



Little Poppets Nursery School/Kidz Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226975
Inspection date	24 January 2007
Inspector	Judith Chinnery
Setting Address	388 Coleman Road, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE5 4EF
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Registered person	Mina Bharat + Bharat Patel
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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 Poppets Nursery School is one of three nurseries owned by Mina and Bharat Patel. This nursery is situated in the Evington area of Leicester close to the Leicester General Hospital. The nursery has been converted and extended from a house. Children are cared for in rooms according to their age with the oldest children accommodated in the first floor.

There are currently 11 funded three-year-olds on roll. The setting supports children who may have disabilities or learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting is open Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 07:00 until 19:00.

There are nine staff working with the children. All of the staff hold relevant early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and hygiene is promoted suitably across the setting. The setting is kept clean and staff generally follow appropriate guidelines for hand washing and nappy changing so that the spread of infection amongst children is minimised. Records for managing accidents and medication are clear and kept up to date. Appropriate policies are also in place and support staff in managing any children who may become ill. This ensures children's needs are met in case of emergency. However, while appropriate routines are established children learn little about why good hygiene is important because staff are less proactive in talking with children and promoting this aspect.

Children receive snacks and meals which ensure they are nourished. Menus include a wide variety of foods, largely vegetarian which meet the dietary needs of the children. Children are introduced to fruit especially at snack time. They also have regular access to drinks and drinking water so that they are unlikely to be thirsty. Again, however, children have less understanding about healthy eating because staff are not proactive in teaching about healthy choices.

Staff are committed to ensuring that children get outside each day so that they get plenty of fresh air. However, this does not always meet the needs of babies and very young children because it is not well planned and managed. Toddlers are able to move around freely and are growing in their confidence to run, climb and balance because staff provide a variety of suitable activities both inside and out. Older children like to be active and again can climb, balance and run competently. However, staff often use this time recreationally rather than purposefully and do not plan for children's physical development effectively in a way which meets their needs. This means that children are not sufficiently challenged to make progress to their full potential in this area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Some children are not well protected and safe in the setting, particularly in the baby room and the out of school club. This is because managers allow unvetted staff to have unsupervised contact with children.

However, children are cared for in a building which is safe, attractive and well maintained. Children and families are made to feel welcome because there are attractive displays of children's work and photographs around the nursery. Each of the children's rooms are checked regularly, electric sockets are covered, there are no trailing wires and hazards such as the stairs are appropriately guarded. This ensures that children's physical safety is maintained and the potential for any accidents is minimised.

Children use safe and suitable equipment and resources. There are suitable low tables and chairs so that children can sit, eat and play safely. Resources are appropriate for children's age and stage of development and chosen with their safety in mind.

Staff have an appropriate understanding of most aspects of child protection. They recognise the main signs of abuse and know to record and report any concerns they may have about a child. While this may contribute to protecting children from harm, as already stated, the use of unvetted staff compromises this.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children enjoy being in the setting. They are beginning to form sound relationships with each other and with staff, although this is sometimes hampered when staff move around or change. Children are cared for according to their age so that they can receive appropriate experiences. Babies are able to pull themselves up on equipment and start to take tentative steps when staff help them. They experiment with cause and effect toys pressing buttons to make the toy light up, play a tune or move. They enjoy tactile play such as feeling, tasting and smelling the jelly as well as eating it. Toddlers have opportunities to look at and talk about the pictures in books. They enjoy participating in painting and play dough activities to create pictures and models.

The staff have started to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework in completing assessments and in planning. Children's progress is recorded but the collection of photographs and pieces of children's work used as evidence for this are not always appropriately annotated. This makes children's progress records unreliable in some cases. The staff make careful plans for each week for activities. These are taken from a topic and activities are chosen which meet the components of the framework. However, because staff do not use information gleaned from children's progress records, activities are not built around children's interests and what they need to do next. This leads to a lack of spontaneity and the completing of activities which do not necessarily meet children's individual needs.

