



Little Oaks Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY245240

Inspection date 14 July 2005

Inspector Shirley Ann Jackson

Setting Address Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Gloucester,
Gloucestershire, GL1 3NN

Telephone number 08454 225095

E-mail

Registered person Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Oaks Day Nursery was established in 1991 and moved to the present premises in 2002. It is based on the site of the Gloucester Royal Hospital. The nursery operates from a single-storey building that was adapted to meet the needs of children. The premises include two baby rooms, a dining and play room, a pre-school room, areas for nappy changing, toileting, laundry and staff facilities. There are

separate, enclosed outdoor play areas for babies and older children. The nursery is for children of National Health Trust employees as well as other health care community workers, such as those from the Partnership Care Trust and the Ambulance Service.

There are currently 93 children from 6 months to under 5 years on roll. This includes 38 funded children. The nursery supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions as both permanent and flexible places are offered.

The nursery opens 5 days a week all the year round, except for some Bank Holidays. Sessions are from 07.00 until 18.00.

A total of 21 members of staff, both full time and part time, work with the children. Of these, 11 are qualified to at least Level 2 in childcare. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher and advisors from the Early Years Childcare Services.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children observe how staff help to prevent the spread of infection by cleaning the tables after meals. They begin to understand the importance of good hygiene through well-established routine, for example, hand washing. Children's health is supported as staff have clear procedures in place for dealing with accidents and administering medication. Children are able to sleep according to their individual needs. Staff carry out frequent checks on sleeping children, helping to safeguard them. However, nappy changing is done within the nursery routine and not according to the child's individual needs.

The children are offered regular, healthy snacks in adequate quantities for their needs. These follow children's dietary requirements and babies feeding routines are consistent with those followed at home. Parents provide the main meals so children enjoy their own, familiar food. Meals are stored appropriately and are properly prepared with temperature testing which contributes to children's good health.

Children have regular opportunities to play outside where they enjoy fresh air and physical activity. They learn balance and co-ordination as they climb on the fixed outdoor equipment. Children take part in activities which develop their hand-eye co-ordination, such as construction straws. Outdoor play is mostly recreational and children are supervised rather than actively involved in worthwhile activities. Older and more able children are not sufficiently challenged by the equipment and resources available.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained setting that has good safety and security precautions, such as a key pad entry system and adult-height door handles. This helps to ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access. Two fully enclosed garden areas are available for children to use, but these have limited resources and are unimaginatively used.

Children are well settled within their surroundings and older children can safely access some suitable resources. Indoors a satisfactory range of good quality, safe, developmentally appropriate resources are offered. Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they listen to regular reminders about being careful when climbing on the outdoor equipment.

Staff have risk assessments in place both indoors and outdoors. Staff have a clear understanding of possible risks to children's well being and this helps to protect them. Staff are trained in first aid and child protection and are aware of how to put the correct procedures into practice. They help to keep children safe through their understanding of health and safety requirements.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. Overall they take part in a satisfactory range of activities. Most children settle well and are keen to take part in the activities offered. Staff in the baby room are caring towards the children, particularly when feeding them, holding them close to foster security and well being. Babies benefit from routines that are consistent with their experiences at home, until they reach two years of age. However, many of the resources for the younger children are plastic and do not offer sensory and everyday experiences. Staff's knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop is limited.

Children between the ages of two and three are confident in their relationships with staff. They begin to play happily together and with adults enjoying using resources such as the parachute and story props. Musical activities include singing and creating rhythms that contribute to children's developing communication skills. Children do not have free access to a wide range of resources that enables them to begin to learn independently.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children do not make enough progress because staff have an insecure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Plans lack detail and do not sufficiently cover all aspects, leading to gaps in the children's learning and knowledge. Staff do not use the stepping stones to clearly identify children's achievements and plan the next step in their learning. The lack of evaluation of the provision means that staff are unable to recognise where they are successful and which areas require improvement. Staff do not adapt activities to enable children who have special needs or who speak English as an additional language to participate fully. Many activities lack challenge and stimulation for older and more able children.

Children are generally engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities and assume responsibility for personal care. Children are friendly and seek others out to share experiences. They listen to stories with increasing attention and recall and often choose books independently. Some children count and begin to use size language. However, they rarely attempt early writing or solve simple number problems in everyday activities.

