



Little Ones - Budlake

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233576
Inspection date	20 October 2006
Inspector	Julie Neal
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Registered person	Little Ones Childcare Ltd
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 Ones at Budlake is a privately owned nursery providing full day care. It serves the village of Budlake and other nearby villages, and is one of a small chain of nurseries operating in the Exeter area.

The setting is registered to care for 29 children under five years. There are currently 53 children on roll, of these 17 are in receipt of funded nursery education. Care is provided for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are eight members of staff who work with children. Seven of these have level 3 childcare qualifications, and one is working towards this. The setting also employs a cook.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday 07.30 to 18.00 all year round. Overnight care is not provided.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from illness and infection because there are good routines in place within the nursery to support their health. For instance, staff are very vigilant in ensuring that good hygiene practice is maintained when changing nappies. Children learn very well about managing their own personal hygiene, and show clear understanding of why they should wash their hands, such as before meals and after using the toilet. Parents are given very good information regarding exclusion times for a wide range of childhood illnesses, ensuring that children do not attend the nursery if they are unwell and therefore protecting children from the risk of cross infection. Generally, documents supporting children's health are shared appropriately with parents, such as accident records. However, there are inconsistencies in ensuring that records of medicines given to children are countersigned by parents, which presents a risk to children. All staff in the setting have first aid qualifications, which supports children's health and wellbeing.

Overall, children benefit from an environment that is clean and well looked after. Babies and very young children can crawl and play on the floor without risk to their health because staff ensure the baby room is very clean. Wooden floors in other areas are frequently swept, and there are good routines in place to ensure toilets and the kitchen are clean. However, routines are less effective in ensuring that a carpeted area in the room used by older children is suitably clean.

Children enjoy meals and snacks provided by the nursery that are plentiful and nutritious. Breakfast, lunch and tea are provided, according to the times children are present. Meals are very well balanced and excellent planning ensures children are provided with variety and opportunities to try different tastes and textures. For example, children enjoy different pasta dishes, curries, pies, and roast dinners. All food is home made, for instance chicken pies and home made cakes and puddings. Children enjoy an excellent variety of fruit and vegetables as part of each meal, and also at snack times, to ensure they receive the health benefits of a well balanced diet. Individual dietary requirements are catered for very well, for instance vegetarian children have vegetable curry instead of chicken, or Bolognese made with soya mince.

Children enjoy the health benefits of plenty of fresh air and exercise. They play outside several times a day, sometimes in structured games and activities, sometimes developing their own play. They are extremely confident as they use a very good range of equipment that develop large muscle skills, riding bikes and cars, throwing, catching and kicking balls, and using a variety of apparatus to jump, balance and climb with skill and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Excellent organisation of the physical environment ensures that children are safe and secure at all times. The premises are bright and child friendly, and space is organised extremely well to provide an excellent variety of play and learning opportunities. The needs of babies and very young children are given very good consideration in the way that the premises are organised, with a cot room and other quiet areas organised so that children can nap when they choose. Sleeping children are monitored very well to ensure they are safe at all times. Good everyday routines support children's safety, for example adults do not wear shoes in the baby room so children can play on the floor without risk to health or safety. There is an excellent variety of resources within the setting that support the care and development of children very well. These are organised extremely well to be accessible to children in their play and promote choice and independence. Excellent routines are in place to ensure that toys are frequently checked and cleaned, and so remain safe for children to use.

Children are safe within the nursery and on outings because staff make excellent risk assessments of all areas. These are very clear and comprehensive and are frequently reviewed to ensure prompt action is taken to address any issues raised. Children learn very well about personal safety. They take part in regular fire drills and know emergency evacuation procedures. They learn simple road safety and very good organisation means they are safe on excursions and walks in the local countryside. Staff have an excellent understanding of child protection issues and their responsibilities in this area, which helps to protect children from the risk of abuse or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children immensely enjoy the excellent range of activities that promote learning and development for all ages. Children throughout the nursery are actively encouraged to take a dynamic part in planning what they do, because the setting implements 'High/Scope' principles extremely well. For example, children as young as two years old confidently take part in the 'plan-do-review' cycle where they select activities to take part in and give feedback in small groups about what they enjoyed most. Babies and very young children are cared for extremely well because staff use their very good knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to monitor individual children's progress, and to plan activities that encourage development. Topics and themes for activities run across the whole nursery, and plans make clear links between components of 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage curriculum and show differentiation in learning intentions for older and younger children.

