



## Little Oaks Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY246821
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Margaret Elizabeth Roberts
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Mobile, James Bradfield School, Wretton Road, Stoke Ferry, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE33 9QJ
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Little Oaks Pre-School Committee
<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 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Oaks Pre-school opened in 1996. It operates from one room in a mobile building situated in the grounds of the James Bradfield School in Stoke Ferry, Norfolk. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08.30 until 15.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 28 children from two to under eight years on roll. Of these 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and none are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children enter premises that are clean but they are put at risk of the spread of infection because hygiene practices are poor. Although warm air hand dryers are available in the bathroom areas, children are expected to dry their hands on the same towels each day, after playing with the water or painting, which staff also use to dry their hands. This increases the spread of cross infection. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before snack time. However, after playing outside they do not do so and listen to a story, sucking dirty fingers or thumbs, increasing the spread of infection further. Staff who are trained in first aid and some relevant documentation that is in place, such as accident and medication recordings help to meet children's medical needs most of the time. Children's care in an emergency is compromised because written parental permission has not been requested for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children benefit from healthy snacks such as fresh fruit and vegetables, which they enjoy as a social occasion, serving themselves and pouring out drinks, which helps to promote their independence. Parents provide a packed lunch for their children, which is served by staff. Drinking water is available from the water container, so that children do not go thirsty.

Children have opportunity to develop their large physical skills in the outdoor play area, where they run freely and ride a variety of tricycles. They are able to negotiate the pathways and enjoy using the climbing frame and swings. Children's eye-hand coordination skills are inhibited through limited presentation of intricate activities such as threading and the use of small implements such as scissors.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter premises that are secure and suitable for their purpose. They have access to clean bathroom areas where facilities are appropriate for children. For example a changing area and steps to allow for easy access to the wash hand basin. Children are able to access different areas of play and are able to rest in a quiet area. Low storage allows children to choose different activities, although they are not seen to do this and play with the equipment that has been presented by staff.

Children use the furniture with ease because it is child size and safe. Although there are suitable toys and play materials available, the limited range of activities planned does not create a stimulating environment for children and therefore their varying needs are not always met.

Children play safely because staff have taken reasonable steps to ensure that hazards on the premises both inside and outside are minimised. For example, risk assessments are taken on a

daily basis, heaters are guarded and there are no trailing flexes. The outside play area is completely fenced and gated and play equipment is safe. Secure, controlled entry systems and supervision of children by staff ensure that children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised. Children can be protected in the event of a fire because there are procedures in place for the emergency evacuation of the building.

Children are protected if abuse or neglect is suspected because the setting has procedures in place for staff to refer to. They have recently updated their knowledge by attending training in safeguarding children.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's individual needs and welfare are not effectively promoted because activities provided are not sufficiently challenging and some staff have the inability to extend children's play and learning. For example, children make Christmas decorations that are already cut out and secured together, so that all they are required to do is to put some glue on and scatter glitter over the top. This inhibits not only their creative development but also their confidence in attempting new challenges and their independence. Role play areas have insufficient equipment presented for children to use, the 'Post Office' only has two parcels and a truck to play with. There is nothing else to extend children's imagination further such as pens, paper, stamps or envelopes. Children are not learning about right and wrong because staff are unable to manage their behaviour in a positive way. When children become unhappy because they are not getting their own way, staff do nothing to diffuse the situation or try to help children control their emotions.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children do not progress well enough in some areas of learning because teaching is ineffective. Staff have limited knowledge of the Foundation Stage and an insecure knowledge of how children learn, for example through practical, exciting activities. Staff do not effectively support children's learning. For example, they present sorting and matching games but because there is no activity plan to follow, there is no staff involvement and therefore children do not understand how to play with this activity. Children are often merely occupied rather than being questioned and challenged. Activities fail to build on children's current knowledge and skills because staff do not work closely with parents to find out what children already know. Planning is not shared by staff and therefore some staff do not fully understand what is expected of them. Although plans show that all areas of learning will be covered this is not demonstrated during the session. Assessments of children's progress are limited and are not completed by the child's key worker. Staff make notes on observations of children and these are then transferred into assessment booklets by the manager. Although activity sheets do record the next steps of learning for some children, this is not transferred to individual assessment booklets. Very informative end of pre-school reports are completed by the manager when children transfer to school, charting their progress. However it is not clear to the reader where these observations have been made and when because of a lack of detail in children's assessment booklets.