Older children in the out of school club are usually happy and well settled. Activities are provided and planned using some ideas from the children so that they are participating in activities which they like and enjoy. Staff are patient as they help children learn to knit, which helps children concentrate and persevere. Others become involved in creative activities such as making Chinese Lanterns ready for Chinese New year celebrations.

Nursery education

Teaching and Learning for nursery education is satisfactory. The staff have built up a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage which they use appropriately to plan activities across all six areas of learning. Staff chart children's progress through the stepping stones but do not ascertain where they have started from. Again, the collected photographs and pieces of work are not always helpfully annotated. This means, as with the younger children, that the progress children are making is unclear and unreliable. Neither do staff identify the next steps children need to take. The planning of activities is not drawn from what children are interested in or need to do next. Instead the planning of activities according to topic, leads to compartmentalised learning and progress which is likely to be insufficient for the child's ability.

The children are generally well-settled and keen to participate in activities. They concentrate and persevere with activities, such as puzzles, fairly well. They act independently in some areas such as taking care of their own needs in the bathroom because the staff encourage them to complete self-help tasks themselves. Children are beginning to develop suitable skills in using English because staff listen to them and support those who speak English as an additional language appropriately. For example staff use labelling words in a child's own language to support them with learning English. They listen well to stories and like to talk about the pictures. Children have some opportunities to make marks with pencils and other media. In maths children are able to count by rote beyond ten. They explore simple calculating in some planned activities as well as opportunities to experiment with shape, size and measure. However, weaknesses in planning mean that staff miss many opportunities in everyday common situations to extend children's skills in literacy and maths.

Children are starting to develop some skills in working out how things work and using some technology such as the computer. They also enjoy caring for the hamsters, fish and snails. Over the course of the year they will also experience activities to do with time, other aspects of nature and other cultures. But, again the way in which these activities are planned means that children get little opportunity to revisit and explore these areas in detail. While children are developing some large body and small hand movements, they are not being challenged to make progress to their full potential because staff do not use information from their assessments. Again children experience a variety of activities which enable them to paint and use colour as well as create models in three dimensions. They know a wide repertoire of songs and experience some opportunities to hear different styles of music. They play cooperatively in the home corner and use their imaginations to copy and take on different roles such as doctors and nurses. While staff support children in creating some things for themselves, children's development in this area is hindered by a lack of spontaneity and a tendency to rely on adult-led rather than child-led activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to join in and generally play a productive part in the setting. Staff have a sound understanding of equal opportunities and use this to plan and celebrate different festivals. This means that children are beginning to learn about their own and other cultures. They have access to resources which reflect positive images of people and beliefs so that children feel valued. Staff also make use of children's own home languages so that children are supported in learning English. Staff work closely with parents, the area special needs coordinator and other professionals to ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities are appropriately included and supported in the life of the setting.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. This is reflected in the personal, social and emotional aspects of the curriculum as well as knowledge and understanding of the world. Children generally behave well in the setting. Young children accept the intervention of staff in squabbles over toys and are easily distracted and re-directed to other activities. Older children respond positively to set boundaries and explanations. Staff also offer

some praise and encouragement to promote more acceptable behaviour. However, the occasional use of short periods of timeout for young children sometimes causes unnecessary distress.

Staff build sound relationships with parents. They ask parents about their child's care needs such as for eating and sleeping and seek to follow their wishes particularly with young babies. Staff offer a lot of relevant information to parents regarding the nursery and what their child has been doing and send regular written reports about children's progress to them. The setting has a record of complaints, which is available to parents. This is accurate and up-to-date and ensures that all aspects of children's care are transparent to all. The partnership with parents for nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive detailed information regarding the educational provision. They are regularly informed about their child's progress and are offered suggestions about the things they can do at home to support their child's learning. However, parents are rarely asked for information about their child and what they can do and are not invited to comment or participate in the completion of their child's progress records. Since targets for the next steps in their child's learning are not set it is difficult for parents to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The organisation of this setting does not support positive outcomes for children. The provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. As mentioned already in the section 'Staying Safe', children are left unprotected when they are cared for by unvetted staff. This is because managers do not make adequate arrangements to ensure staff are supervised whilst waiting for clearances to come through.

