



# Longfield Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	226436
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Alexandra Brouder
<b>Setting Address</b>	Longfield House, Kilby Road, Fleckney, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE8 8BQ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Longfield Kindergarten Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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?

Longfield Kindergarten was registered in January 1990. It is situated in a purpose built extension to the family home of the provider, on a farm near Fleckney in rural Leicestershire. The setting serves the local community and the surrounding market towns and villages and is registered to provide full-day care for up to 20 children aged between two and eight years.

The kindergarten is open from Monday to Friday, during term time for children under five years, and also opens for one week during the summer holidays for children up to eight years. Children attend five days a week from 09:00 to 15:00.

There are currently 22 children, aged from two to five years, on roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for their nursery education. The kindergarten has experience of providing care for

children with special needs. There are currently no children attending for whom English is an additional language.

Three full-time staff members, including the registered provider and three part-time member of staff work with the children. The full-time staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Leicestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of maintaining their own hygiene develops as they wash their hands before lunch, after messy play and when they have used the toilet. Their understanding of how this helps to maintain their health develops as staff explain to all children the need to wash hands after touching the farm animals and before their lunch. More able children know that this 'stops the germs' and 'washes germs away'. However, children are not always able to independently access the soap due to the sitting of the steps and sinks, as staff feel that the risk of children slipping on spilt soap is high. Children blow their noses, place their hands over their mouths when they cough and older children understand why this is important. Accurate and well-organised documentation is in place regarding medical and accident records, which helps to maintain children's welfare. As an extra precaution staff have developed a procedure in which labels are used on children's coats or bags to remind parents to speak to them to ensure that they are informed of any accident or incident, helping to protect children's welfare.

Children confidently practice their physical skills as they hop, crawl and run up and down slopes. They are enthusiastic learners and rise to new challenges well. For example, children were observed using planks of wood and placing them as they wanted to. Children handled them well, and in safety, carrying them under their arms and manoeuvring them around the play park into a variety of ideas, such as a bridge, a treasure map and a 'cow shed'. They have daily access to the outdoors, either on the play park, barn or walking out on the fields, which increases their all round ability and health. Children develop their understanding of being healthy through planned activities, healthy snacks and, for those that stay for lunch, through discussion with staff about what is good for them. Their fine motor skills develop as they use a variety of puzzles and handle small items well, such as beads and collage materials.

Children have a healthy balanced diet and learn the importance of this through discussion with staff, baking and through having a healthy snack each day, such as raisins, orange or apple. Staff talk to parents whose children stay for lunch regarding appropriate foods that should be in their lunch boxes to encourage the children to eat a balanced and healthy diet. Appropriate records are maintained regarding children's allergies and dietary requirements and all staff are made aware of this to ensure that children's needs are met appropriately. Children remain hydrated as they have access to fresh drinking water, in a labelled bottle, each day.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting with enthusiasm and confidence and settle immediately into their desired activity within the well organised, child centred environment. Their independence skills increase as they make choices in their play and self select from the full range of age appropriate resources. In addition to this, they request resources that they are not able to reach, from staff, who help them to this, or, if the session is drawing to a close, inform them that they will get it out for them the next day, which they do. This increases children's sense of belonging and self-esteem as they feel part of the group. Excellent resources are available which cover all areas of development and are checked regularly by staff to ensure that they are in full working order and therefore safe for children to access.

Thorough risk assessments are completed of all areas to ensure that children are always safe and supervised, and their welfare maintained. Additional measures are taken when walking round the fields to ensure that staff consider the likelihood of children being stung by nettles or picking up fungi. Children's safety is further supported through good procedures for securing the entrance to the setting and ensuring that unknown adults are not able to collect children, by the use of a password system.

Staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children is good. Relevant procedures are in place to ensure that should they have concerns about a child then they can take appropriate action. In addition to this, three of the staff have completed up to date training in this area to ensure that children's welfare is maintained appropriately.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident and enjoy their time at the setting. They are very settled and secure at the group, which is helped through the warm relationships that they have with staff and attending for five sessions a week. This promotes their sense of belonging. They actively enjoy their play and relish opportunities to try out new activities, such as hammering nails into wood. They persist at chosen activities for extended periods and show interest in what they do. Children talk enthusiastically to staff about what they are doing. For example, when building a 'cow shed' in the play park from wooden slats. Younger children enjoy a range of developmentally appropriate toys, equipment and activities. Staff are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning for the younger children, and observe and record what they can do and plan to plot their progress through this.

Children decision making skills are promoted well as they are able to independently access the range of resources on offer, or ask members of staff for specific items. Their self-esteem and confidence develops as staff listen to them and take time in helping them to achieve their goals as they play. Children behave very well and show a secure understanding of right and wrong and, as a result, play harmoniously.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage curriculum is sound and they ensure that children's progress towards the six areas of learning is discussed daily, to ensure that their individual needs can be met in full. Staff work very well as a team and know the children well. Written plans are in place that link to the daily activities that children take part in. However, it is not always clear how this links to specific areas of learning, and they are not evaluated effectively to show what children have learnt.

Observation and assessments are completed on all funded children to ensure that their needs are met. Staff begin to target children on the plans to enable them to make progress through the six areas of learning. However, this does not always link to the stepping stones or cover a balance of the six areas, which means that areas of development may be missed.

Children are fully interested in the range of activities available to them. They are confident and happy to attend the setting. They make good relationships with known adults and their peers and are confident in approaching visitors, questioning the purpose of their visit. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Their independence grows as they access the full range of activities to support their learning. They begin to learn about the world they live in through planned activities and themes, such as 'The Farm' and 'Ourselves', enabling them to think about the life's of others. They speak confidently about themselves and respond appropriately to staff questioning. For example, a three year old was able to explain that he had gone on a shopping trip with family members, what he had brought and had eaten for lunch. A small group of children enjoy role play in the play park as they work together to build bridges over the 'stepping stones', speaking knowledgeably about the importance of laying them flat so they don't fall off.

Children are able to develop their mark making skills in a range of activities. For example, in the role play area paper is available to make appointments or write messages. Mark making is encouraged and evidence shows how more able children are gaining skills in emergent writing. They competently use a range of tools including glue spreaders in creative activities and practice pencil control as they colour pictures. Children engage in conversations easily and are given time to respond. Staff use questioning skills well to enable children to extend their language for thinking. Children begin to recognise print as they look for their name at registration and enjoy looking at books.

Most children can count confidently to 10 and beyond and show a developing awareness of size and quantity. For example, a child was asked to take 'two at a time' from a packet of sweets, and was able to do so. Opportunities to consolidate their knowledge is available in a range of activities such as shape sorters, number puzzles and threading. Children's knowledge of shape develops and more able children recognise a circle, square and triangle in a sticking activity.

Children can run, hop and climb with growing confidence. They use a variety of equipment to develop these skills such as ride in toys, slides and seesaws. Further to this, they use their fine motor skills well as they thread and pick up small items to stick onto a collage. They recognise and express their own needs, such as accessing tissues and taking themselves to the toilet. Their understanding of a healthy lifestyle develops as they eat a healthy snack and speak about the impact that exercise has on their bodies.

Children do not have access to a working computer, but are able to develop their skills in the use of technology through battery-operated computers, cameras and musical equipment. Excellent opportunities are available for children to explore and learn about their environment; they walk around the fields to collect collage materials and have animals visit the setting for set periods, such as turkeys, guinea pigs, ferrets and calves. Practical activities such as celebrating different festivals increase children's knowledge of the wider world. Children delight in looking at growth and change. They plant a variety of foods and flowers throughout the year, such as courgettes, carrots, and hyacinths. Children have painted pictures to predict what the flowers will look like.

