



Little Cherubs

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	120100
Inspection date	06 December 2006
Inspector	Carol Newman
Setting Address	60 Station Road, West Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 6DX
Telephone number	01932 348348
E-mail	
Registered person	Little Cherubs Nursery
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 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 Cherubs Day Nursery opened in 2000. It is a privately owned provision. The nursery operates from a converted chapel building in a residential area of West Byfleet in Surrey. There is a very small, enclosed, outside play area and children are taken to the local park and the canal to feed the ducks. Children attending the setting come from the local area.

The nursery is open each day between 07:00 and 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year and children may attend full or part days. It is registered to care for a maximum of 28 children at any one time and there are currently 36 children, from ten months to four years, on roll. This includes six children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with learning difficulties/disabilities and/or those who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight members of staff who work at the nursery. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two staff members who are currently on relevant training courses. The nursery receives support from the local authority. There is a pet rabbit who lives in the outside play area.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play happily in a generally clean environment. Some effective daily routines and the staff's own satisfactory practice helps to prevent cross infection. Children know to wash their hands before they take their snack and pictorial reminders are displayed at the snack stations. Children automatically wash their hands after playing outside and suitable nappy changing procedures contribute to protecting the children from germs. However, older babies do not have their hands washed at nappy changing times, to encourage an early understanding of good hygiene practice.

There is a no shoes policy in the setting and children understand this. However some resources, such as the cushions in the book areas, the dolls in the two - three's room, the hard flooring in the three - five's room and carpeted communal areas, are not maintained in a clean and hygienic state for the children's benefit. Additionally, although children wash their hands prior to lunchtime, they then engage in further activities, which means that they do not come to the lunch table with clean hands, to avoid ingesting germs.

Most staff have a current first aid certificate and parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment is requested. This means staff can act in the children's best interests if there is an accident. However, some contents of the first aid boxes are unsuitable, or are past their expiry date and this presents a risk to the children.

Children thoroughly enjoy the meals provided by the outside caterers and they all eat together, making it a social event. Healthy breakfasts are provided in the nursery and children receive a range of healthy snacks including scotch pancakes, milk and fruit, encouraging them to develop healthy eating practices. Staff gather all relevant information regarding diet and medical history, including information regarding the children's immunisations. This ensures children's individual dietary and medical needs are met.

Babies and toddlers learn to control their own body, gaining physical skills appropriate to their stage of development. They crawl and pull themselves up on the furniture when they are in the toddler room. However, no domestic style furniture is available in the baby room, to help the children develop mobility and to continue normal life experiences. Staff monitor food intake and nappy changes to ensure babies remain healthy and children's individual sleep requirements are respected. Children and babies under three develop a healthy dependence on their key worker who is receptive to individual needs.

Children enjoy daily physical exercise that contributes to keeping them healthy. Space in the outdoor area is limited, but staff ensure children are able to enjoy fresh air in all but the most

extreme weathers. Staff include outdoor physical activities in the daily planning and activities such as planting bulbs, riding bicycles and jumping on the trampoline help children to develop good physical skills. Children are beginning to understand the changes that take place in their bodies when playing outside. They know they need to wrap up warmly and to wear their gloves.

Activities such as walks along the canal to observe wildlife and visits to the local church and shops, extend the children's physical skills and also contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play happily in an environment where staff have worked hard to maximise the use of the limited space, so children can move around freely, independently and generally safely. The premises are very secure and there are good procedures in place to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access. Closed circuit television, a well maintained visitors book and the staff's vigilance protect the children.

Some good safety measures to prevent accidents, are in place. Staff carry out regular risk assessments in each room and outside to minimise hazards. Recent improvements have been made to the storage of most resources. Toys and games are easily available to the children in well labelled boxes and children are encouraged to tidy away when they have finished using them. However, the unstable storage of some resources in the three - five's room, on top of a shelving unit over an area where the children work, presents a risk of harm to the children.

Children and staff practice the emergency evacuation procedures on a regular basis. This helps children become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency. Staff pay attention to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, children understand that they must keep their slippers on so that they can leave the building quickly, if necessary and that they must walk and not run indoors.

Children use a wide range of good quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular visual checks of toys and resources ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child. Staff supervise children closely when playing outdoors and ensure all resources are safe before children go out to play. There are sufficient cots and beds that allow children to rest and sleep in comfort and safety. Staff regularly check sleeping children to ensure their safety and well-being.

Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, confident and relaxed. Children under three explore and experiment through a range of well-planned activities that are appropriate for their stage of development. Babies and toddlers often play together and gain much from this experience. They learn to communicate and develop good relationships. Staff give good support to help babies learn about their

environment. Good use is made of the Birth to three matters framework to enhance the youngest children's experiences. Babies have access to a good range of resources such as treasure baskets, soft toys and inset puzzles. They become involved in activities such as gluing and sticking and they freely explore sand and small world figures.

Older babies confidently talk about making hearts and circles as they use a range of tools to manipulate playdough. Staff encourage young children to express their thought and feelings. Good questioning and repeating children's responses encourages use of language. A good balance of adult and child initiated games help children to make progress in all areas of learning.

Staff make regular observations against the Birth to three matters framework and record achievements in the children's profiles. This helps the staff plan for each child to ensure their learning and developmental needs are met. Staff identify the next steps for each child and ensure these are focussed on during individual and group activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are actively involved in their learning. They are confident, work well independently, take initiative and show good levels of concentration. They keenly see to their personal needs such as dressing for outdoor play and serving their own snacks. Staff encourage children to work co-operatively to help each other with coats and shoes and children know they should pour "just a little bit" of milk at the snack bar, so that it does not spill.

Children behave well and respond to requests for good behaviour. They understand the rules within the setting, such as the requirement to walk and not run and abide by them. Children are encouraged to be very kind to each other and do this willingly. This ensures good relationships and harmony.

Most children are developing good spoken language. They learn to negotiate well and to express their imagined experiences during a range of role-play situations. For example, they talk about whether they are "Elf one" or "Elf two" in the Santa's workshop role play and decide what resources they will use to make their presents and cards. Children count confidently and recognise numbers accurately. For example, children know they have found numbers two, three, four and five and therefore number one is missing, when they go on the number hunt around the nursery. They proudly announce this to the group.

Children automatically write their name on their artwork, using correctly formed letters at most times. They enjoy books and tell the story through the pictures, turning the pages carefully. Children use mathematical language such as "big" and "small" in everyday situations. Staff expose children to positional language such as "above" and "next to" when helping children to decide where to put their artwork.

Children are confident in using information and communication technology. They demonstrate good mouse control when playing games on the computer and clearly enjoy this activity. Children learn about their environment through local walks and visitors to the setting. Visitors to the group for the "People who help us" topic include the fire service, nurse, doctor and teacher.

The dentist visits as part of the "Healthy Living and My Body" topic and children leave the setting to shop for fresh food, walk to the local church to observe the stained glass windows and walk along the canal to observe wildlife.

Children use their senses to explore and describe experiences such as, tasting food at snack time, listening to musical tapes and feeling a range of textures such as soil and sand. They have free access to a wide range of musical instruments so that they can experiment with sounds and tap out rhythms.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. They paint, draw and make collages that represent their experiences. Children are involved in lots of free expression activities and these are displayed effectively around the room. Children are allowed to interpret activities for themselves and use quantities of resources as they choose. Children work with interesting resources such as oil pastels.

Staff are good role models and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning by presenting activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner. Staff interact well with the children. They recognise opportunities to support the children's learning and to keep them engaged.

Staff know the children well and look for their next steps using the children's profiles. However, this system is inconsistent and does not systematically identify children's next steps. Children are achieving satisfactorily and the setting has made good progress since their last inspection. However, no individual observations or assessments are made to clearly identify children's individual next steps, so that appropriate activities, that move all children on at a good pace, can be included in the weekly planning. Staff have enrolled on a range of courses to improve their understanding of how to deliver an effective Foundation Stage curriculum.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff treat all children with respect and kindness and use lots of praise and encouragement to promote their self-esteem and confidence. Planned activities and topics help children to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them and children can access a suitable range of resources that reflect today's cultural diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Currently all children in the setting speak and understand English well. Staff have not identified, in policies or procedures, suitable strategies, such as learning a few words in the child's own language or the use of picture clues, to support children with English as an additional language. Staff are aware of children's individual needs and respect their differences.

The nursery has experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and they progress well due to consistent encouragement and support. However, detailed observations and records, when staff have concerns regarding the development of the children in their care, are not maintained. Therefore staff cannot address any issues with parents and outside agencies in an informed manner.

Appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, help children understand right from wrong. Children learn important social skills such as sharing and listening to each other. Children enjoy each other's company and treat each other kindly.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents contribute to an initial assessment of their child. This ensures staff have a knowledge of individual needs and achievements. This helps staff to build on what children already know. Parents receive information about the foundation stage and the Birth to three matters framework in the setting prospectus. The information outlines what and how children will learn. This ensures parents understand that play has an important role in developing children's skills for the next stage of learning. Staff involve parents in their child's learning by giving suggestions regarding activities that can extend learning at home. This is included, in some detail, in the regular newsletters.

Care diaries for young children contribute to continuity of care. The staff respect parents' wishes. This enables them to meet individual needs regarding routines. Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive and parents feel welcome. Staff ensure parents know how their children are generally progressing through informal verbal feedback. However, Foundation Stage profiles are not sufficiently structured, with evidence based on clear observations, to give accurate information to parents regarding their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All documentation required for the safe and effective management of the nursery, including accurate attendance records, is in place. This contributes to the welfare of the children. Many improvements, such as the introduction of mostly effective storage systems and designated learning areas, have been made to the room layouts since the last inspection. As a result, children can access resources easily and they feel at home in the nursery.

An extensive range of policies and procedures are in place to guide staff in their daily practice. These have not been updated recently. However, staff have spent some time identifying the weaknesses and a revision of the policies and procedures forms part of the improvement plan. The full operational plan is also in the process of being developed as a result of the last inspection. These improvements contribute to the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare.

Leadership and Management are satisfactory. Staff changes have been made since the last inspection. There are effective recruitment procedures in place. Staff are actively encouraged to attend further relevant childcare training and have enrolled on a wide range of courses for the New Year. The person in charge of the babies and the other room leaders are well qualified and experienced. The setting aims for 100% of staff to have a suitable qualification. To this end, two members of staff are currently on training courses. This means that suitable, experienced and qualified persons look after the children.

Detailed assessments have been made regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and action plans to improve the care and education offered, are in place. Management have enthusiastically embraced the improvement plan offered by the local authority and recent

changes for the better have been warmly acknowledged by staff and parents. Staff are aware that some improvements with regard to observation, assessment and record keeping remain outstanding. However, children play happily and productively in this homely environment.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs (toddlers and two-to-three year olds) and improve the range of play materials that children can independently access themselves. Staff have introduced the Birth to three matters framework and are using this effectively to provide a good range of suitable activities to meet young children's developmental needs. Resources are stored in low level trolleys and children are encouraged to choose for themselves, to develop their independence.

In addition, staff agreed to improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and ensure that the attendance register is properly and accurately maintained on a day to day basis to show which children are present on the premises. Also, to keep a record of children's times of arrival and departure. New registers have been purchased and are completed effectively, showing children's arrival and departure times. This ensures staff are aware of the children that are present, at all times.

Also, the setting agreed to develop and implement an effective monitoring system to review existing practice, to identify strengths and areas for improvement within the nursery. The management have devised detailed action plans and acted on them to improve the standards of care and education on offer to the children. The setting is making ongoing progress through regular monitoring and evaluation.

Nursery Education

At the last inspection the setting agreed to develop staff understanding of the early learning goals and their role in supporting children's learning across all areas of the curriculum. Also, to improve systems to monitor children's achievements and progress and use the information gained to plan for the next steps in their learning. The new staff employed in the three - five's room are enthusiastic and committed. Staff have attended some training relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum and have enrolled on a wide range of additional courses for the New Year, including observation and assessment. Improvements to the monitoring and evaluation systems, so that staff can accurately plan individual children's next steps, remain outstanding. However, staff know the children well and they are providing a stimulating balanced programme of activities for the children.

The setting also agreed to devise and implement a system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and children's learning within the Foundation Stage to ensure children's needs are met. The management have recently completed the local authority self evaluation forms in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the educational provision. They have enthusiastically undertaken the local authority improvement plan and have sought out training

opportunities to support their practice for the benefit of the children. This is an on going project.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take 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 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 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 the contents of the first aid boxes are regularly maintained to ensure they are suitable, sufficient and in date
- ensure good procedures with regard to hand washing are in place, particularly in relation to immediately prior to lunch time and the children's hands when they have their nappies changed, to encourage early hygiene
- ensure all toys are stored safely to protect the children from the risk of resources falling from a height
- ensure a high standard of cleanliness is maintained with regard to some resources in all rooms, the hard flooring in the three to fives room and carpeted communal areas.

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):

- ensure observations and assessments are made to clearly identify children's individual next steps, so that appropriate activities, that move all children on at a good pace, can be included in weekly planning.

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