



## Little Scholars (Sunnyhill)

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 509199  
**Inspection date** 18 July 2006  
**Inspector** Patricia Bowler

**Setting Address** 12 Wellesley Avenue, Littleover, Sunnyhill, Derby, Derbyshire, DE23 1GQ  
**Telephone number** 01332 271608  
**E-mail**  
**Registered person** Little Scholars Ltd  
**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](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?

Little Scholars Day Nursery is one of two nurseries run by the owners. It opened in 1998. It operates from five rooms in a converted house in Sunnyhill, Derbyshire. A maximum of 28 children may attend at any one time. The nursery open each weekday from 07.45 until 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of

these, 21 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine members of staff of whom eight hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a generally clean and well maintained environment. Robust policies and procedures are consistently followed by staff to prevent children's exposure to cross infection. However, this is not always sufficiently maintained following lunch to ensure the floor is free from dropped food. Procedures such as wearing disposable aprons and gloves for nappy changing result in children's health being maintained. A no shoe policy operates in the baby room to ensure floor areas remain clean and disposable protectors are available for visitors not wishing to remove their shoes.

Children's health is protected because the staff are well informed about their health care matters. Clear and concise documentation ensures that their individual needs are discussed and recorded with parents and are vigilantly carried out by staff. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well organised activities and consistent daily routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals and have single use flannel to wash their faces. They talk knowledgeably about why these practices are important, developing a sound awareness about healthy living. Resources, including tissues, enable children to address their personal needs independently. Accessible soap dispensers and disposable towels within the bathrooms enable children and staff to wash their hands thoroughly as required.

Children enjoy a range of energetic activities that contribute to a healthy life style. They develop self- confidence in their physical skills as they use a range of indoor and outdoor equipment to increase their dexterity. They gain control of their bodies as they confidently pedal and steer wheeled toys and eagerly join in action songs to increase their coordination. Some older children enjoy riding scooters expressing pride as they skilfully balance these whilst propelling with one foot.

A separate sleep room is available for babies within the baby room with individual cots and single use bed linen. Curtains across the windows add to the peaceful environment to enable them to rest and sleep according to their needs. Quiet areas with soft furnishings and an excellent range of books allow older children to rest and relax, and younger children benefit from having their own bed linen as they sleep peacefully on hygienically covered floor mattresses.

Good arrangements are established to meet dietary requirements for babies.

Formula milk is stored appropriately in a designated fridge within the baby room until required. Meals are served appropriately to assist in an easy transition through the weaning process. Children benefit from a healthy diet as the nursery follows a recommended nutritional food guide. They enjoy a variety of balanced meals and are introduced to a range of foods which they are eager to try. Raw vegetables such as carrot, cucumber and tomato have recently been introduced at snack time. They gleefully reminded staff that tomatoes are actually fruit and stated that carrots help to see in the dark. Children chose from mixed platters to promote choice.

Clear procedures operate to ensure all meals comply with special dietary requirements to promote children's health and ensure their individual needs are met. Older children access a cold water dispenser as they require, to enhance their independence and arrangements for younger children ensure they receive regular drinks so they are not thirsty.

Younger children and babies receive appropriate support during meal time as staff sit with them encouraging them to eat the meals provided and develop their skills with cutlery. Staff do not always sit with older children to make meal times an integral part of the day. There are missed opportunities to provide challenge and increase children's social interaction, to make choices about the foods they eat or to encourage their dexterity with cutlery. Children do not pour their own drinks at meal times or assist in setting tables.

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

The provision is good.

High regard is given to ensure children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They benefit from a comprehensive risk assessment which is effectively maintained by staff to identify and minimise any possible hazards both inside and outside. Any issues identified are included in staff group meetings. They are discussed to ensure satisfactory outcomes are reached to work in practice to maintain children's safety.

A robust procedure for children's attendance is effectively maintained. Parents and carers take children to their base rooms where clear systems record their arrival and departure times to further contribute to their safety and welfare.

Effective arrangements ensure children can move around safely and freely to independently access available equipment, activities and resources within their base rooms. Children benefit from good organisation of furniture to facilitate table and floor play to increase their confidence as they make active choices about their play. Children using the stairs walk carefully holding on to a low level banister rail. A newly established policy limits the number of children on the stairs at any one time to ensure they have appropriate time and opportunities to do this safely.

