



Little Stones Pre-School and Out of School Clubs

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220270
Inspection date	15 November 2006
Inspector	Kristin Hatherly
Setting Address	The Horsa Hut, Jackson's Lane, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 4LD
Telephone number	01933 276645
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Registered person	Little Stones Pre- School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 Stones Pre-school and Out of School Club is run by a voluntary management committee. It opened in 1970 and operates from one main room in a single-storey building near the centre of Wellingborough. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group provides three types of care facilities at different times. The pre-school is open during term-time only and sessions are daily from 09:15 to 11:45 and 12:30 to 15:00. The out of school club is open daily during term-time and sessions are from 15:00 to 18:00 hours. Little Stones Holiday Club also operates from the same premises during school holidays and sessions are daily from 08:30 to 17:30 hours. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 24 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting serves both the local and wider community.

They are able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs four members of staff, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted by staff who follow clear health and hygiene procedures and ensure they have appropriate medical information such as details of any allergies. Children learn about their own personal hygiene through discussion at circle time and by washing their hands at appropriate times such as, before snacks and after messy play. Staff were seen to remind children to wash their hands after they had been to the toilet. This sustains the level of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children's welfare is safeguarded because three members of staff have up-to-date first aid knowledge in the event of any accidents and appropriate procedures are in place if children are unwell.

Children gain an awareness of the role of healthy eating in developing their good health and growth as they are provided with a variety of nutritious snacks. They have access to fresh drinking water at all times. As a result children are thoroughly hydrated and comfortable. Parents provide packed lunches for the lunch club and chilled food is stored appropriately. Children benefit from a social atmosphere where good table manners are encouraged as they sit down together to eat their packed meal provided by their parents.

Children have regular opportunities to obtain fresh air, enjoy physical exercise and learn about the importance of activity in a healthy lifestyle, as they have regular access to an outside area. They manoeuvre wheeled toys and climb on climbing frames. Children move spontaneously with increasing control and co-ordination, developing an awareness of space around them and the close proximity of others.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in purpose-built single-storey premises that are secure and suitable for their purpose. They have access to an appropriate range of facilities that promote their development. Children are able to play safely and move freely between activities in a play environment where space is organised and used effectively. They have access to toys, resources and equipment appropriate to their age and development which are regularly checked.

Children's safety is promoted as proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. For example, there is a good ratio of staff to children to ensure that children are well supervised at all times and clear procedures for children entering and leaving the premises. Children practise fire drills regularly which are recorded. They are protected and their welfare promoted through daily and weekly risk assessments of equipment and premises.

Staff were seen to risk assess the outside area before taking the children out to play.

Children are further safeguarded and their welfare well-promoted because staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the pre-school. Children's self confidence is promoted by staff who build warm relationships with the children and have consistent expectations and clear routines. Staff demonstrate a caring attitude towards the social side of the child and encourage children to share and play together. Children develop their independence as they express their ideas during play using a wide range of resources which capture their interests for example, during imaginary play and during craft activities. Children enjoy playing in the outside play area and going for walks to the local park and library which develops and supports their physical skills. They begin to understand their own needs, and with adult support, become aware of the needs of others. Children behave well for example, they take turns and share resources. All of these promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. The planning is based on the six areas of learning and the 'Birth to three matters' framework is being implemented. There is a system for observation and assessment of children and child profiles are kept. However, it is not clear how these are used to plan individual next steps for children based on what they already know and can do. Activities are evaluated although they do not show whether learning goals have been met so not used effectively to inform future planning. Staff are friendly, caring and form good relationships with the children which help them to feel secure. They give regular encouragement and praise which develops children's confidence and self-esteem. As a result, they behave well. Throughout the setting, children's personal social and emotional development is promoted by the staff's caring attitude towards the social side of the child. They encourage children to respect each other and to play co-operatively. Children work well together, sharing and helping each other.

Children have good relationships with each other, chatting to each other and engaging in play together. They share and take turns when using the inside climbing frame and slide. Generally, children are confident to speak to staff and visitors to the pre-school. There are opportunities to learn that marks have meaning as they play in the home corner which is altered to develop this such as shops and post office. Children have access to a well resourced book corner and they are encouraged to read independently and staff go into book corner and read with them. Children listen with concentration and interest to stories and eagerly answer questions and engage in responses to the stories. During circle time they discuss weather, the day and date and any events from home. Staff are able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. Children are developing their number skills through a variety of activities, singing rhymes such as 'Five Currant Buns',

construction, games and puzzles relating to number, shape, measure and weighing. However, they do not often compare numbers or solve simple problems. They are encouraged to develop their mathematical language such as small and big, long and short.