There are appropriate systems in place to check the suitability of staff and to plan for sufficient staff for the number of children cared for. Staff are usually placed around the nursery so that there are sufficient staff working directly with the children so that their care, learning and play is appropriately supported. Staff undertake training regularly to keep their child care skills up-to-date. Policies and procedures are well organised and generally known by the staff. In the main they promote children's health, safety, ability to enjoy and achieve and to make a positive contribution.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. The managers set out clear aims and objectives for children's care and education in their written literature and are committed to ensuring that staff take up appropriate training to further their skills with the Foundation Stage. There are appropriate systems in place for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of staff through an annual appraisal. This also forms the basis for planning to meet training needs. Managers have recently developed systems for auditing the quality of care and education offered to the children in order to assist them with making improvements. However, since managers are less confident in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage the systems do not work well in practice to bring about those improvements effectively.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection in September 2003 the setting was asked to make some improvements to its record keeping. Since this inspection the setting has implemented a suitable policy and procedure for dealing with any lost or uncollected children and ensures that medication records are accurate and signed by parents. This contributes to meeting children's needs should they be unwell or experience an emergency. The child protection procedures are also up to date with accurate contact details for agencies should staff need to report any concerns. This ensures that children can be protected in the event of concerns being raised.

At the last nursery education inspection in September 2003 the setting was asked to consider improving children's opportunities to count in everyday situations and to develop information about children's progress given to parents. Since then the setting, due to the nature of planning often misses opportunities for children to count and use numbers in everyday, common situations. This hinders children from developing good skills in mathematics. While they pass on detailed information to parents regarding their child's progress, the setting has still not implemented ways to share or glean information from parents about their child, their interests or what they can do. This continues to hinder children's ability to make good progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 01 April 2004 Ofsted has received two complaints that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

During September 2006 Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about insufficient staff, staff suitability and qualifications, safety on an outing, and dealing with complaints from parents. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the provision on 12/09/06 to consider these concerns in relation to National Standards 1: Suitable person, 2: Organisation, 6: Safety, 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers, and 14: Documentation. As a result of the visit the provider was given the following action: ensure that the registered person meets the required adult to child ratios at all times. A satisfactory response to this action was received on 09/10/2006. In addition, the following recommendations were made to further improve the childcare service: ensure that the system for registering children and staff attendance on a daily basis shows the hours of staff attendance; and ensure that records, with regards to staff, are available for inspection. The provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

During October 2006 Ofsted received a complaint about staff to child ratios, supervision and complaint handling which raised concerns about National Standards 2: Organisation, 3: Care, learning and play, 6: Safety and 12: Partnership with parents and carers. Ofsted undertook an unannounced visit on 09 October 2006 to investigate these concerns. Ofsted found no evidence to suggest a breach of National Standards 3, 6 and 12. Ofsted did find evidence of a breach of National Standard 1: Suitable person and 2: Organisation and has issued the following actions for completion: Standard 1 - demonstrate how you ensure that staff caring for children and others likely to have unsupervised access to them, including those living or working on the premises, are suitable to do so Standard 2 - ensure staff are deployed effectively within the premises to ensure the safety, welfare and development of the children. Ofsted received a

satisfactory response to these actions on 01 December 2006. The provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints received from parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

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

- ensure that adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

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

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):

- ensure that the assessment of children's progress is clearly based on observational evidence and that it identifies what steps children need to take next (this also applies to care)
- ensure that plans are clearly drawn from information in children's assessments so that activities are provided which children are interested in and need to do next (this also applies to care)
- provide opportunities for parents to share information about their child's progress, their starting points and next steps
- ensure that the knowledge of managers and staff is up-to-date so that systems used to monitor and evaluate the provision are more effective.

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