Children develop a good awareness of safety through a range of interesting activities. During outside play in wheeled toys they enjoyed stopping and starting at traffic lights controlled by a staff member. They recognise colour sequences and discussed safe road crossing using pelican crossings. They practise regular emergency evacuation

and know why this is important. Practises are systematically recorded and reviewed for effectiveness. Children discuss reasons for safety with staff to increase their awareness in everyday situations. For example, they assist in tidying away and pick up any items dropped to prevent them tripping.

Children are kept safe on outings because risk assessments are systematically carried out on all venues. Vigilant procedures including taking first aid equipment and mobile telephones ensure any incidents can be dealt with efficiently if required.

Robust procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitable adults who have relevant experience and skills. They are protected from harm because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary. However, there is not a defined procedure to be followed in the event of a child not being collected.

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

The provision is good.

Children take part in a range of activities where they develop good skills in most areas. Staff 's awareness and effective use of 'Birth to three matters' provides a sound framework for the care of babies and younger children. Babies are cared for in a warm, caring environment where mobiles and wall displays stimulate their visual development. A wide range of resources assist them as they learn to crawl and walk. Young children are confident and relate warmly to positive staff interaction. They play happily with each other and staff and enjoy group and individual situations. They develop their imaginative skills in small world play and link home and nursery through appropriate role play opportunities. Children are competent communicators and express their joy and delight in activities such as a hair dressing activity where staff acted as models as children styled their hair with a hair accessories. They independently access toys and resources to instigate and extend their play.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is supported by a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Staff use a range of teaching methods appropriately to work with children individually and in small and large groups. Children's personal, social and emotional development is enhanced with opportunities to make active choices about their play to encourage their confidence and independence. Children are knowledgeable about the world in which they live. They speak confidently about themselves and what they are doing as staff use age appropriate questioning to extend their thought processes. The methods to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning are used effectively to identify ways to improve the learning outcomes for children. Clear assessments are closely linked to children's progress and written observations help staff to plan for children's next steps in learning.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and present a range of interesting

activities to promote children's learning. The planning and evaluation is detailed to cover all areas of learning and identify if the learning intention is achieved. Systematic methods are established to record observations which are used effectively to plan for children's next steps in learning.

Children are confident and demonstrate a sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. A group session in the morning and afternoon is used effectively to promote their confidence as they wish each other good morning and good afternoon. They build warm relationships with staff actively seeking support when required and interact appropriately with peers as they play. A small group of children enjoy role play in the post office issuing stamps for letters that other children have 'written'. A post box is used to post the letters and children speak knowledgeably about collection and sorting processes before the letters are delivered to our houses.

Children have a high level of independence and freely access equipment to extend their play. Resources are stored appropriately to enable them to access paper and writing implements to extend role play situations. Mark making is encouraged and some children are gaining skills in emergent writing. They competently use a range of tools including glue spreaders in creative activities and some children use scissors successfully to cut circles in boxes as they make cameras in a junk modelling activity. They join in conversations about how cameras work, different ones available including those with zoom lenses and processing procedures including home printers.

Children enjoy books and readily select these to look at and share with each other and staff. Children are beginning to associate written text to meaning and recognise and relate letter sounds to the beginnings of their names.

Most children can count confidently to 10 and beyond and show a good awareness of size and quantity. Staff make good use of spontaneous opportunities to increase children's knowledge. For example, they count how many strides it takes to go across the outside area talking about long and short strides.

Children take responsibility for their personal care and recognise and express their own needs. They help themselves to tissues and dispose of these in the covered bins. All children ably assist in tidying away and respond appropriately to staff's consistent guidelines to promote positive behaviour. Children use good manners appropriately when requesting and accepting help, drinks or food. Staff do not always sit with older children to make meal times an integral part of the day. There are missed opportunities to provide challenge and increase children's social interaction, to make choices about the foods they eat or to encourage their dexterity with cutlery. Children increase their hand-eye coordination as they pour their own drinks at meal and snack times.

