



Little Lodge Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205126
Inspection date	14 July 2006
Inspector	Saida Cummings
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Registered person	Jane Jones
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?

Little Lodge Nursery is a privately owned nursery which opened in 1989. The setting operates from specific nursery premises, situated on the outskirts of Worcester city. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open to children from a wide catchment area. A maximum of 34 children may attend at any one time. Children from the age of two to eight years of age attend the setting. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 17:30 for 48 weeks per year.

There are currently 72 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 32 children receive funding for early education. The setting offers support to children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority, and representatives from the nursery attend local early years partnership and providers' forum meetings.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to develop self-care skills during daily hygiene routines, including washing their hands after toileting and before meals. Younger children are supervised by staff and older children are able to independently visit the toilets with staff over-seeing them. They are gently reminded to wash their hands and discussions are held concerning the reason for hygiene. Posters situated at children's levels in the toilet area also remind them to wash their hands. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with any accidents, administering medication if requested, and initially gathering information from parents and carers concerning individual children's health needs. The risk of infection to children is reduced as parents and carers are made aware of the guidelines followed and children are not cared for if they have an infectious illness. Children are building up their independence through daily routines, such as putting on their own sunhats and helping to apply their own sun cream. Younger children's routines are adhered to whenever possible. They have opportunities for resting after lunch or taking part in quieter activities.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a varied and interesting diet. They bring their own packed lunches and are provided with healthy snacks and drinks for the remainder of the day. Children enjoy well-organised snack and mealtimes where they sit in appropriate groups and use these opportunities to build on their socialising skills. They independently dish up their packed lunches onto plates and eagerly join in with discussions about the types of food they eat and what their preferences are. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy living through the various projects they take part in. For example, when they are helping to plant courgette plants they discuss how eating vegetables and fruit makes them healthy and help them to grow.

Children are learning to gain control of their bodies and move confidently around the nursery. They take part in planned indoor physical activities to help use different parts of their bodies. Children enjoy daily early morning exercise when they take part in the 'brain gym' sessions. They enthusiastically take part in this fun physical session and follow instructions to move their bodies. For example, they wiggle, stretch, clap, stamp, jump, kneel and stand still. Children also have opportunities to take part in dance and movement sessions during group activities, such as when using the musical instruments and marching to their 'marching song'. Children are developing a sense of space during planned and spontaneous activities. They are able to find their own space during the 'brain gym' sessions for being able to carry out some of the exercises, such as when doing the 'star jumps'.

Children have opportunities to exercise and develop their physical skills on a regular basis as outdoor play is timetabled into each session. They confidently use various outdoor play equipment to help them balance, slide, rock and swing. They are challenged when using the range of outdoor apparatus as there are different types which are suitable for the different

age groups. The younger children have opportunities to join in with all the physical activities as these are adapted appropriately depending on their stages of development and abilities. An example of this is when they are attempting to throw small beanbags into hula-hoops, they are able to stand closer to the hula-hoops to make sure they are able to reach.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Staff follow appropriate procedures for completing risk assessments to ensure hazards to children are minimised. The premises are made safe by use of age-appropriate safety equipment, such as safety gates, electrical socket covers and outdoor safety flooring. Children are made aware of the emergency evacuation procedure which is regularly practised. A specific staff member takes responsibility for safety to ensure all procedures are regularly reviewed and implemented.

Children have access to safe, clean and age-appropriate play equipment and resources. Staff follow appropriate procedures to ensure all equipment is regularly cleaned and checked for safety. School-aged children are safely transported to and from local schools using age-appropriate seats and harnesses. Children are constantly supervised and taught safety as part of their everyday activities. This includes discussions concerning safety rules, such as not walking with scissors in their hands, and how many children are allowed at the sand and water activities at any one time. Children are also made aware of safety as part of specific projects and topics. The current topic is 'safety and people who help us', and children take part in various activities to help them understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, they enthusiastically join in with discussions during the morning register about road safety and then move on to carry out activities which also include making road safety posters. They use their hand print for 'stop', colour and glue pictures of eyes and ears for 'look' and 'listen'.

