



Little Learners Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Lynn Masterman

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Registered person Doncaster Deaf 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Learners Day Nursery is an integral part of Doncaster School for the Deaf. It registered in 2006 and operates from four adapted rooms within a self-contained unit. A maximum of 50 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 17.30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these,

16 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery serves children from the local and wider community. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The nursery employs eight staff. All staff, including the manager, hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have the opportunity to develop and observe good hygiene practice through a range of activities, which are part of the daily routine. They are familiar with the appropriate hand washing procedures and are encouraged to manage their own personal hygiene. For example, children know hand washing before eating prevents the spread of germs. Staff follow clear health and safety procedures, which ensures the environment is clean and comfortable for children. For example, the kitchen and toilet areas are routinely cleaned and checked. Appropriate procedures ensure sick children are comforted and the risk of infection to other children is minimal. Signs and symptoms are promptly recognised and parents are informed. This results in children's health being well supported.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of a healthy diet. For example, children know vegetables keep you healthy. This helps to promote children's awareness of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy a balanced diet of nutritious meals and snacks. However, the variety of snacks is sometimes limited. This restricts children's opportunity to make informed choices. Clear information is recorded with parents to identify and provide for children's specific health and dietary requirements. For example, important information is routinely shared with kitchen staff regarding children's diets and food preferences. This ensures children's dietary needs are met successfully.

Children have the opportunity to participate in a suitable range of physical activities, which contribute to their good health and well-being. They show enthusiasm and are eager to access to the outdoor equipment available. For example, children have access to cooperation toys, such as bikes and trolleys which provide opportunities for children to ride together. This provides children with the opportunity to develop their gross motor skills. However, very young children have limited opportunities to develop their physical skills and do not routinely explore the outdoor play area. This does not promote children's physical health and well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in secure premises and good security systems ensure access to the premises is carefully monitored. They are able to move around freely, safely and independently. Staff carry out a suitable range of safety monitoring as part of the

daily routine to ensure the premises remain safe. Children are well supervised and are becoming aware of their own safety. For example, children are gently reminded to sit on chairs appropriately and not to climb on furniture. Staff give clear and simple explanations of the consequences of their behaviour. Fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly and children are beginning to understand the importance of following procedures. For example, children know when the loud bell rings everyone has to leave the nursery. This results in children developing an awareness of safety and the importance of following procedures.

Children have access to a good range of play resources, which are age appropriate, clean, well maintained, and meet the required safety standards. Resources are checked on a regular basis to ensure their safety. Play resources are stored at child height and can be accessed easily.

Staff have a satisfactory awareness of child protection issues. They understand their responsibility to ensure children are protected and are able to recognise indicators of abuse. They are clear about the procedures for the setting. This ensures children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies are cared for in a warm, caring and relaxed environment. Staff have developed warm and friendly relationships with the children. For example, children respond with smiles and enjoy close physical contact. This helps children to develop meaningful relationships. They are given lots of cuddles and respond to positive adult interaction. They sing songs, clapping their hands and dance to music. This helps promote early communication skills. They are well supervised by vigilant staff and are able to explore the environment freely and safely. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

Staff have a clear understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and use the components to plan for children's learning. They take part in an interesting range of activities, which help to promote most areas of their development. However, activities and resources do not always provide sufficient challenge for more able children. This does not provide opportunities for children to develop skills for their next stage of learning. Staff provide children with a satisfactory range of sensory experiences. They sit with the children and encourage them to develop their exploration and sensory skills. For example, children are encouraged to explore cornflour. Staff talk to the children about the texture asking questions, such as 'do you think it is sticky?' and 'does it feel cold?'. This helps children to be competent learners and skilful communicators.

Children aged two to three years old arrive at the setting happy and relaxed. They receive a warm welcome and are eager to play and explore the environment. They interact well with staff and their peer group, which helps to foster children's sense of trust and confidence. They have a sense of belonging and are familiar with the daily routine, for example, they know where to hang their coats and to tidy away toys. Children make informed choices about their play, however, do not always have

sufficient time to complete self chosen tasks as they are sometimes directed away by staff to other activities. This does not allow children to maintain their concentration and manage their own play. Children choose from a satisfactory range of activities, which provide sufficient challenge and the opportunity to explore a variety of different experiences. For example, the topic is mini beast and children know snails live on leaves and they leave a silvery trail. This helps to develop an awareness of the environment and the changing seasons. However, some activities are put away at the end of each session and children are not provided with the opportunity to return to their play. This results in children not being able to consolidate their learning.

Children's work is displayed around the room and they are able to recognise their own work. For example, children are able to identify their own pictures and talk about their drawings. This results in developing children's self-esteem and sense of pride in their achievements.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This ensures children progress appropriately in most areas of their learning. Staff have a sound knowledge of childcare and an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters framework. However, staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning and build on what children know and understand. Planning is a team effort and staff make use of long, medium and short term planning to assess children's learning against the stepping stones, however, they do not make use of children's assessment records to help plan the next stage of learning.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other on arrival. They are sufficiently confident and assured to work and play independently or in small groups. They are able to express their own needs; for example, 'I need the toilet'. Children show an interest in a range of purposeful, first hand activities and respond appropriately to challenge. For example, children persevere when trying to put on and fasten aprons for painting. They are generally engaged in play and select and carry out some activities independently. Their imagination is appropriately stimulated as they act out imaginary situations, for example, children dress as workmen and prepare their own sandwiches in the home corner.

