



## Priory Lodge Day Care Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	224170
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Dianne Andrews
<b>Setting Address</b>	Priory Lodge, Priory Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY1 1RU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Julie Amanda Parry
<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 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?

Priory Lodge Day Care has been open since January 2000. The nursery is located close to Shrewsbury town centre. It operates in a listed, three storey building near the quarry. There are five activity rooms, staff facilities and an enclosed area for outdoor play. Children come from a variety of social backgrounds and reflect the cultural mix of the area in which the nursery is situated.

The setting is registered for 35 children aged under five years old. There are currently 49 children on roll, 14 of whom are in receipt of Nursery Education funding. The nursery operates from 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday.

The proprietor is responsible for the daily running of the setting. There are seven other staff working with the children, most have recognised qualifications in childcare.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because they learn the value of good hygiene practice from consistent nursery routines. They learn that hand washing after visiting the toilet or before meals is important to keep away germs. Children's medical needs are known and met as any special requirements are recorded so staff are fully aware. To safeguard children's welfare, accidents or incidents are recorded and shared with parents or carers and any medication administered is witnessed and countersigned. Most hygiene practices are effective in promoting children's good health, but blankets are inappropriately stored in some areas and, although improved from the last inspection, arrangements for sleeping are not fully effective in protecting children from the risks of cross-infection.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet as they discuss which foods are good to eat. They are offered healthy and nutritious snacks such as fruit and vegetables and enjoy their midday meals, which are appealing and varied. The daily menu is displayed so parents are aware of what their child is eating. Children are offered drinks, such as milk and water several times during the day and can ask for drinks if they become thirsty, but are not able to independently access drinks at other times during the session to encourage them to deal with their own care needs.

Children enjoy a suitable range of activities which contribute to their good health. There are outdoor activities to help them develop control of their bodies, such as the use of wheeled toys, bats and a variety of balls. Indoor activities, such as acting out a familiar story or playing catch with bean bags are planned to make the best use of the limited space available to further encourage children to be active. They can access a wide range of equipment such as construction sets, play dough and small world play to help develop their fine control skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Space in the nursery is limited, however, the rooms are cheerfully decorated and kept free from clutter, so they are attractive and welcoming to parents and children. Each playroom is well-organised and equipped with appropriate furniture, for example, very low tables and captains chairs with harnesses for the youngest toddlers, enabling them to take an active part in all activities. However, displays in most rooms are positioned above children's height, which means they cannot fully benefit from the attractive pictures and photographs.

Children use a suitable range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources. These are organised in accessible shelving and drawers so children can choose them safely and easily, which enables them to make independent decisions and follow their own interests. For both hygiene and safety, toys and equipment are checked and cleaned regularly, although some of the most popular and well used resources, such as soft bodied dolls, are unappealing. Children learn to maintain their own safe play areas and are encouraged to help tidy away resources. Opportunities are missed to offer children the full range of play opportunities available in the

nursery as toys are rarely rotated between the rooms. Older children know that there are other toys, such as cookers with varying features, in other rooms and feel disappointed that they cannot play with them.

There are some suitable procedures in place to monitor the safety of children in the setting and reduce the risks of accidental injury. For instance, security in the nursery is given high priority, the front door has coded locks and all visitors ring for entry, and toys and equipment are checked for damage and suitability. However, daily safety checks are not consistently effective; the kitchen area is accessible to children who leave the pre-school activity room to use the toilet and gates that make the stairs inaccessible are not consistently fastened. In addition, a clearly defined procedure in the event that a child becomes lost has not been fully considered. Consequently, children's safety is compromised. Children have opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe through the regular practising of the emergency evacuation procedures, this is particularly important because they are cared for in a three storey building.

Staff have a suitable understanding of how to protect children as they review the setting's child protection policy, which reflects current local procedures, during staff meetings. Key staff are attending refresher training in child protection awareness to ensure that children are protected from harm or neglect.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children separate happily from their parents or are supported by staff to do so in the welcoming and child-friendly environment. All children make positive relationships with staff and their peers and spend the majority of their time playing together purposefully. Babies and younger children benefit from a suitably organised environment where they have space to crawl and toddle safely and explore the resources, such as the innovative treasure pockets. They enjoy secure and warm relationships with staff who are kind and attentive to their needs, sharing cuddles with happy confidence. Flexible routines enable babies to rest or play according to their own needs and parents' wishes, as a result they are settled and content. Introduction of the 'Birth to three matters' framework offers opportunities for babies and younger children to benefit from a wide range of age-appropriate activities that enable them to progress. However, parents are not actively involved in the assessment of the children's starting points to enable progress to be effectively monitored.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children benefit from a good range of practical activities because staff are aware of how children learn and have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Most activities are planned to ensure their effective progression through the stepping stones, although the learning objectives from the adult-led Christmas activities are not considered and opportunities are missed to tailor these activities to meet the differing developmental stages of the children. Staff are skilled at listening to children, answering their questions and responding to their comments, which ensures children feel valued and secure. Observations that assess children's progress are effective, using information from both

practitioners and parents to provide a complete picture of children's attainments and plan for their next stages of learning.

