



## Ivy Cottage

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY330787
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 July 2006
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<b>Registered person</b>	Childcare and Learning (Pebbles) Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Ivy Cottage has been an established children's nursery in the area for many years, although it re-registered under its current management in 2006. It is now owned by the Childcare and Learning Group Ltd, who also operate several other nurseries within Surrey and the surrounding area. The nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 58 children aged from two to five years. The nursery operates from a large, detached house on the outskirts of Horley, Surrey. Children have access to

several group rooms, on both ground and first floor level. Toilets, hand washing and nappy change facilities are easily accessible. There is a large, fully enclosed outside play area, which is used all year round. The nursery serves the local area and is open throughout the year, Monday to Friday, from 07:00 to 19:00.

There are currently 85 children, aged from two to four years, on roll. Of these, 62 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of 11 staff work with the children. Of these, seven staff hold recognised early years qualifications. One staff member is currently undertaking training and three staff are due to commence training.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy many opportunities to play outside and benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise. They use a wide range of equipment and apparatus, enabling them to enjoy physical play and move in a variety of ways. For example, children develop their co-ordination and muscle control as they run and move around freely. They enjoy balancing on stepping stones and competently crawl through barrels and under obstacles. This encourages children's healthy development and enables them to enjoy vigorous activity. Children make full use of the garden and enjoy outside activities in all weather. Staff are attentive to ensuring their health needs are met well. For example, during the summer months children's health is promoted well as children clearly understand why they must wear sun hats and use sun cream. During wet weather, children dress appropriately in wet weather clothes and enjoy splashing in puddles. This enables children to learn how to take care of their own needs to ensure they stay healthy.

Most precautions are taken within the nursery to ensure children's good health. The premises are very clean and well-maintained. They offer a bright, clean and very well-ventilated environment. Staff ensure that all areas of the nursery are kept clean throughout the day to prevent the spread of infection. Children understand that they must wash their hands after toileting and before lunch. However, staff do not consistently remind children to wash their hands before snack time. This restricts children from learning good practice and to clearly understand the importance of always washing hands before handling food.

Children's dietary needs are met very well. The nursery menu has recently been reviewed. As a result of this, children now enjoy freshly-cooked, nutritious and well-balanced meals. Children enjoy their lunch times and benefit from the very relaxed and sociable environment. Staff sit and eat with children and this encourages children to develop positive attitudes towards meal times and healthy eating. Children enjoy ample portions and can access snacks and drinks freely and easily. This

enables children to have sufficient food and drinks, according to their needs.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children move around the nursery freely and safely. The rear garden is totally enclosed, enabling children to play outside safely. Staff are extremely vigilant in ensuring all children are closely supervised at all times, both inside and outside. The premises are fully secure and highly effective procedures are in place to enable staff to monitor visitors to the setting. The security arrangements are effective and allow staff to prevent unauthorised adults from gaining access to the nursery. Parents are also mindful in ensuring that unknown adults are not permitted into the nursery. This ensures that children's safety and security remains of paramount importance at all times.

Children play with an extensive selection of high quality toys and play materials. All storage areas are at children's level, enabling children to safely choose their own toys and develop their independence. Staff are vigilant in carrying out frequent checks and risk assessments to identify any potential hazards to children. This ensures that children always use resources which are safe and appropriate for their age and developmental ability.

Children consistently learn about the importance of safety as part of topic work and through discussions with staff. For example, children recently celebrated Safety Week and enjoyed a visit from the local fire service. This enables children to learn about fire safety and understand the importance of keeping themselves safe. Staff extend this by arranging a visit from the police to further endorse children's understanding of how to protect themselves from danger. Older children are extremely mindful and respectful of the needs of the younger children and help to maintain a safe environment. For example, children recognise when sand or water is spilt on the floor, this presents a hazard and children quickly help to make the area safe. Older children understand that during preparation for lunch, they must carry their cutlery carefully to prevent injuries and accidents. This helps children to understand the importance of recognising hazards and taking necessary precautions.