Children are kept safe and protected from harm as staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and procedures. Some of the staff have completed appropriate child protection training and others are made aware through the in-house training. The manager is aware of the local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines, and the procedures to follow should there be any concerns. However, the child protection policy does not clearly reflect the latest local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. Consequently, staff, parents and carers are not made fully aware of the exact procedures, which potentially compromises children's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. They separate happily from their parents and carers and are warmly greeted by the staff. They are confident and are building up their self-esteem. Children benefit from the way the resources and equipment are organised, which helps them to gain relevant experiences and to develop their independence. They are able to self-select from a wide variety of age-appropriate play equipment and resources which enables them to instigate their own play and use the toys and materials to engage in

meaningful play. Staff set up the toys and materials depending on the ages of the children and to support any topical work, such as supplying appropriate materials for making fire engines as part of the safety topic. Children socialise well, are busy and engage in purposeful activities throughout most of the sessions. They are given time to concentrate and complete their chosen tasks.

Young children have opportunities to socialise with older children as staff plan activities that enable all the children to be involved. Staff are starting to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to specifically plan for this age group to ensure they have many opportunities to develop and build on their knowledge and skills. Planned activities are adapted accordingly depending on children's abilities and stages of development. Young children have opportunities to develop their speech and listening skills through various activities, such as listening to taped sounds and stories. They also have many opportunities to be creative and to use their imagination. For example, the painting resources are available throughout each session and they are able to use various painting methods to create colourful pictures. School-aged children are given opportunities to choose all the activities they want to take part in whilst attending the out of school club. Staff hold discussions with the school-aged children to find out their interests and try to incorporate these into the planned activities. They are also given time to relax and unwind when they first arrive back from school.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's personal, social and emotional development is well fostered because of staff's knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and progress. Children are confident and they talk to staff and other children with ease, and spontaneously play independently or in small groups. For example, they include other children during role-play, but also enjoy solitary play where they are engrossed in their chosen activity. Children are able to instigate some of their own play activities and also choose from the various planned activities set up by the adults. As a result, there is a balance between adult and child-led activities, and children make good links in their learning. An example of this is when they sit at the threading table, using colourful beads and cotton reels to thread onto long pieces of string whilst counting, sequencing and recognising colours. They then spontaneously extend this activity and instigate their own snake games by walking around pulling their creations behind them.

Communication, language and literacy are well developed. Children recognise familiar words and are good in their linking sounds to letters. Many can sound out the letters in their own name and familiar objects. For example, during the music sessions they use their musical instruments to sound out the syllables in their own names. Children enjoy stories and spontaneously use the book corner to look at books which interest them. They also enjoy joining in with story-time, often repeating the familiar 'punch lines' from their favourite and familiar stories. Children have opportunities for writing during specific planned activities and as part of their everyday play. Staff ensure various writing materials are made available at all times to encourage children to develop their writing skills.

Children's mathematical development is good. They have opportunities to use mathematics during planned activities and as part of their everyday routines, such as during mealtimes. An

example of this is when they sit to eat their lunch they spontaneously count the number of food items they have in their lunch boxes and name the shapes of their sandwiches, such as triangle and square shaped. Children also have opportunities for measuring and comparing during some of the planned activities. For example, they are able to use different receptacles to measure water and sand and compare measurements of different objects to each other using appropriate language, such as smaller, larger and wider.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Children have regular opportunities to investigate, explore and use their senses. They take part in several activities as part of the nursery's Eco-friendly scheme. They re-cycle their plastic, paper and tin and are helped to understand how this helps our environment through topical discussions. They also enjoy planting different plants, such as courgettes, and help to look after them, noting the evolving changes as they happen. Children have opportunities to use information and communication technology as part of their everyday play. They confidently use appropriate equipment such as play telephones, programmable toys and play tills. Children also take part in several planned activities to help them understand their own and other cultures and beliefs, such as celebrating Christmas, Eid and Diwali.

Children's physical development is good. They handle small equipment, such as scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes, with confidence. Some children show preference of which hand to use and are supported by appropriate equipment, such as left-handed scissors. Others who have not yet developed their preferences are also supported by the different equipment and materials available. They have opportunities to develop their hand-eye co-ordination during planned and spontaneous activities, such as cutting and sticking, crayoning, manipulating play dough and building construction equipment.

Creative development for children is good. Children are able to create their own paintings and drawings as they have many opportunities to freely draw and paint during each session. They are able to take part in art and craft activities and take pride in their creations which are colourfully displayed throughout the nursery. Children enthusiastically join in with various musical sessions, enjoying singing and using the musical instruments. They use their imagination during role-play and are able to link this to some of their experiences from home, such as 'cooking the tea' when using the home corner. They also enthusiastically take part in planned role-play activities which are linked to any topical work. For example, they use their home-made zebra crossing for acting out a road crossing scenario. Children take turns to be the lollipop lady or man, whilst the other children watch for the 'green flashing light' before crossing the zebra crossing whilst singing their zebra crossing song.