Children explore and investigate by looking at minibeasts, planting seeds and experimenting with cornflour, pasta and water. They go on walks to the local park and occasionally have visitors such as firemen to the pre-school. They also participate in community activities such as the sponsored toddle and the local carnival which encourages them to develop a sense of community. They have the opportunity to join in the Forest Schools Project where they will investigate flora and fauna. Children celebrate a variety of festivals to develop their understanding of other cultures. They develop their physical skills through outdoor play, movement to music and handling of tools such as pencils, scissors and rolling pins. Children are becoming aware of healthy eating as they are encouraged to make their own fruit salad at snack time and take part in activities through the British Heart Foundation Project.

Children have variety of opportunities to explore media, materials and colour during planned activities such as, investigating mash, shaving foam, different shapes and colours of pasta. They are encouraged to experiment with colours and use variety of items to design and make patterns. Children respond and express ideas and share feelings during free play and when talking to each other and teachers. They are encouraged through use of sad/smiley faces and specialised books such as 'Good Manners' to learn to express themselves appropriately. Children engage in dressing up in costumes and play independently in role play corners to develop their imaginative play. They respond and express ideas and share feelings during free play and when talking to each other and staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy activities and resources which promote a positive view of the wider world. They celebrate festivals, for example Chinese New Year and Christmas and have access to resources such as jigsaws, dolls and books which show people from other cultures. This increases their awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Children learn about their local community through regular walks, joining in community events and through occasional visitors to the pre-school. They are valued and respected as individuals and are fully included in the life of the setting. The pre-school understands their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken to support children with identified needs. As a result children receive appropriate support.

Staff deal with behaviour consistently that is appropriate to the child's level of understanding and maturity. Children learn to share, take turns and consider others. They receive regular reassurance, praise and encouragement which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are provided with information through notice boards, daily exchanges of information and newsletters. However, they are not kept regularly informed of their children's achievements and future learning targets. The

pre-school operates an open-door policy and encourages parents to come in and look at their children's folders and talk to staff. Parents report positively about the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from appropriate organisation of the space and resources both indoors and in the outdoor area so that they can make choices and develop their ideas as they play. Staff support children well during activities and allow them time and space to initiate their play. The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. However, arrival and departure times are not recorded appropriately. Resources and equipment are organised to promote children's safety, welfare and development.

Staff have appropriate qualifications and secure procedures are in place for checking they are suitable to work with children. Children's records and all paperwork are stored securely and are available for inspection. Children's care and welfare are safeguarded by an Operational Plan. However, this still needs development to ensure all information is easily available.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The Supervisor and staff work well together as an effective and committed team sharing the planning and evaluation of activities. There are clear recruitment and induction procedures in place with regular six monthly appraisals. There are regular staff meetings. Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At last inspection there were nine actions to improve. The pre-school is developing their operational plan and reviewing their policies and procedures although further information needs to be included. The staff are working together as a team with the Early Years Advisor and 'Birth to three matters' framework to develop their planning and there is continued improvement in the educational provision. Children's safety has been improved through ensuring that there are always the correct number of staff on duty and daily risk assessments are carried out to identify risks and appropriate action is taken. Staff were observed to have developed effective ways to manage behaviour and one member of staff has completed managing behaviour training and the supervisor is on a managing behaviour course thus ensuring that children's behaviour is managed well. Children are now provided with a good range of resources and activities to promote their understanding of diversity. They are further protected as all staff have now attended a Safeguarding Children training course.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure parents are provided with ongoing information about their children's daily activities, current achievements and future learning targets - this also applies to nursery education
- continue to develop and review the operational plan to ensure all the required information is easily available
- ensure the children's time of arrival and departure are recorded daily.

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):

- develop the use of observations and assessments of children to plan next steps to build on what individual children know and can do
- develop the evaluation of activities to ascertain whether the learning goals have been met and to inform future planning
- develop the range of play opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and practice solving simple problems.

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