Children's welfare needs are promoted very well. All staff have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection and undertake relevant training. This ensures that they are fully aware of the appropriate procedures to follow, if they have any concerns about a child in their care and contributes fully towards safeguarding children.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and confident within the nursery. They benefit from the rich learning environment and form very close and loving relationships with staff. Children approach staff confidently and enjoy many cuddles and plenty of physical affection.

This creates a very homely, warm and loving environment. Children and staff happily engage in play together and staff are skilled in gently extending children's ideas and learning needs. Staff successfully use the Birth to three matters framework as a guide to planning activities for the younger children and monitoring their progress. Children develop very positive attitudes towards learning as they have many opportunities to explore and extend their own ideas through practical play experiences. For example, children learn about numbers and letters as they play with number and alphabet sand moulds during sand play.

## NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a stimulating range of rich, practical learning experiences for children. The nursery is effectively organised in learning 'zones' which capture children's imagination and creativity and stimulate their learning. Staff have successfully changed their curriculum planning format to focus on child-initiated learning. This enables all children to focus their own interests and develop and extend their own learning through chosen activities. Staff gently guide and extend children's learning and encourage children to build on their experiences. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is monitored closely as staff carry out regular observations, which are used effectively to inform planning records and identify further learning needs.

Children are very happy, confident and motivated to learn. They approach activities with interest and curiosity and show well-developed social skills as they play happily together. Older children are kind and respectful to the younger children. They help them in their play and are mindful of their differing needs. Children behave very well. They are polite and courteous to one another and clearly understand acceptable boundaries. Children develop very good skills in independence. They select their own resources and develop their own play ideas. Staff organise the learning environment extremely well to maximise the opportunities for children to be independent. For example, in the creative 'zone', children select and mix up their own paints, according to their own preferences.

Children have very well-developed language skills. They communicate confidently with all children and adults competently and clearly make their needs fully understood. Staff extend children's vocabulary well by engaging in conversation with children and encouraging children to use language to give reason and provide explanation. Children develop a clear love for books. There is a well-presented book corner and children also enjoy devising their own stories and making up their own characters. As part of Super Hero Day, children happily created a character called 'Manic Girl' and delighted in creating their own adventure. Children's writing skills are developing well. There is a very good range of resources available, enabling children to freely use pens and pencils and supporting materials such as hole punches, paper clips, rulers and a range of papers and notebooks. This encourages children to use writing for a purpose and enables them to develop mark making skills and pencil control.

Children develop their understanding of mathematical concepts as they enjoy many practical activities. They develop their understanding of volume and capacity, as they

happily play with sand and water. Children use a range of resources to explore mathematical concepts. For example, they use coloured pegs for making patterns and repeating sequences; they match and sort using a range of different materials and develop an understanding of the concept of time as they experiment with sand timers. There are some examples of numbers on display, including in the outside area. However, staff do not utilise all opportunities within the daily routine to encourage children to count and calculate and there are missed opportunities for children to see more examples of numbers around them, for example in notices. This restricts the opportunities for children to see and use numbers to develop their mathematical skills.

Children have very good opportunities to explore and investigate. They develop their own ideas and are actively encouraged to show interest and curiosity. Children have many opportunities to explore the environment and handle natural resources. A recent visit from Zoo Lab enabled children to learn about, and handle, animals such as snakes, spiders, rats and snails. This encourages children to learn about nature and develop an understanding of environmental issues. Children show wonder as they play with balloons and watch staff blow up balloons of different shapes and sizes. They handle a range of tools and have good opportunities to use Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) equipment. For example, children confidently use the computer and select their favourite programs. They take their own photographs using a camera and handle apparatus, such as telephones and computer keyboards in the role play area. Children play with electronic toys and confidently understand how to turn them on and off, clearly recognising how they work.

Children's physical skills are developing well. They handle a range of tools, equipment and resources which help to improve their hand/eye co-ordination. For example, children pour their own drinks confidently; they use a wide range of writing and mark making materials and use resources such as hole punchers and scissors. This develops children's manipulative skills and improves their dexterity. There are many opportunities for children to move in a variety of ways using equipment and apparatus in the garden.