Overall, children make good progress in all areas of learning. They are curious and inquisitive and staff encourage them to think for themselves and to develop their skills. The effectiveness of curriculum planning and assessment for all funded children is good. Staff plan interesting activities which they adapt to meet children's individual needs and interests. Activities are also adapted as required to take children's spontaneous play into consideration. As a result, children are motivated and have the freedom to initiate their own learning. All children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. Staff use effective questioning and ensure they supervise the children without inhibiting their ideas and imagination. In this way, staff ensure children are progressing through the 'stepping stones'

towards the 'early learning goals'. However, children's involvement is sometimes hindered when very large group activities are organised. Staff are able to set up a safe environment to enable children to progress. They follow a daily timetable and children are familiar with the daily routines. Staff give children clear explanations and directions at the beginning of each session to ensure they are made aware of the planned and available activities. An example of this is when they discuss the focus activity which involves making a fire engine, encouraging children to discuss what role the fire service plays in 'our lives' and link this to the topical work of 'safety and people who help us'. Children's behaviour is managed very well as staff hold appropriate discussions to encourage them to play safely, think about their actions and to be kind to one another. As a result, children are generally well behaved which enables them to progress as there is a positive and calm learning environment. Adults consistently and positively interact with the children to encourage their interest, involvement and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are treated equally and have equal access to all resources and activities. They are encouraged to be involved and staff ensure all children are included. There is an effective equal opportunities policy in place which is implemented by all staff. They are aware to immediately address any discriminatory behaviour or remarks. There are effective procedures in place for caring for any children with disabilities or learning difficulties. Staff show an awareness of how to ensure children's individual specific needs are met. There is a good system for liaising with parents, carers and outside agencies which ensures any children with disabilities or learning difficulties are able to progress at their own pace and reach their full potential. There is also an effective procedure for working with any children who speak English as an additional language. Any children with a specific need are included in the life of the nursery as any specific activities are incorporated into the daily sessions and routines.

Children know each other well and form harmonious relationships. They hold meaningful discussion in small groups and include each other in spontaneous play. Children have access to a good range of resources to promote their awareness of diversity and take part in several planned activities to help them understand their own and other cultures and beliefs. Children know what is expected of them and are well behaved. They are able to follow adults' instruction and hold discussions concerning safety rules and behaviour. They share the toys and understand how to take turns, such as sharing the musical instruments and waiting for their turn to play during the music sessions. Staff are good role models for the children and encourage them to be polite, say 'please' and 'thank you'. Any behavioural issues are dealt with appropriately and sensitively. For example, when a lot of the children want to choose a bell during the music session and there is not enough to go round, staff explain that they will get the opportunity to use a bell as the instruments will be swapped around during the session. Children then happily choose another instrument and await their turn. Staff praise and encourage children's positive behaviour and ensure there is a consistent approach. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Staff establish a good relationship with parents and carers which contributes significantly to children's well-being in the nursery.

They are aware of the importance of involving parents and carers in the life of the nursery and their children's development. Staff initially seek information from parents and carers concerning their children's starting points and their stages of development. The provider and key worker visit children at their home prior to them commencing at the setting and fully discuss all of the child's needs. This includes the child's developmental stage and how independent they are, such as if they are able to dress and undress themselves, and if they are able to express themselves clearly and make their needs understood. As a result, staff are able to specifically plan activities to ensure individual children's care, health and developmental needs are met, and that they have opportunities to build on their basic skills. Children are able to meet the key staff at this stage and are made to feel at ease in their own home surroundings. They are also given the nursery teddy bear and invited to bring this with them when they first attend to help them feel more at ease about joining the nursery.

