safe.

Children are superbly protected from potential harm as staff demonstrate a sound understanding of child protection issues and how to identify causes for concern. The setting is proactive in seeking training for staff and they are all aware of the nursery's written procedures.

Younger children are kept exceptionally safe within this setting as staff consider their individual stage of development when planning and presenting the environment. For example, much of the flooring in the two younger children's rooms is soft and comfortable carpet. They have an excellent range of cushions and soft play equipment to roll around on. Clear and effective procedures for checking sleeping children is in place; they are physically checked every ten minutes and a record is made of their sleeping patterns for the nursery and to share with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children throughout the nursery are extremely actively involved in a wide and exciting range of activities. The nursery provides children with the opportunity to play, learn and develop at their own pace and by making their own choices about their day.

Children aged under three years are superbly supported as staff are developing an effective and sound understanding of young children's needs. They have a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and work closely with the Early Years Childcare and Development Partnership mentors.

Babies who are cared for at this setting receive excellent individual attention from the staff working with them. They roll and crawl around the comfortable floor of the playroom accessing the exciting range of toys and play equipment available to them. They admire themselves in

the low-level safety mirrors and enjoy a game of 'pee-bo' with a member of staff. Baby's coos and vocalisation sounds are expertly responded to by staff answering enthusiastically to their sounds and encouraging them to enter into a conversational pattern of exchange. Babies have superb opportunities to experience fresh air and outdoor play on a daily basis when they utilise the undercover outdoor area.

Children of all ages participate in an exciting range of messy and creative activities. They paint, play with 'gloop' and have regular water play. The onus within the provision is for children to explore a wide range of sensory experiences with little or no emphasis on them creating an end product. This enables them to learn at their own pace and through their own experiences.

Young children throughout the nursery express themselves superbly when they access the interesting selection of role play and imaginative play resources. They dress up in a range of size and age appropriate costumes, play with the selection of plastic play foods and care for the 'babies' within the home corner area. They also have excellent opportunities to explore natural items when they are provided with an exciting range of natural and household objects.

Children's all round development is being superbly extended through the close and caring adult to child interaction. Staff are extremely attentive to the children's needs and follow their individual routines in all aspects of the nursery day. Children are encouraged to bring and care for their own comforters from home and to have them whenever they feel they need them.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

Staff demonstrate an exceptional understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Two room leaders share the responsibility of managing the staff within the pre-school room and ensure that they are knowledgeable of the Foundation Stage. They take their guidance from the document 'The Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and work closely with professionals from the Early years Childcare and Development Partnership.

Extremely well-organised and effective planning is in place which covers, long, medium and short term planning. Their planning covers all six areas of learning and all staff work professionally together to produce the medium and short term plans. Some adult-led activities are planned each day, however the majority of the children's learning takes place through their own exploratory nature and the well-presented resources and activities within the room.

The superb use of time and resources within this room enables children to learn at a calm, gentle and relaxed pace. They have ample time to freely explore their environment and make excellent choices about whether they play indoors or outdoors. Excellent presentation of the outdoor area enables children to learn and develop equally well whether they are playing indoors or in the garden.

Excellent adult to child ratios enable the sessions to flow smoothly and provides superb support for the children. The calm and relaxed atmosphere and confidence of the staff provides children with outstanding opportunities to learn in a well-organised and productive environment. Children are very well-behaved and flourish as staff consistently and confidently manage their behaviour by providing a vibrant and stimulating learning space for them to explore.

Children's progress is very effectively observed and their achievements recorded as the nursery has developed an excellent key worker system. The key workers collate observations made

throughout the week by all of the staff working in the room and map their progress on the stepping stones stepped document. Their progress files are always available for parents to view.

Children's individual pace of development is very well-recognised by staff who provide a programme of activities which ensures that every child in the room is fully included. They use clear and effective means of differentiating for the more and less able children and expertly adapt activities to meet each child's needs.

Children are keen and motivated to learn. They regularly sit for prolonged periods of time concentrating on specific activities, for example, when they sit quietly and listen to a succession of stories read to them by the library worker who visits their room. They are independent young people who clearly enjoy governing their own play and learning. Their independence is superbly encouraged by staff providing them with the tools and means to become independent. For example, at snack time they take it in turns to cut the whole fruit into smaller manageable pieces for their friends. They pour their own drinks from appropriate sized jugs and hand out the plates and cups to the rest of the children.