Children have very good opportunities to express their creativity. The creative 'zone' is stimulating and very well-resourced, enabling children to develop their own ideas and produce their own pictures and models. Children use their imagination as they play in the role play area and access a very good range of supporting materials, such as dressing up clothes, dolls and play food. This encourages children to re-enact familiar scenarios and enables them to develop their own creative ideas. Staff utilise opportunities, such as the Super Heroes Day, to enable children to play imaginatively, such as going on 'Baddie Hunts' in the nursery garden.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop very high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence within the nursery. They see many examples of photographs of themselves displayed around

the nursery, including on their labelled coat pegs. Children talk happily and enthusiastically about their friends and their favourite things at nursery. This reflects how children feel totally valued, secure and settled within the nursery and demonstrates their very strong sense of belonging. Children are empowered by staff to develop their own learning and to build on their daily experiences. The nursery environment is extremely child-focused and offers children freedom of choice to select their own play and activities. Staff care for children sensitively and are extremely aware of their differing and personal needs. For example, staff ensure that children have adequate lunch time portions to satisfy their appetite and younger children have plentiful sleep and rest periods, according to their needs.

Children develop a strong sense of awareness of the needs of others. Older children are kind and respectful to the younger children and all children enjoy happy relationships with one another. They learn about equality as staff ensure that the nursery environment reflects diversity within society. For example, children's play materials reflect positive images of diversity. As part of topic work, children learn about the differing needs of blind people and recently enjoyed a visit to the setting from a blind lady. Children handled Braille books and learnt about the supporting role of the guide dog. This enabled children to understand and respect the different needs of others. As a result of this, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There is strong provision in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff are experienced in working with external agencies to address children's personal needs. The nursery manager is the designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and she has completed a comprehensive range of relevant training. This enables staff to identify and address all children's individual needs.

Children behave extremely well. They thoroughly understand behaviour boundaries and all children play very well together. Children are polite and courteous to one another and show kindness and respect for each other.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff are wholly committed to working together with parents and involve them in consultations regarding proposed plans for the nursery. Staff hold meetings with parents and value their input on ideas for improvements for the nursery. For example, parents were recently invited to comment on plans to improve their nursery garden. As a result of parents comments, the plans have been reviewed to take on board parents suggestions. This demonstrates the strong commitment nursery management have in working together with parents to ensure high standards of care. Parents receive a wealth of information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and staff display many photographs, curriculum plans and early years guidance to enable parents to fully understand how their children learn through nursery activities. For example, staff provide information on good practice ideas and display information for parents on the proposed Early Years Foundation Stage.

Staff welcome parents into the nursery at all times and offer a very warm and welcoming environment. Information is freely exchanged between parents and staff regarding children's personal care needs and their daily activities and achievements.

Staff organise parents' evenings and ensure that parents have many opportunities to consult with the staff on their children's progress. There are many social events held, such as a barbecue and Daddies' Day, enabling parents to be fully involved in the nursery routine and work more closely with staff. This builds consistency for children and strengthens the partnership for children between home and nursery.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The nursery is exceptionally well organised and managed by a strong, motivated manager. All staff are committed to the success of the nursery and form a dedicated team. Staff consistently review their practice to ensure the highest standards of care and education. The leadership and management are good and staff development is regarded as a high priority. Many of the current staff team hold recognised early years qualifications and have access to further training. Staff are of high calibre and are able to identify areas for improvement and make necessary changes through effective evaluation.

The nursery is organised very effectively around the needs of the children and maximises the learning opportunities for children. Staff have quickly adapted to the new planning and teaching format and are enthusiastic in the new approach. For example, staff are motivated to organise their designated learning 'zones' effectively to engage children's interests and capture their inspiration to learn and explore.

All regulatory documentation is maintained in full and is stored securely and confidentially. Staff are familiar with all written policies and procedures and implement these fully in daily practice. This contributes towards the smooth and highly effective organisation of the nursery.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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 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):

- ensure all staff consistently remind children about the importance of hand washing, particularly at snack time

##### **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):

- extend the range of opportunities for children to count and calculate during routine activities and improve the visible examples of numbers on display for children

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