Recent changes to the way the setting operates has meant that on some days older children join the younger children's rooms. At these times children are not effectively involved in activities that are planned to meet their developmental needs. However, this situation is coming to an end and children will be fully involved in appropriate learning opportunities at the beginning of the next term.

Children approach staff with confidence to ask them to read a topical Christmas story book to them. They behave well, with staff continually praising and encouraging them, so enhancing their self-esteem. Staff act as good role models as they thank children for helping them tidy up. Children co-operate and concentrate well when playing pass the parcel, waiting their turn and revelling in the excitement of the game. They show a very good awareness of their own needs and independently use the toilet or blow their own noses. They enjoy helping with necessary tasks, such as laying the table for snack time.

Children enjoy reading and sharing stories with staff and each other and point out words and pictures as they predict what happens next. They have a developing knowledge of letters, understand how words are formed and know some initial letters and sounds. They have opportunities to write for a purpose, for instance when recording a phone call in the diary in the home corner, however, many of the writing resources such as pencils and pens are blunt or not working and this spoils children's enjoyment and sense of achievement. The environment is well labelled with numerals and text, although some storage drawers do not have corresponding pictures to help the less able children make connections with the words.

Children use mathematical language in their play and some recognise numbers, such as 11 on the clock. They easily count six cups for snack time and enjoy sequencing numerals from one to 10. Staff ably use many spontaneous opportunities to aid children's mathematical development, such as asking them to count how many children are left while playing musical statues. Children explore pattern as they play with coloured jigsaw pieces to make a dinosaur and recognise the sequences as they play with peg boards.

Children learn about the local environment on walks to the adjacent park and gardens, they record their activities using photographs and wall displays. They use their senses to experience a varied range of media, such as paint, malleable materials, ice cubes, sawdust and chocolate powder and have opportunities to explore and investigate materials, demonstrating their skills using various construction kits. Children enjoy using the computer on a regular basis and develop their knowledge of everyday technology using interactive toys. All children have good opportunities to take part in a range of physical activities and learn about keeping healthy.

Children play imaginatively in the role play area and create their own scenarios, such as pretending to be a wizard or organising a grocery shop. They have planned opportunities to take part in activities using a range of interesting materials provided by staff. However, creative materials are stored in another room which limits children's ability to create using their own imaginations.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are cheerfully welcomed into the setting, which ensures they feel valued and comfortable. The nursery is bright and cheerful and includes displays and examples of children's work, although some of this has not been updated to ensure that it directly relates to children currently in the nursery. Children show warmth and affection for the staff and clearly know them well, they happily seek out the company of adults, for example, to share a spontaneous story time.

Younger children follow their own routines as staff collect appropriate information from parents so they understand how to meet children's individual care needs. As a result, children are well-rested and content. However, parents are not asked to provide details of children's religious needs to enable staff to foster positive links with this area of their lives. Children are cared for in key worker groups to provide consistency and continuity of care and, on the whole, parents are aware who their child's key worker is, however the information displayed about the groups is out-of-date due to recent staff changes. The nursery prospectus offers some useful information about how the setting operates, but the policies and procedures are not easily accessible to enable parents to refer to them.

Children in all areas of the nursery are encouraged to select their own resources and activities, which enables them to follow and develop their own interests and skills. They take part in various charity events such as 'Children in Need' day, when they have their faces painted like Pudsey Bear and dress in pyjamas. This helps them learn about the lives of others. They have more limited opportunities to celebrate diversity as the resources and activities available to promote this are limited. Currently there are no children with disabilities or learning difficulties attending the nursery, but staff have past experience and ensure that they work with parents and other professionals to meet each child's needs.