Children are extremely confident and competent speakers. They articulate their feelings in an exciting and expressive way. Their excitement is fully supported and extended by staff who encourage them to continue with their story, for example, when a conversation develops about a child's parents' castle and the nice dragon that lives there. Staff enthusiastically provide the opportunities for children to join in with group conversations and extend their vocabulary through the introduction of new words. Children have superb opportunities to make marks using a range of materials, for example, they have clip boards which they can carry around with them, they use large pieces of chalk in the garden to draw large scale pictures and words and they are encouraged to write their own names on their work. Children are confidently developing their understanding of linking sounds to letters through everyday play and conversations with staff.

Children's mathematical development is superbly extended through the exciting range of equipment available to them and through the colourful clear visual resources which reflect numerals. Children prolifically count up to ten and over, they are using simple calculation in everyday activities such as snack time when they calculate that five and six plates will make the 11 that they need. They are learning about opposites when they consider a range of items in the display cabinet, such as, a big and small bear, and open and closed book and a tall and short tower of bricks. The bikes and trikes are numbered with a corresponding number displayed on the garden fence so that children can park their bikes in the correct space.

Children are developing a superb grasp of their knowledge and understanding of the world through the exciting selection of exploratory activities and resources. They participate in regular science activities, such as, floating and sinking and considering which container of water will make the ice melt quickest, the warm or the cold water. They have fun cooking and using a range of recipes. They enthusiastically set a timer to tell them when their buns and cakes will be done, then go off to the kitchen to collect them. Children understand about planting and growing as they actively grow a range of seeds and bulbs. They excitedly learn how to care for the nursery pets and take their binoculars into the garden to spot birds. Children build with a range of construction materials, such as plastic and wooden building bricks and cardboard boxes. They have daily use of a computer which is equipped with an exciting range of age appropriate software. Children's construction experiences are extended to the garden whereby they are provided with an excellent selection of real construction materials such as goggles, spades, hard hats, wheelbarrows and stones to transfer from one area to another.

Children have excellent fun expressing themselves through role and imaginative play. They have an exciting selection of dressing-up clothes, imaginative play resources and equipment. The home corner is based on two levels and children make clear choices about how they want the area to be organised and what items they wish to place in there. Children sing and dance, they enjoy a range of different music and learn different ways to move to the music. Children have superb opportunities to develop their creative nature, as they are provided with an exciting and stimulating range of creative play materials to choose from.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well-settled at this nursery. They enter confidently and leave their parent or carers with ease. They are valued and made to feel like a very active member of the 'nursery family'. They develop a secure sense of belonging as they identify their own space, for example, their coat pegs are clearly labelled with their names and their photographs. They have a small shelf on top of their coat peg to place comforters or items from home.

Children's individual needs are superbly acknowledged by staff who spend valuable time getting to know the children and their family prior to the child commencing at the nursery. Clear written information about each child's needs are shared with staff through their personal details form and through their child profile. Staff use the information shared to inform their practice and ensure that they provide children with an individual approach. Children's well-being and happiness is at the forefront of this nursery's practices and staff are committed to ensuring all children receive exceedingly high standards of individual care and attention.

Children enthusiastically learn about other people's cultures and religious special occasions when they celebrate an extensive range of festivals. They have recently celebrated Chinese New Year and talked excitedly about what they had learnt and pointed out the display on the wall. Children have daily access to a selection of posters, dolls, books and toys which reflect positive images of diversity and people's differing backgrounds.

Children who require additional help are superbly supported by caring and competent staff. They are fully integrated into nursery life and enjoy experiencing the exciting range of toys and activities on offer throughout the nursery. Staff work closely with the parents of any children requiring additional help and liaise effectively with outside agencies to provide the best care for each child.

Children's behaviour is expertly managed by confident and consistent staff. Children are busy and active throughout their day. Children behave well and enjoy each other's company. Staff act as exemplary role models, talking calmly and quietly towards each other and respectfully towards the children.