Parents and carers are provided with good quality information about the setting, which includes information about nursery education and how children work through the 'Foundation Stage' curriculum. Parents and carers are kept well informed of what their children do and their achievements through daily discussions and invitations to planned parents' and carers' evenings. Children benefit from this good communication system as parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in their children's progress and development by extending some of the activities into the home. For example, as part of the current topic children took home a safety work pack which included lots of ideas and practical activities for parents and carers to help their children with. The provider and staff have recently introduced a fun way to involve parents and carers by hosting a fun activity evening. Parents and carers were invited to take part in a typical nursery day including a gym session, painting, sticking, music and role-play. This event was evaluated with very positive feed-back and the provider intends to expand on this type of event to give parents and carers first-hand experience of what it is like for their child at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised environment and the premises are bright and welcoming. Their work is colourfully displayed throughout the nursery. The premises are organised to ensure children are cared for in child-friendly surroundings where they are able to choose activities they wish to take part in and make free choices throughout each session. The high level of adult to child ratios positively supports children's care, learning and play. The management and staff work together to ensure the organisation and procedures are regularly reviewed with improvements made as required. The service is regularly reviewed as parents' and carers' views and suggestions are taken on board and whenever possible changes are made to accommodate any requests.

Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures are in place which ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff are committed to improving their knowledge and understanding and enjoy attending various training events. Children benefit from staff's development as any new procedures or good practice are implemented into the care provided. Regular staff meetings are held to ensure all staff are made aware of all procedures and updated on any changes. Parents and carers are

supplied with good quality information about the organisation of the setting and how the children are cared for. They are kept fully informed of the nursery's events through regular newsletters and notices which include the nursery's policies, procedures and the planned activities.

Leadership and management for nursery education are good. The provider has clear aims for the setting and is committed to evolving and developing the provision. She is currently further developing the partnership with parents and carers and implementing different ways to involve them with their children's learning. The effectiveness of activity planning for all children is good. The written plans cover the main focus activities and link into the other free play activities made available during each session. Consideration is given to initial information given by parents and carers to ensure staff plan for children according to their development stages and particular interests. As a result, children are able to freely choose activities and to be challenged through activities linked to learning outcomes. The overall organisation of the planned activities also takes into consideration children's pattern of attendance, such as those who only attend for a small number of sessions per week and those who attend on a full-time basis. Consequently, this ensures all children receive a balanced curriculum and have opportunities to be involved in all the topics and projects. Although most children are able to take part in all the available activities their involvement is sometimes hindered when very large group activities are planned. For example, the story-time and music sessions involve all the nursery children which at times is too large a group for this to work effectively. Consequently, this compromises some of the children's learning and involvement at these particular times of the day. There are systems in place for observing, monitoring and recording children's progress and achievements which are discussed and shared with parents and carers. The effect the nursery programme has on children's progress is also evaluated. This is completed by staff assessing the impact on the children's progress and checking that the original aim and objective of particular activities are achieved. The provider and staff are committed to providing a high standard of care and education for each individual child.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to improve some of the documentation, such as the health and safety policy and the records concerning transporting children and the registration system.

The provider has reviewed all the policies and procedures and is currently reviewing them again to ensure they are in line with the latest legislation. The provider is aware of the requirement to report any serious injury or communicable diseases to Ofsted. This has been added to the health and safety policy to ensure all parents, carers and staff are made fully aware. All relevant documentation concerning transporting children is now in place which include vehicle and drivers' details. The registration system has been developed to include children's ages and arrival and departure times. Staff's attendances are also recorded within the registration system. This clearly shows that the required adult to child ratio is met at all times. As a result, these improvements ensure children's well-being and safety is not compromised.

Nursery Education:

There were no key issues at the last nursery education inspection, but the provider agreed to give consideration to improving the system for planning children's activities and to develop resources of advice and support for children with English as an additional language.

The provider and staff have reviewed the system for planning children's activities and now use specific planning forms. The staff are now able to plan main focus and related activities which are linked to the 'Foundation Stage' curriculum, with clear aims and objectives. Consequently, the provision of nursery education has improved as the planning of activities are linked to children's learning outcomes and ensure children receive a balanced early years curriculum.

Procedures are in place for working with any children who have English as an additional language. Staff would work closely with parents and carers and identify achievable goals to develop children's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The provider and staff are aware of local resources for seeking further advice and support for working with any children who have English as an additional language. They are pro-active and have also collated basic resources of various information on different religions, beliefs, customs and languages. As a result, staff would be able to support and assist any children with English as an additional language to ensure they are able to develop their language skills and progress at their own pace.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 01 April 2004 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 and carers, 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):

- review the child protection policy to ensure this is in line with the latest Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines, and make sure all parents, carers and staff are made aware of it.

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):

- review the organisation of the large group activities to ensure all children are purposefully engaged and are always able to take part.

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