Children behave well, their self-esteem is enhanced by the appropriate expectations of staff and they play harmoniously together. Staff have developed consistent guidelines so children have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with the parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are kept informed about the pre-school through the newsletters, which explain about topics and themes being introduced. Children's individual records of progress are regularly shared with parents who are offered the opportunity to make their own observations and comments to help inform the planning of the next stages in their child's learning. Parental comments confirm their satisfaction with the education provided; 'my child has received a broad and balanced nursery education, which has encouraged and stimulated development and achievement'. Much of the feedback offered to parents is provided verbally through the informal, open-door policy.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most documentation is in place to provide safe management of the nursery. The manager is working to update the operational plan in line with changes in the regulations. Children's safety has been appropriately considered within the procedure for a child who is not collected from the provision, but in the event of a child becoming lost, the procedures are not sufficiently detailed or documented. This compromises children's well-being. The systems for registration have been improved and a daily register is maintained on the ground floor showing the times of arrival and departure to the building of children and staff. However, the room registers do not accurately reflect the deployment of the staff to ensure children's welfare is fully protected.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. The manager has a sound overview of the provision and knows what needs to be done in order to further develop the provision for the children attending. This helps to ensure that the care and the education provided is constantly under review. Staff work effectively as a team, having an appropriate understanding of one another's roles and responsibilities. They are appropriately qualified and are committed to providing an interesting learning environment for the children. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the nursery was asked to promote children's good health by: ensuring that healthy snacks are provided; that food handling procedures are suitable; that nappy change procedures and arrangements for children's sleep promote good hygiene. Children are now offered a range of healthy snacks and nappy change procedures include the use of disposable gloves and aprons to protect against the risks of cross-infection. The arrangements for children's sleeps have been changed, but the new procedures do not consistently and effectively promote their good health. This remains a recommendation at this inspection.

The nursery were also asked to make curtain cords inaccessible to children. The cords have been wound up, out of children's reach, to promote their safety.

At the last education inspection the nursery was asked to develop the system for planning; to provide regular opportunities for children to link sounds with letters and to encourage children to begin to develop an understanding of calculation, using numerals in the environment as a learning tool. They were asked to consider ways in which activities can be tailored to meet the needs of individual children. Staff have developed a mainly effective system for planning using the assessments of children's development and the Foundation Stage curriculum to move children forward in their learning. They now introduce spontaneous opportunities for children to use letters, linking them to the initial sounds, and regularly practise the skills for early calculation within the daily routine, making use of the various displays of numerals around the room to consolidate children's understanding of numbers.

The nursery was also asked to develop opportunities for children to self-select activities and initiate their learning. Children have opportunities for free-play where they select and develop their play using the range of resources displayed at child-height within the room. They do not,

however, have access to the range of creative materials to enable them to create using their own imagination.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints.

In April 2006 concerns were raised about the temperature in the baby room. These concerns relate to National Standards 2: Organisation, 4: Physical environment, 6: Safety and 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers.

In order to investigate the allegations, a Childcare Inspector visited the provision unannounced. During the visit the inspector interviewed the provider, made observations and reviewed policies and procedures. As a result of the enquiries made and evidence gathered Ofsted is satisfied appropriate policies and procedures are in place and are being followed with regard to Organisation, Safety, and Working in partnership with parents and carers.

However, a recommendation was set in relation to National Standard 4; to monitor the temperature in the baby room and ensure that a comfortable and appropriate temperature is consistent at all times.

As a result of the complaint the Registered Person has provided additional heating in the area, installed room thermometers to monitor the temperature, has provided additional insulation to the flooring and new carpeting as the room is above the cellar. The provider remains qualified for registration and has made a record of the complaint in their complaint record.

In October 2006 Ofsted received concerns relating to staff to child ratios and the frequency of accidents at the provision.

A childcare inspector conducted an unannounced visit on 20 October 2006 to inspect against National Standards 2: Organisation, 6: Safety and 7: Health.

As a result of the visit two actions under National Standard 2 were set as follows: ensure the operational plan includes details of how staff will be deployed within the provision, how and what activities will be provided and suitable contingency arrangements to cover emergency and routine staff absences; make sure the system for recording children's and staff attendance shows their hours of attendance.

A satisfactory response has been received to the actions set and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- improve the arrangements for the provision of children's sleep to ensure that they consistently prevent spread of infection and promote the good health of children.
- ensure that safety measures in place to make the kitchen area and stairs inaccessible to children are consistently applied.
- develop procedures to ensure effective action can be taken in the event that a child becomes lost
- make policies and procedures accessible to parents
- ensure that children have access to a broad range of resources and activities which reflect diversity.

#### 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 opportunities for children to create using their own imagination
- improve planning to ensure that the learning outcomes are clear for activities which take place at all times of the year, and that all activities are tailored to suit the developmental stages of the children attending.

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)