Children's well-being is extremely well-promoted as the staff and parents have developed a close working relationship. They share important information about the children's needs, likes and dislikes and effective ongoing verbal communication ensures that staff are kept up to date with any changes in the children's lives. Younger children's parents also have the opportunity to communicate through a 'to and fro' book which allows staff to write clearly about the children's daily routines and what they have been doing. Parents are encouraged to provide information about what kind of night the children have had and what they have been doing at home.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding.

Parents are encouraged to play an extremely active role in their children's education and in the general running of the nursery. They freely access their children's developmental records which are stored in neat files, just inside the pre-school room. A well-presented and effective parent's comments sheet enables them to share their views on their children's learning and any milestones they achieve at home. Clear written information is displayed around the nursery, informing parents about the Foundation Stage and how their children are learning through their fun, exciting play.

Parents are invited to share their children's progress during open evenings or whenever they wish to visit and talk with their children's key worker. Staff record on a whiteboard at the end of each day, what the children have been doing during that session and what they have learnt from their experiences.

Clear effective newsletters inform parents about the coming themes and topics which will be covered in the pre-school room and across the whole nursery. Parents are enthusiastically encouraged to play an active role in the topics by sending their children to nursery with items that relate to the theme. During the children's settling in period, parents are introduced to the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. They are encouraged to explore some of the activities available to their children and to spend time with the staff in this room discussing their children's nursery education. Parents are also invited to attend some of the in-house training events which take place, for example, on behaviour management.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are independent and caring towards each other. They enjoy the company of their friends and are very comfortable in the care of the adults within the nursery. They develop a sound understanding about other people's needs through general discussion and through the themes and topics covered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for by a stable and committed team of adults who work extremely effectively together. Exceptionally robust procedures are in place to ensure that the right staff are employed for the setting. The recruitment process includes applicants spending some time working in the nursery with the children, the request for character references and a number of other checks to enable the owner's to determine their suitability to work with children. A good calibre of qualified staff have been employed and some other staff are currently working towards a qualification. The substantial mix of mature, experienced staff and those who have more recently gained their qualifications enables the team to be well-balanced and provides opportunities for all staff to learn from each other's experiences.

Staff are actively encouraged to pursue training and areas of interest. Staff who undertake training are well-supported by the setting and provided with time to attend the course and study. In-house training and information sessions are organised within the nursery enabling a larger proportion of staff to attend.

Children are cared for in small groups with a key person responsible for their individual well-being. The key person system works well, enabling staff to observe the children in their

group and providing a stable member of staff for parents to approach. Children throughout the nursery are superbly supported and receive extensive adult interaction as the nursery consistently works to a higher adult to child ratio than required.

Organisation within this provision is of an exemplary standard. Staff are extremely aware of their roles and responsibilities and communicate effectively to ensure the smooth running of each room. Staff working within a specific room very much 'own the room'. They play an extremely active role in organising the environment effectively and determining the routine within each room.

The operational plan, written policies and procedures and records are maintained to a meticulously high standard. Staff clearly understand the nursery's policies and follow them consistently. Records and documentation thoroughly supports the children's care and well-being and are always available for parents to view.

Leadership and management is outstanding.

The owners high expectations and vision for this nursery have been in place since they began planning the venture. Their hopes and expectations have been superbly met and exceeded in their first six months of operation. The management and staff work extremely well together, each playing a very active and responsible role within the setting. The ethos of the nursery; 'to enable children to develop at an individual pace' shines out with every age group as staff are dynamic and inspiring. Their motivation and forward thinking attitude is superbly supported and encouraged by the owners and managers which in turn enables them to feel valued and important.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all practices and procedures within the nursery is undertaken by all staff and management. They constantly review what has happened each day and consider whether there are ways in which any aspect of nursery life can be improved or made more effective.

Staff's professional and personal development is paramount to the owners of this setting. They encourage all staff to pursue their interests within their everyday work at the nursery. Their professional development is discussed during the annual appraisal system and they have excellent opportunities to tell the owners and managers if they feel there is an area of training which would benefit them.

The owners and staff have clear and exciting plans for the future which include developing a small garden which leads from the library room and pursuing their interest in developing a small farm/market garden to the rear of the nursery. Children will play an active role in caring for the animals within the farm and growing the fruit and vegetables in the market garden.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

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

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

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