Children gain some experiences that encourage them to show an interest in the world in which they live, such as looking at recycling. However, staff rarely follow up children's ideas to encourage them to explore and investigate the world around them. Staff provide few chances for children to know how to operate simple equipment. Children use their imagination in play, but staff miss opportunities to extend this. There are few chances for children to spontaneously create using different materials and to explore using their senses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well into the nursery with support from staff. Sufficient adult attention is given to the children due to the well-organised staffing ratios. Toddlers and pre-school children benefit from appropriate opportunities to mix to begin to develop socially. Children have good relationships with staff and with each other. Staff have consistent expectations of behaviour and children are well behaved and polite in response to this. Children's self esteem is promoted when staff praise their success, for example, the child who built her "home" with bricks was given a spontaneous round of applause. However, opportunities for older children to operate independently in the nursery are restricted by the nursery timetable and the lack of freely available resources.

Children begin to learn about the environment, for example, through a recent recycling topic. They begin to develop a sense of belonging as they each have an individual peg for their personal items. Staff provide some resources that help to raise children's awareness of diversity and the wider community. However, staff have not attempted to ensure that there are resources that positively represent the children who attend. Staff working with children who speak English as an additional language are unclear about children's backgrounds and how to help them to interact fully in the activities offered. The staff member with responsibility for special needs has little experience and training for this role. Consequently children are not well supported to fully participate in activities. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is not fostered.

Partnership with parents is inadequate. Parents are given a handbook which outlines the nursery's policies and procedures. However, there is little information on the Foundation Stage for the pre-school children. Staff lack the knowledge to share this information effectively with parents. Parents are not involved in their child's learning. Parents share basic information about routines with staff, but this is only done initially and is not ongoing. Parents are not involved in their child's assessments or development records.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery's documentation is well organised. All legally required records are well maintained and organised. Confidentiality is highly regarded concerning the personal details of children and adults. Policies and procedures are clearly written, but are not always implemented in practice.

All children receive satisfactory care, but pre-school children receive inadequate education. Children spend periods of time waiting, when they are not actively involved in anything. Staff lack of confidence and skill means that this time is wasted and is not productive. Time is spent putting out resources or organising activities and not directly working with the children. Throughout the nursery most activities are adult-led and children have few opportunities to initiate and develop their own ideas.

Leadership and management of the nursery is inadequate. Although most staff are appropriately qualified, the manager has not ensured that those who work with the children in receipt of funding have sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage to help all children achieve well. The lack of clear direction and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning means gaps in the children's learning goes unnoticed. Recording systems are not effectively used so staff have little useful information about children's achievements and are unsure about how to move children on to the next stage in their learning. This hinders children's learning. Overall, the needs of the range of the children attending are not being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection imposed an action requiring that the nursery ensure that any person who has not been vetted is not left alone with the children. The nursery management team now safeguards children as they have put procedures into place to prevent this happening again.

The previous care and nursery education inspections recommended that the nursery; improve the range of play opportunities for three-year-olds; ensure that three-year-olds have an appropriate range of activities that promote equality of opportunity; develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage three-year-olds behaviour; support children's personal, social and emotional development by using appropriate grouping of three-year-olds in adult-led activities; plan appropriate opportunities in communication, language and literacy for all children to share books with adults, one-to-one and in small groups.

There has been limited improvement in most of these areas. Children are not benefiting from access to a wide range of freely available resources and appropriate play opportunities. Those children with specific needs do not have equality of opportunity due to staff's lack of knowledge and understanding. Grouping of children is not always appropriate due to nursery routine so some activities are inappropriate for the ages of children taking part. Children now have more access to books and stories in small groups and one-to-one, but this may be incidental rather than

planned.

Children's behaviour is now managed consistently by all staff. One member of staff has attended training and this has been cascaded to the staff team.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

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 all children have opportunities to experience and explore a wide range of sensory and natural opportunities indoors and outdoors, particularly those under 2
- ensure staff working with children who have particular needs have the necessary knowledge to provide appropriate support.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- make sure individual children are successfully challenged and supported through effective use of assessment and planning that supports children in all areas of learning
- improve leadership and management to ensure the organisation, to include rooms, resources and grouping of children, supports their individual needs.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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