Children's imagination increases through innovative ideas. For example, planks of wood were taken onto the play park along with an empty cardboard box. Children delighted in developing various ideas to use these, such as making a 'cow shed', hiding in a cave, and building bridges. Children use a range of media to develop their senses. For example, cornflour gloop, play dough, bark mulch and sand. Opportunities for children to create freely, for their own purpose, are sometimes limited. They listen to music and begin to move in a desired method. For example, children pretended to be caterpillars growing and turning into butterflies after they had listened to the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar'.

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

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and respected by staff and their peers. Staff endeavour to meet the individual needs of all children and gain a range of information on children's individual needs before children begin. This ensures that they can offer appropriate support to each child from the moment they enter the setting. Children feel valued at the setting and staff take time to make all children feel welcome. For example, a child used to attend whose parents spoke French, at registration time the children and staff used French and English to count how many children were present each day. This same method was used for a child with German speaking parents. This promotes children's sense of belonging and ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Although the group has no children in attendance that have learning difficulties or disabilities, good systems are in place to ensure that appropriate support would be available to a child and the parents, should the need arise.

Children's behaviour is very good. Their self-esteem grows as staff offer them praise and encouragement as they play, as well as using a reward system. They begin to understand what is expected of them as they play, and show remorse when they upset others. For example, a three year old was observed to hit another child. The injured child became upset, so the child apologised and asked them to play with them. Staff sensitively support children in these matters and offer consistent and age appropriate guidelines, to ensure that children learn what is right and wrong.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Clear documentation is in place regarding the group's policies and procedures, how the setting supports children and information on the curriculum. Further to this, a newsletter is sent out to parents each term. Parents and carers

Speak highly of the staff group. They are very happy with the setting and know that staff are always available to talk with. Opportunities for parents to extend children's learning at home is developing using a weekly letter of the alphabet, and daily feedback on what children have completed each day.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff that have good experience in childcare and receive a high level of support in a secure and welcoming environment. All of the full-time staff hold relevant childcare qualifications, whilst part-time staff seek to improve their skills through discussion and training in the curriculum. Excellent staffing ratios ensure that children are well cared for and have their needs met, in the safe environment.

Sound documentation and records are in place to support the children's health, safety and enjoyment. Induction procedures are developing to ensure that new staff receive information that is relevant to their post. Vetting procedures exist that are effective in ensuring that children's safety is promoted.

The leadership and management is good. The owner has a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities, and a commitment to improve and adapt to change. All staff deliver the curriculum to children, although currently, only the full-time staff plan for the individual needs of children. Part-time staff do not have an input into the planning, but are given clear guidance on the purpose of the activity. Information is readily accessible to all staff regarding the six areas of learning and appropriate acts to support these.

Observation and assessments are completed on all children and inputted into their progress charts on a regular basis. However, it is not yet clear how this information is used to set appropriate challenges for children to enable them to make progression through the stepping-stones towards the six areas of learning.

The leader is an excellent role model, and an enthusiastic provider. She has a positive approach to children's learning and a strong belief in working as a team, which in turn earns her respect from all and enhances children's learning. The strong staff team work well together and support each other, to benefit the children attending.

Overall, the range of children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure that the child protection procedure for the Kindergarten complies with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) guidance and includes procedures to be followed, should a staff member be accused or suspected of abuse.

The child protection policy has been adapted to reflect current practice and show how the group 'safeguard' children. Three of the staff have attended up-to-date training in this area that has been cascaded to all staff, ensuring that children's welfare and safety is maintained.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was given one point for consideration, which was to ensure that parents are kept fully informed about their children's progress and achievements in all six areas of learning.

Children's parents are now made aware of the educational programme on offer to their children as they receive regular verbal information and posters inform them what their child will be doing. Termly reports are sent out to parents to ensure that they are fully aware of the progress their child is making in the six areas of learning.

### **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 that relevant information regarding and staff is accessible when using the outdoor area to ensure that appropriate action can be taken in an emergency.

#### **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):

- further develop the current planning system to show how this links to the six areas of learning, that this information clearly links to the specific learning intention and is evaluated to show how this was met
- further develop the observation and assessment process to ensure that targets set for children are appropriate and suited to their individual needs.



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