Children across the nursery enjoy an excellent balance of structured activities and free play. Children under two become thoroughly absorbed and engaged in art and craft activities such as 'cutting and sticking' and sponge painting. They chatter animatedly to staff as they create their pictures from the good selection of materials provided, and they develop skills well because they are encouraged and supported according to their individual needs. For example, some very young children cut their own paper shapes with help from staff, learning to use scissors safely. Babies and younger children develop their own play well and show high levels of interest

in the resources that are available. For instance, children are engrossed as they sort pasta shapes and are delighted when they discover they can 'post' these into the hollow legs of the sand tray, enthusiastically showing staff who applaud their initiative; children play with brightly coloured fabric, delighting in the patterns the colours make and trailing it behind them as they pretend to be snakes. Two year old children are grouped with three to five year olds, and excellent organisation of activities ensures they are challenged and encouraged to make very good progress, according to their individual stages of development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and implement this very well to ensure all children make very good progress. Planning is very thorough and ensures that children take part in extremely good activities that cover all areas of learning very well. Areas where activities can be extended to develop children's learning are clearly identified. Staff further demonstrate their high levels of competence in delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum in their confidence in encouraging child led activities while ensuring that learning objectives are achieved. Staff make excellent observations of children and these are used very well in developing individual learning plans that clearly identify the next steps in learning for each child. Staff monitor what they do extremely well, making very good written evaluations of activities and children's levels of participation and enjoyment. They share information very well, discussing individual children's progress at team meetings, and informally keeping each other informed when they observe individual children's achievements. For example, a child is engrossed and absorbed for an extended period making shapes in corn flour paste and staff are very enthusiastic because this is the first time the child has shown interest in 'messy' play and discuss how this sudden interest can be developed.

Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They are extremely confident and interact very well with each other and adults. They concentrate very well and become thoroughly absorbed in chosen activities. They are strong communicators who eagerly share their thoughts and ideas in group situations, such as circle time and at 'review' time when they talk about what they have been doing. Children link sounds and letters very well because they practise this in a variety of contexts. For example, they bring a variety of items from home beginning with the letter of the week for the 'phonics table', they focus on different letter sounds at circle time, and they look for pictures in books beginning with the same initial sound. Children are developing excellent writing skills. They practise their mark making in different contexts, having extremely good access to pens, pencils, crayons and paper in their play, such as in the 'office', in the home corner, and on the writing table, which they use enthusiastically to write letters and shopping lists. Many children are forming letters clearly and can write their own names without assistance, and staff encourage them to do so through simple but effective activities such as labelling their own work.

Children are developing excellent mathematical skills in all areas. They count very confidently and recognition of numerals is good. Their knowledge of simple calculation and mathematical problem solving is extremely good. For example, children cutting fruit identify that that most

fruits are in pairs but the lemon is 'all by itself'; they identify how many children in the group are wearing something green and how many are wearing something pink, and calculate which group has more children. They have a very good understanding of size and measure, for instance they organise animals according to size, into groups of 'big' and 'small'; they use sand and water to compare the quantity held by different objects. Children immensely enjoy exploring and investigating the properties of a range of materials. They discuss the texture of corn flour as it is diluted and explore how it feels as it changes from powder to liquid consistency, adding different colours and essences such as strawberry and vanilla to encourage them to use their senses. They discuss the fruit that they cut up, for instance examining what a kiwi fruit feels like outside and inside, the colours of the flesh and the seeds. Children construct and build very well using a good variety of materials, working extremely co-operatively together to achieve their goals. For example, five children use giant blocks to build a house, discussing which blocks are best for the walls and how they will construct the roof. Children learn well about the use of simple technology. As well as using programmable toys in their play they relish the regular opportunities to use real items, such as taking photographs using the digital camera. Activities that encourage children's awareness of the wider world and other cultures are well organised so that they are meaningful to them. For example, children learn about festivals relating to different cultures, such as Divali and Eid, exploring the different foods eaten, dressing up in different costumes relating to the festivals, and learning about places in the world where these are celebrated.

