



Little Rascals Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	318118
Inspection date	23 November 2006
Inspector	Jennifer Anne Marsh
Setting Address	5 St. Nicholas Close, Edenthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 2QD
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Registered person	Fiona and Gary Straw
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.

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 Rascals Day Nursery opened in 1998. It is one of two privately owned nurseries and serves the local area of Edenthorpe, situated on the outskirts of Doncaster. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery at any one time. This includes 12 out of school places for children aged up to eight years. The nursery is open each week day from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round, except bank holidays and Christmas week. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 70 children aged from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. At the time of the inspection there were no out of school club children on roll. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Twelve childcare staff and one support staff are employed in the nursery, nine of whom hold a relevant childcare qualification and two are working towards.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy daily a varied range of well planned activities which contribute to their good health. All children including babies benefit from lots of fresh air daily. When the weather is cold they dress appropriately with gloves, coats and hats, and enjoy dispersing excess energy running round and playing outdoor games. Children benefit from regular play outdoors and often take walks to the park and around the local community.

The regular and frequent outdoor activities enable children to have effective control over their bodies and the way they move. Many three-year-olds have developed competent physical skills and balance to ride small two wheeled bikes. They successfully have bursts of fast pedalling to maintain their balance and are able to change direction to avoid obstacles. Other children's coordination skills are progressing rapidly as they eagerly ride bikes supported with stabilizers, ride scooters, throw and kick balls. Babies use furniture to pull themselves up and staff support them effectively up and down stairs extending their physical skills. Staff recognise signs of tiredness in babies and young children. They ensure children receive appropriate rest and relaxation by cuddling up on comfortable cushions to listen to stories or restful sleep in beds and cots.

Children benefit from a good range of healthy, nutritious meals. These are freshly prepared each day by the cook and thoroughly enjoyed by the children. Meal times are social occasions for the children and they are given plenty of time to relax and enjoy their meal. Children are encouraged to become independent by feeding themselves and staff encourage children to manage their own appetites. For example, they ask children if they still feel hungry, or do they need some more and are their tummies full. Children eat heartily and are confident to ask for more. Fresh fruit and vegetables are offered everyday and children's thirst is quenched by regular drinks of water and sugar free juice throughout the day.

Children learn good hygiene practice through daily routines. They independently access and manage the toilet and hand washing facilities. Children manage their own personal needs very well, for example, they obtain a tissue to wipe their nose and help wipe tables after any spills. Any risk of cross contamination is effectively managed by staff who, for example, follow thorough nappy changing procedures ensuring the correct use of disposable gloves and aprons. They ensure parents are aware of any recent outbreaks of communicable infections and symptoms to look for. There are clear details for the exclusion of sick children to prevent cross infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children independently select from a good range of well maintained resources and equipment within a secure and satisfactorily maintained environment. There is suitable freedom of movement for children between the playrooms where they freely and safely access available toys from tables, trays and shelves within their reach. Children start to learn about keeping safe as staff sensitively remind children to be careful when moving around indoors and the possible risk to themselves if they put their knife in their mouth at meal times. Careful consideration is given by staff to ensure that activities provided are age appropriate and are safely and independently accessed by the children.

Children remain safe because staff supervise children well and implement procedures to identify and minimise risks. For example, visitors to the setting are strictly by appointment only. This is to ensure a member of staff is available to assist them during their visit and that they remain accompanied in the presence of children.

Children are well protected in the event of fire because the procedures are practised regularly to ensure all children are involved. A log is maintained and includes information on whether the practise was successful or required amendments to ensure all aspects to maintain children's safety in the event of an emergency are covered.

A risk assessment of the premises is undertaken to identify any hazards within the setting, this is reviewed monthly. The outdoor area is fully enclosed and gates are padlocked to ensure children are unable to leave unsupervised. However, this area lacks a thorough assessment to fully ensure children's safety outside, for example, children's safety around seasonal berries and when they ride the two wheeled bikes.

Children's welfare is protected because staff show a suitable understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection. Some staff have attended recent training which has raised their awareness to any new procedures regarding safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at nursery, they are happy and settled. Children feel free to explore their environment because they feel secure and have good relationships with staff, which has a positive effect on their well-being. For example, the key worker system is strong and successful in coordinating information about individual children's needs and development between parents and staff. Children arrive chatting happily about events at home and some children enjoy a reassuring cuddle from staff to help them settle.

Babies benefit immensely from lots of cuddles and physical closeness. For example, they are wrapped in warm blankets, held closely when being bottle fed. They are sung softly to and their heads stroked until they fall asleep. The quality of babies' and toddlers' learning experiences are being enhanced as staff implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This is fairly new to the setting and staff show ongoing commitment to regularly evaluate their planning

and assessments. This ensures young children's individual needs are fully met and they experience an interesting range of activities.

Children benefit from a good balance of interesting activities and experiences including play dough, sand and water play. Staff work together very well and offer children just the right support and motivation, resulting in all children making extremely good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. For example, they independently set the table with cutlery and placemats and successfully pour their own drinks. Although, on some occasions creative activities for younger children have too much adult intervention. All children are making extremely good progress in their language and literacy. For example, they fully enjoy the social atmosphere created at lunch time and chat happily amongst themselves about the days events. Story times for young children are relaxing and enjoyable, everyone snuggles up on cushions with staff listening to interesting story tapes about 'Laura's Star' supported with pictures and expressive reading from staff. Children have a sense of belonging and are familiar with the daily routine. For example, they know when to tidy away and how to line up to go outdoors.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because they are supported by staff whose clear awareness of the Foundation Stage fully supports their learning. Planning has recently been evaluated and improved. This ensures children access a well balanced range of daily activities. Long, medium and short term planning covers the six areas of learning, which are clearly demonstrated in weekly plans. Teaching is rooted in the staffs sound knowledge of how young children learn and progress. Children are very self- assured in their play and are confident to try out new experiences. The children's key worker successfully monitors the children's daily progress and their next step of learning and this is shared daily with parents.