Children are making limited progress in some areas because they demonstrate some unacceptable behaviour that hinders their learning. They are not always able to share and take turns, often screaming at one another or bursting into tears. They do respond to some staff who have a better understanding of how to manage children's behaviour and are seen on some occasions to be taking part amicably in activities. They have opportunity to listen to stories and are beginning to recognise their names. Limited resources in planned activities hinders their approach to developing their writing skills.

Children are making progress in number work. They are able to count to 10 and beyond with adult support. They use number in everyday situations such as counting the cups at snack time. They are beginning to understand simple calculation, adding one to three to make four. Children are able to use the computer independently, once it has been set up by staff, enjoying playing the 'Thomas the Tank' game with a simple lever action to manoeuvre the train around the track.

Children's progress in creativity is not promoted. They have little opportunity to use their own imagination because of a restricted range of media and materials. Too much adult direction to achieve an end result in producing collages and decorations inhibits children's free expression. Limited resources in the role play area and small world equipment does not encourage children to make up their own games or play with one another.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's individual needs cannot always be fully met because staff do not liaise with parents sufficiently to ensure that information is shared to enable appropriate care to be given. Although children have access to a full range of resources and activities, due to a lack of adult support these are not always used to advantage to help children learn about equality through their play. Children with special needs can be cared for because the physical environment is suitable for children with disabilities. Help is sought from outside agencies to allow children with special needs to receive extra care from a support worker.

Children's welfare and development is not effectively promoted because staff are unable to manage their behaviour in a positive way. Children are shouted at from across the room to stop behaving unacceptably. No explanations are given by staff as to why the behaviour is unacceptable and therefore children do not know what is expected of them. This in turn leads them into repeating the negative behaviour and being told again to stop. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Parents are not encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and there are inadequate arrangements for informing parents of their children's progress. There are limited systems in place for staff to find out about what children already know and understand prior to them entering the setting, which has an impact on the care and learning they receive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children's welfare and learning is not promoted adequately because staff are unsure of their roles and responsibilities. Vetting procedures are unclear and disorganised documentation has a negative impact on the care children receive. The daily register does not show the hours of attendance of children or staff and some policies and procedures require amendments.

The leadership and management of the setting is inadequate. Little progress has been made in rectifying previous weaknesses and those measures taken have had little impact on the quality of the provision. Managers do not motivate staff to take an active part in the delivery of the educational programme and therefore children's learning is impeded. Overall the needs of children are not met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to include the name, address and telephone number of the regulator in the complaints policy; ensure that the child protection procedure for the pre-school complies with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures; consider ways to encourage children's independence at snack times; plan a range of activities and play opportunities to promote children's imaginative skills on a daily basis; make sure that premises are secure and that children are unable to leave them unsupervised when parents collect their children, particularly at the end of the morning session; ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing and review and update all policies to meet the standards, paying particular attention to the vetting of staff, complaints and child protection.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to improve the assessment of the settings strengths and weaknesses, taking into account the advice from external advisors; improve the use of resources to promote children's skills in mark making and imaginative play and introduce opportunities for children to share news and what has been happening to them.

The setting has made very little improvements. Children's independence at snack time has improved as children now pour out their own drinks. Children can be protected if neglect or abuse is suspected because effective procedures are in place to safeguard children. Children's safety is better promoted because a controlled entry system is now in place, but their health is still compromised because good hygiene practices are not in place with regard to hand washing. Organisation of the setting has a negative impact on the care children receive. The complaints policy does not include the name and address of the regulator, robust vetting systems are not in place.

Children's learning is disadvantaged because the setting has made limited improvements to the educational programme. Children have very limited resources to promote their imaginative and writing skills and are not encouraged to share news. The setting has recently begun to assess their strengths and weaknesses through self evaluation.

## 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.

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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:

- develop good routines for managing children's personal hygiene, so that the risk of the spread of infection is minimised
- request written parental permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure that behaviour-management strategies are consistently applied by staff, so that children are given clear boundaries and understand what is expected of them
- ensure an accurate record of attendance is maintained for children, staff and visitors
- review and update the vetting of staff and complaints policies.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve the use of resources to ensure that activities set sufficient challenge to older and more able children.
- use assessment records to effectively plan the next steps of learning for individual children
- provide adequate arrangements for parents to be informed of their children's progress encouraging them to be involved in their children's learning

- improve the leadership and management of the setting so that all staff are encouraged to work together to help all children make progress towards the early learning goals.

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

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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)