Children have regular access to information and technology equipment and use this independently and in adult-led group situations. A group enthusiastically identified the letters of the alphabet and associated pictures to link letter sounds.

Good opportunities assist them to acquire knowledge of their environment as children

identify weather conditions and engage in seasonal activities. They speak excitedly about recent hot weather and enjoying activities at home including barbeques. Children are knowledgeable about the world in which they live. They speak confidently about themselves and what they are doing as staff use age appropriate questioning to extend their thought processes. Practical activities such as celebrating different festivals increase children's knowledge of the wider world. Innovative outings increase children's awareness of their local surroundings. Children spoke enthusiastically about a visit to a local superstore to visit the restaurant. A photograph album clearly shows children ordering, paying and organising trays to carry drinks and toast. Children delight in recalling the event remembering that one staff member had coffee although everybody else had tea.

Staff work diligently to promote positive behaviour with praise and encouragement. Children respond to consistent guidelines and listen as staff explain unacceptable behaviour. They apologise to other children and are sensitively supported to return to play.

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

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and build warm relationships with staff and peers as they greet each other on arrival. Children behave very well. They are beginning to understand right from wrong through a range of visual aids which they know and use gainfully as they learn to share and take turns. Staff use a range of effective methods to manage children's behaviour and they respond successfully to praise and encouragement as they help to tidy away and take age appropriate responsibility for helping each other. Staff allow older children to resolve their own differences encouraging them to develop skills in negotiation, turn taking and respecting the needs of others. Older children willingly share resources. Gentle reminders to play carefully in the sand to avoid getting into eyes and hair, encourage children's awareness of their actions and the needs of others.

Children gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through activities and a range of resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Good systems ensure their individual needs are met and staff work closely with other agencies to provide for children's specific needs. The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs is used effectively to ensure the provision of appropriate care is maintained.

Partnership with parents is good. Extensive information is shared through the comprehensive prospectus and parents information board. Effective communication is maintained through a quarterly newsletter, open evenings and arranged and informal discussions. These work effectively to ensure children's individual care needs are met. Parents are fully involved in the initial assessment for nursery education to ascertain what children can already do. This equips staff with clear acknowledge of each child's starting point to plan for their individual learning and progress. Parents are actively involved in monitoring the nursery. They complete a

systematic evaluation record including their expectations and whether these have been met. This assists the owners in their commitment to improve the service provided. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced through rigorous recruitment and employment procedures. Diligent induction training ensures that staff are fully aware of the settings comprehensive policies and procedures to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Staff training is provided which is linked to appraisals and professional development to support the ongoing improvement of the setting.

Clear contingency plans ensure there are sufficient staff to care for children. Staff are effectively deployed to support children's care, learning and play. Children are suitably grouped to ensure they receive good levels of care appropriate to their age and developmental stages. Play and learning activities are organised well to provide interesting and appealing opportunities for children which contribute to their enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Leadership and management is good. The owners and staff have a clear vision with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children attending the setting. The outcomes for children are met well as the owners set clear directions leading to improvements. They are actively involved in supporting staff to improve the provision for nursery education. There are appropriate opportunities for staff to spend time working together to establish a consistent approach to monitoring, assessment and planning for children's learning and development.

All staff are involved in evaluating the setting being required to grade the level of care provided. They are required to qualify their judgement giving reasons and ways to improve the level of care for children. The nursery is taking a positive approach in the Early Years foundation Review and is actively preparing for impending changes. The owners lead the team effectively supporting their working practice to maintain and improve the level of care and provision to meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery was required to establish a record of visitors to the setting and to replace the cracked pane of glass in the window at the top of the stairs.

Visitors are accepted into the nursery at the main entrance where a visitor record book is completed. This ensures that all visits are recorded and minimises the risk to children's safety from unaccepted visitors to the nursery. The window pane at the top of the stairs has been replaced to further enhance the safety of children.



## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 the premises are clean in relation to the dining room floor following lunch
- establish a clearly defined procedure to be followed in the event of a child not being collected

### **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 mealtimes are an integral part of children's personal, social and emotional development. Create an atmosphere that promotes their social interaction including opportunities to make active choices about the foods they eat. Provide positive role models for children to improve their dexterity in handling cutlery.

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