



## Westminster Lodge Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123595
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Maura Pigram
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<b>Registered person</b>	Leisure Connection Ltd.
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Crèche

## 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Westminster Lodge crèche is one of several crèches run by Leisure Connection Ltd. It opened in 1989 and operates from a purpose built building adjacent to Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre, St Albans in Hertfordshire. Only people using the leisure facilities are able to access the crèche.

There is one main playroom with a separate area for babies and an outdoor play area. A maximum of 16 children may attend the crèche at any one time. It operates from 09:15 to 12:30 on Monday and Tuesday; 09:45 to 15:30 on Wednesday and 09:15 to 14:15 on Thursday and Friday. It is open all year round except for bank holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year. Children are able to stay in the crèche for a maximum of two hours at one time.

There are currently 60 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. The crèche supports children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an

additional language. The crèche employs eight members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a clear understanding of good health and hygiene as they participate in daily routines to maintain this. The children are reminded to wash their hands following using the toilet or before having their snack. This means that they develop sound personal hygiene habits. Children have healthy and nutritious snacks because staff remind parents to supply snacks such as fruit or breadsticks. Consequently, energy levels are maintained and the children develop good eating habits. The snacks and drinks such as cartons of juice or prepared bottles of milk for younger children are provided by parents. Water is always available for the children to ensure they do not become dehydrated.

The children are protected from cross-infection because there is a clear policy in place regarding exclusion of children who have a contagious illness. Measures such as cleaning surfaces with anti-bacterial spray ensure children are further protected against cross-infection. Procedures are in place to assist staff to act in the children's best interest should they require medical attention. All required documentation is in place, including written parental consents. Parents are requested to leave details of their location within the sports centre. This procedure allows staff to act quickly if children become ill or if there is a medical emergency. Key staff have completed appropriate first aid training. This means that children's health, if they have an accident, is protected.

Children can rest and sleep according to their needs and the staff are careful to meet parental wishes regarding sleeping patterns and routines. As a result, children benefit from the continuity of care between the staff and the parents. Children are offered sufficient opportunities to develop their physical skills. Indoors, they use soft play blocks to climb on and enjoy using the dinosaur slide. Equipment and furniture is arranged so that children mastering crawling or walking skills are able to do so. Children use the garden in fine weather and make use of the equipment on offer such as the sand and water tray, the tunnel and slide. This means that children's physical development is appropriately fostered.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Indoor space is organised and effective action is taken to minimise any potential risks. This means that children can move around confidently and freely access resources. However, the toilets do not contain any heating therefore temperatures in all rooms are not maintained adequately. This means that children are potentially uncomfortable when visiting the toilets. Children's safety is effective. Parents and visitors can only gain entry when the secure door is opened by a member of staff. Visitors are requested to sign a visitors book and parents sign their children in and out of the premises. Children are protected from accidents through the suitable use of safety equipment such as

safety guards on the radiators. They practise the evacuation procedure so they know what to do in an emergency.

There is a suitable range of toys and equipment, which are in good condition and comply with safety standards. These are appropriate for the developmental needs of the children and are routinely checked to ensure they are in a clean and safe condition. This means that children can play with them safely. Children's safety and welfare is protected because the staff have a satisfactory knowledge of child protection procedures. There is a clear procedure in place to report any concerns.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the setting because they can freely and independently select suitable toys and equipment. Space and resources are organised so that they can readily access the low-level toys which attract their attention. Soft assorted blocks become trains or a house. The children delight in climbing on these. These are also used for seating, creating a cosy area for a spontaneous story of 'Peace at last' read with enthusiasm by a member of staff.

The staff consistently provide positive interaction with the children. They are involved with the children at all times to support their play, skilfully extending their language and understanding. The children in particular love taking part in the planned and spontaneous arts and crafts activities such as making snowmen and models of Father Christmas. Here, the children develop their small motor skills and coordination. Finished projects are proudly displayed on walls, windows and many hang attractively from the ceiling. Younger children enjoy the movement these models create. Older children delight in showing their parents their finished art work and talk enthusiastically about these. Consequently, they develop their confidence and self-esteem. Babies are very well cared for. They benefit from the presence of long serving and experienced staff members, who take a genuine interest in the children's happiness and development.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have their individual care needs met because the staff know them well. They ensure favourite toys are easily available for the children when they arrive in the crèche. This means that children are valued and respected as individuals. They are encouraged to make independent decisions about their play and personal needs. As a result of this, they develop a sense of belonging and their self-esteem is promoted. The crèche welcomes children with special educational needs and some staff are experienced in this area. Activities are adapted so that all children can participate. As a result, all children are fully involved and supported as necessary. Appropriate opportunities are taken to celebrate different festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Consequently, children develop an understanding of the differences in society. Children behave well because they know what is expected of them. Staff are calm and use positive interaction at all times. Simple explanations and suitable strategies such as using a different tone of voice or distractions are successfully used to manage any negative issues.

Arrangements to settle children into the crèche are discussed taking into account the needs of children and the requirements of parents and carers. Children are very well supported during this period so that they become confident and feel at ease in the environment. Parents and carers speak highly of the 'friendly and kind staff'. Questionnaires show many positive comments including 'my son loves it' and 'the staff are brilliant'. Parents of babies and younger children are supplied with an information sheet showing their children's activities whilst in the crèche, consequently there is a continuation of care between the staff and the children's parents. The routine is displayed along with a summary of policies and procedures. However, the complaints procedure has not been updated to show the regulators contact details. The manager is aware of the requirement to record any complaints made in writing by parents, although currently no process is in place. Subsequently, documentation that supports partnership with parents and carers is underdeveloped. As a result, potentially, parents and carers are not fully informed to enable all to work together to support the children's well-being.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within bright and welcoming rooms that have been specifically planned to enable them to initiate their own play. They achieve this by being able to access all resources in low-level storage. Staff are consistent and are interested in children's welfare and development. The manager always ensures staff ratios are maintained to positively support children's care, learning and play. Parents and carers can participate in their chosen activity or they can take an older child to swimming lessons. During this time younger siblings are cared for by friendly and caring staff.

Parents are given a brief welcome leaflet explaining the opening times and some procedures. A notice board showing the routine of the day along with some policies are displayed. This ensures they are informed about the care provided. Most of the policies and procedures are in place allowing for the successful running of the crèche. However, new management of the Leisure Centre has resulted in the crèche opening times and staffing resources being reduced. This means that children are potentially not able to fully enjoy all the benefits on offer as staff ratios need to be adhered to all times. The registered person communicates adequately with the manager to ensure the crèche continues to run effectively. For example, there is a sound recruitment and vetting procedure in place. All staff have obtained Criminal Records Bureau checks. Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the registered person and the manager agreed to: review the procedures for appointing and vetting staff; to have a named deputy; to update the policies and procedures; to ensure all the rooms are an adequate temperature and to ensure the children can access toys and resources.

Most of these issues have been addressed satisfactorily. A clear system is now in place for appointing and vetting staff. Criminal Records Bureau checks are always obtained and the manager ensures references are obtained to ensure suitable staff are recruited. A named deputy is now in place. The policies and procedures identified at the previous inspection, such as the

lost or uncollected child policy, are now in place. There is an appropriate procedure for the recording of accidents and appropriate forms are completed. Children now have access to all toys and resources. This means that there has been some improvement since the last inspection to benefit the children's care and welfare. However, the recommendation of ensuring all rooms have adequate heating has not been addressed and is carried forward from this inspection.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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**

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.

### **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 rooms used by children are maintained at an adequate temperature
- ensure awareness of revised regulations concerning complaints recording and include the address and telephone number of the regulator.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)