

Day Nurseries

This Development Control Policy note was considered and accepted by the Planning and Development Committee at its meeting held on 14th June 1990, and forms the formal policy of Mansfield District Council with respect to Day Nurseries. Every application submitted will be considered within the context of the adopted policies and guidance, and the relevant merits of each proposal.

Amended February 1995

Development Control Guidelines - Day Nurseries

Introduction

This policy document is one of a series produced by the Development Control Service of Mansfield District Council. There is expected to be an increased interest in the provision of day nurseries in the District. Women are increasingly returning to the workforce to further their careers while bringing up their families. Equal opportunities policies reinforce this trend. While some larger employers provide nursery facilities, and Social Services run a limited number of places for children at risk or in particular need, for the majority of the working population, private day nursery provision is the only available option.

There is expected to be a significant increase in the number of enquiries about and applications for use of dwellings as day nurseries. In anticipation of many more planning applications, some planning guidelines are set out below to enable rational decision making under approved planning policies. The provision of day nurseries is beneficial in that more skilled and experienced personnel are available to the local workforce. However, the provision of these facilities must not be at the expense of residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The policies set out therefore aim to safeguard such amenity. In the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), day nurseries fall within Class D1 - Non-residential Institutions. This class includes a wide variety of uses with potentially different impacts on their surroundings:- medical or health services, schools, day centres, museum/art galleries, public libraries and places of religious worship or instruction.

Social Services Requirements

The Social Services Department of Nottinghamshire County Council issue standards relating to day nurseries, play groups, crèches, child minders and supervised activities and should work to those standards. All the facilities listed above require registration under the Children Act 1989. Application for registration is made to:

Nottinghamshire County Council - Social Services Department

Under 8's Unit The Lindens, 379 Woodborough Road, Nottingham, NG3 5QX

Planning Considerations

Planning permission may not be required in all cases, for example if one room of a house is used for a few hours per week for child minding for a small number of children. Most day nursery proposals, however, would require permission and would be likely to alter the character of the dwelling and produce an impact on the locality. In all cases, contact the Development Control Service to ascertain whether planning permission is required.

The factors which would be likely to cause harm to residential amenity would be noise and disturbance from children playing in groups larger than a normal family; and noise, disturbance and congestion from traffic visiting the premises. Most applications are likely to be within residential areas.

The following guidelines are intended for use within those areas:

In order for a dwelling to be suitable for use as a day nursery, the property must be detached to preclude the transference of noise through any party wall. The property should be large enough to accommodate any required extensions, for example for extra toilets, without adversely affecting the amenity of any adjacent dwelling.

There must also be a sufficiently large garden area to accommodate outdoor play without undue disturbance to neighbours. A minimum usable garden area of 150 sq.m. is desirable to give a degree of open space and is also likely to be a useful indicator as to the type of premises suitable having regard to the likely proximity of neighbouring dwellings. The garden should normally provide at least 10 sq.m. of outdoor play space per child.

The garden should be suitably enclosed to contain activity and noise. Boundary treatments should be a minimum of 1.8 metres in height.

Means of access to a site and parking provision are also important considerations about both residential amenity and highway safety. Vehicle movements would not take place at specified times but would tend to be spread over longer periods as day nursery users tend to arrange their arrival and departure times to suit their own needs. Cul-de-sac locations are unlikely to be acceptable because of congestion and disturbance from vehicles manoeuvring. Suitable off street parking facilities will also normally be required to accommodate visitor parking. They should be sensitively designed so as not to detrimentally affect the appearance of the site. For example, the removal of walls and/or trees could be visually detrimental. In every case a staff car parking facility of one space for each full time member of staff should be provided. The requirement for parents parking will normally be one space per six children. This may be relaxed depending on the nature of the adjoining roads. However, for premises fronting classified and other busy roads full provision with independent turning facilities clear of the highway will normally be required. One secure (loop type) cycle parking stand should also be provided for every 10 car parking spaces.

It may be necessary in certain instances to limit the number of children by the use of a planning condition. The number of children to be accommodated will be influenced

by the size of the dwelling and garden. Parking requirements and the proximity of neighbouring dwellings will also be taken into account in determining the maximum permitted number of children.

Within residential areas, the upper floors of day nurseries should continue in residential use so that outside the working day the property is indistinguishable from its neighbours. A condition limiting the hours of operation of the day nursery may also be proper. Concentrations of day nurseries could also change the character of a residential area, and this will also be a consideration in dealing with planning applications.

The guidelines set out in this report are summarised below:

1. The property should be detached.
2. The property should have an enclosed garden which should provide at least 10sq.m per child, and be a minimum size of 150 sq.m. in area.
3. The number of children may be limited by planning condition.
4. Generally the site should not gain access from a cul-de-sac unless visitor parking includes a turning facility to the satisfaction of the highway authority.
5. Off-street parking space should be provided in a way which does not adversely affect the residential appearance of the dwelling. One space per staff member and one space per six children will normally be required. One cycle parking stand per 10 car parking spaces should be provided. A turning facility will be required for premises fronting classified and other busy roads.
6. Conditions may be imposed to control the hours of operation, residential occupation of the upper floors and removal of rights conferred by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), to carry out other uses within Class D1.

If you need further advice or guidance about this policy contact Development Control:

Contact

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