Children are good communicators and speak confidently. They are confident and interact appropriately with staff and each other. They show care and concern for others. For example, children comfort an upset child. They respond to their names and are able to follow simple instructions. For example, 'shall we sit on the carpet for story time?'. Children listen to stories attentively. They are able to predict the next stage and able to relay the story using their own words. This helps develop their listening and communication skills. Children self-select and care for books appropriately, they are beginning to show interest in print, however, have few opportunities to link sounds to letters, write letter shapes and use writing for a purpose.

Children are beginning to recognise numbers. They are able to count to 16 with support. However, this does not extend to daily routines and staff miss opportunities for children to use their knowledge of numbers to count, recognise shape, calculate

and solve number problems.

Children have satisfactory levels of curiosity, independence, imagination and concentration. For example, children know sand sticks together when wet because of the water and dry sand runs through your fingers. This helps to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. However, children's opportunity to explore and investigate everyday technology and the use of programmable toys to support their learning through play are limited.

Children are beginning to develop an awareness of the community. For example, children are able to recall visits to a tropical butterfly farm where they observed ants, lizards and farm animals. This helps to foster their awareness of the environment. They are able to recognise changes in the environment. For example, 'it was raining this morning but it has stopped now'. Overall children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are very happy and content and are showing a strong sense of belonging. They are familiar with daily routines and form good relationships with each other and staff. For example, children hug each other because they are friends. This helps children develop meaningful relationships. Children receive an individual greeting from friendly, familiar staff and are eager to play and explore the environment. They feel good about themselves because staff know them well and show that they are interested in what they do and say. This results in children being independent and feeling safe and secure, through which they develop self-confidence, a belief in themselves and healthy self-esteem.

Babies receive lots of cuddles and bond well with their key worker. Staff take time to get know their routines and work in partnership with parents. For example, work in partnership with parents to ensure babies who experience feeding difficulties are well supported. This ensures children's individual needs are met and routines link with home. There are appropriate steps in place for children moving into the larger room. Parents are informed and children are accompanied by staff. The settling in process is based on children's individual needs. This ensures children are appropriately supported and children are settled successfully. This results in children developing a sense of belonging as they move onto their next stage of learning.

Children are well behaved, and polite in their response to the expectations of practitioners. They are beginning to understand right from wrong in a caring and sensitive environment. Most staff provide children with clear reason and explanation to help them understand the consequences of their behaviour. They are encouraged to share, and show care and consideration for others. For example, 'would you like me to help you with your shoes?'. Staff praise children for their thoughtfulness. This helps to promote positive behaviour.

The setting welcomes children with special needs and operates a total inclusion policy. Appropriate support networks are in place and children's individual needs are

given careful consideration. For example, all children are taught British Sign Language. Staff sign to ensure hearing impaired children are able to participate and have the opportunities to make informed choices. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children's awareness of equal opportunities is fostered appropriately. They are beginning to learn about cultures and beliefs through discussion, daily activities and planned topics about celebrations and festivals in the wider world. For example, children have celebrated Chinese New Year. They have access to an acceptable range of play resources, which promotes diversity. This helps children to learn about the wider world around them through their play.

Parents receive informative information about the nursery and the childcare service available. Staff make time to talk to parents daily and share information about their child's experiences and achievements. Most parents of children under three feel they are kept well informed of their children's development and generally their good health and well-being is promoted successfully. This ensures information relating to the care of children is shared appropriately.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Parents of children in receipt of nursery education are kept well informed of their children's progress. They are provided with appropriate information, which enables them to build and extend their children's learning in the home environment. They have clear knowledge of the key worker system and feel confident to approach staff with any concerns. Children clearly benefit from the positive partnership which has developed with parents. This results in children being happy and well cared for.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The registered person uses effective recruitment procedures which ensure staff are appropriately vetted and qualified. The induction programme and committed staff team ensures they work together to provide satisfactory outcomes for children. Staff have a commitment to training and the opportunity to access a range of suitable training opportunities. They receive regular support from senior members of staff, however, there are no systems in place to assess areas for further development.

Staffing ratios are maintained and staff are deployed appropriately. The premises are sufficiently well organised to meet the needs of all children attending. Space is used appropriately and children are able to relax, play and move around freely.

Staff understand and implement a wide range of satisfactory policies and procedures to take appropriate steps to protect children, promote their well-being and support their development. All required documentation is in place and stored securely, which ensures confidentiality and security.

Leadership and management of the educational provision is satisfactory. Practitioners have sound knowledge of childcare and an appropriate knowledge of the early learning goals. The manager and staff team work well together and meet on a regular basis to discuss the children's progress and plan for the next stage of

learning. The manager works alongside staff to monitor their work practice and offer advice and support. However, there are no rigorous systems in place to evaluate the quality of teaching and children's assessment records do not provide sufficient evidence to clarify how children will achieve their next stage of learning. This means that there are some areas for improvement, such as the staff's role in children's independent learning, which are sometimes missed. However, there is a commitment to continuous improvement, reflected in the cooperative working with other professionals, such as the early year's teacher. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 young children routinely access the outdoor play area and are provided with opportunities to develop their physical skills
- ensure the activities in the baby room provide sufficient challenge for more able children.

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):

- improve staff's knowledge of teaching and learning with particular regard to using children's achievement records to evidence the progress and identify their next steps in learning
- develop the planning systems to ensure that all stepping stones are covered sufficiently over time and offer children a broad and balanced curriculum.

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