Children are making extremely good progress in their language and literacy. They have lots of opportunities to experiment with mark making and forming letters through drawing patterns in the sand, foam and cornflour and water 'gloop'. This results in many three-year-olds confidently being able to write their own name. Children interact and communicate with growing confidence. Children use language to describe what they are doing, for example, when they are playing in the water and constructing models. Children share books with staff, and they enthusiastically sing songs in English and Spanish. Other early reading skills are developed well, as children recognise their names from cards, and link sounds to letters.

There are good creative displays of children's work which shows a variety of resources and methods used, such as scarecrow pictures with straw and materials. Children's designing and making skills are being developed, they realise tools can be used for a purpose as they persist with interest, cutting out from catalogues and photographs from home. However, there is a lack of opportunity for children to explore a range of objects and materials that work in different ways for different purposes. Children are confident to operate the computer, completing simple mouse tasks, such as 'click and drag'. Visits to the library and shops, incorporated by visits from local services, such as ambulance and fire service, successfully raises children's awareness to the world in which they live. Children are observing change through their current topic about

autumn, they discuss and observe the changing seasonal colours of leaves in the garden and learn new words, such as evergreen and bark.

Many children count confidently up to 10 and can solve simple number problems when using the construction blocks. They recognise simple shapes, such as star, circle, triangle and are able to relate that their house is square. Children use mathematical language to describe size and quantity through everyday play, for example, 'pass me the big one' and I can see a 'teeny weenie' mouse.

Children communicate and express themselves well to each other and adults. Interaction is appropriate and staff encourage children to share their experiences, talking about events in their lives and at home. Staff use lots of effective questioning during activities to increase children's thinking skills. For example, staff ask children what might happen when they put raisins in the 'gloop', will they float or sink, 'Why do you think the leaves are this colour'? At lunch time, many children initiate their own conversations to the other children asking 'did you go to your grandma's then?' They confidently follow simple instructions from staff and pass the instructions to other children about preparing for the water play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with staff that treat them as individuals and with equal concern. They feel a sense of belonging within a welcoming friendly environment. New children receive lots of support from staff if they arrive feeling a little insecure. Children receive continuing reassurance that mummy is coming back for them, which helps develop trust between adult and children. Large photograph displays of the children and their families are displayed throughout the nursery. This has a positive impact on children's well-being as they regularly point to mum or dad and talk to staff and other children about their families and whether dad is at home or work. Children are encouraged to look after and care for others less fortunate than themselves when they are involved in fundraising activities for 'Children In Need.'

Children learn about other cultures and beliefs mainly through themed topics, such as Diwali and Chinese New year. Children as young as two years are embracing the knowledge of learning an additional language. The children skip round happily singing 'It's Spanish time' as they eagerly look forward to twice weekly visits. The children are extremely enthusiastic as they learn the Spanish language through lots of lively songs and action rhymes.

Children relate well to their peers and have formed attachments to members of their group. Babies enjoy secure relationships with trusted adults, who listen to them and are attentive to their needs. Staff present as good role models to children. Children learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and think about the needs of others. For example, children have devised and display their own 'Golden Rules'. During circle time, children reflect on their behaviour with the help of a creative display called 'Fergal Frog'. For example, as staff praise the group for positive behaviour, Fergal is moved along the lily pads until he reaches the pond, when all children are rewarded with a treat. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are warmly welcomed and free to stay for as long as they like and settle their children. Children benefit from friendly relationships between staff and parents. Presentation of some parent notice boards are a little disorganised, these are currently being updated and reorganised to ensure clarity of information. Although, all the relevant information is available. This includes relevant information on the Foundation Stage and each area of learning. Weekly and daily topics are displayed and how this impacts on the children's learning. Many parents comment that they read what is displayed and are beginning to learn about the learning outcomes. They regard the staff highly and feel confident with the key worker process and are fully informed about their children's progress. For example, the key worker takes time to discuss with parents daily about their children's activities and progress made that day. They then discuss their children's next steps of learning and how parents can help continue the children's progress at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled, they play an active part in the setting. They benefit from being cared for by a qualified and experienced staff group who undertake additional training and have regard for children's well-being. Staff are well deployed, they ensure all children are supported and receive individual attention. The key worker system is effective in enabling staff to get to know individual children well and to monitor their development. Some staff have been with the provision for many years, which helps provide consistency of care for children and their families.

Policies and procedures meet regulatory requirements. However, the settings operational plan, inclusive of policies and procedures are not regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain effective. Secure systems are in place for staff recruitment and induction. The monitoring of staff development is informal. Although, evidence shows that staff are committed and regularly attend training, for example, 'Birth to three', child protection and Portage.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff show a good understanding of how children learn and meet their individual needs very well. They provide a wide range of interesting activities that help children progress. Children's assessments are regularly evaluated and completed on a daily basis. They are now used more effectively to guide the planning and children's next steps to learning. The setting benefit from the advice of the early years service support teacher who is guiding staff in nursery education and 'Birth to three matters' framework. The manager is fully interactive with the setting and presents as a good role model to staff. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the provider agreed to increase staffs' knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Children now benefit from staff who have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They evaluate the planning and children's assessments to ensure children are making good progress within the stepping stones.

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.

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 risks and hazards are identified and reduced effectively in the outdoor play area
- review and update the operational procedures on a regular basis

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):

- increase opportunities for children to observe, explore and investigate how and why things work.

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