Children express their creativity extremely well, using an excellent variety of media and materials in their play. They thoroughly enjoy using paints and other art materials as they freely create their own pictures and designs. They use their imaginations exceptionally well and utilise resources creatively as they develop their play. For example, children constructing a house decide they need 'safety gear' and rummage through the dressing up clothes to find a variety of hats that become their 'safety helmets'. They enjoy very good musical activities, singing songs and using percussion instruments very well as they play fast and slow rhythms, and creating musical patterns with different sounds. Children use a very good variety of tools and equipment that promote hand-eye co-ordination, such as scissors, dough cutters, paint brushes and pencils. They are very proficient in their use because they can freely access them as needed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely relaxed and confident in the setting. They demonstrate very high levels of self esteem because their specific needs are met very well. Babies and very young children benefit from being cared for by a small and consistent team of staff within the baby unit who know their individual requirements extremely well, and ensure that their care is in keeping with home routines. This results in babies that are secure, confident, and happy. Staff have a high regard for children's thoughts and ideas, they listen well to what they have to say and they are extremely positive and encouraging. Children are very proud of what they do, and staff support this very well by displaying their work and encouraging them to select items to go in their scrap books. This shows children that what they make and learn has value and so effectively promotes children's self esteem. Staff have an excellent understanding of equal opportunities and inclusion, and show very good awareness of the diverse needs of children and families attending

the nursery. Any concerns regarding individual children's progress are quickly identified through the excellent processes of observation and children benefit from the settings pro-active approach to ensuring these are addressed.

Children are very well behaved and have excellent manners. They are kind and caring to each other and very helpful, for example older children help younger children to pour their milk at snack time, and all children help to tidy toys away before lunch. They listen very well to each other and to adults, and know not to interrupt, for example when another child is sharing their news. Staff interactions with children are excellent, their clear and careful explanations ensure that children know what is expected of them. Staff are very warm, consistent, and positive, and children respond very well by being affectionate and communicative.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered. Children are learning well about their own and other cultures and communities because they take part in interesting activities that explore diversity and the wider world.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The information they receive about the setting is of excellent quality and ensures they are kept fully informed and involved in their children's care and learning. They have good information regarding all the procedures that underpin the care of their children because these are included in the parents handbook. Excellent use is made of notice boards in all areas of the nursery to keep parents informed about the activities children take part in, forthcoming events, and current menus. Planning is clearly displayed so parents can see how the activities their children take part in link with the Foundation Stage curriculum and the different areas of learning. Excellent feedback is provided so that parents are well informed about what their children do each day. Staff have very strong relationships with parents, who regularly stop to talk about their children's day. Daily diaries are used to record younger children's routines and these support consistency of care between home and the nursery. Regular parents evenings are held so that parents are well informed about their children's progress towards the early learning goals. Very good systems are in place to involve parents in their children's learning, for example staff discuss children's individual learning plans with them and encourage their input; staff make suggestions regarding simple ways they can be involved, such as helping children search for items at home that begin with the letter of the week. Staff welcome parents suggestions and encourage them to use the comments book to note any compliments or concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for which they provide. Robust employment procedures ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so. Induction processes for new staff are extremely thorough, which means that children benefit from a staff team who are highly confident in their knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures that support their care and wellbeing. The setting has a comprehensive operational plan with clearly stated aims and objectives that support children's care and learning. Children benefit from good levels of adult support as ratios are maintained well and at least one member of staff is supernumerary. Additionally, there are very good arrangements in place to provide extra staff when needed, for example to cover holidays or sickness. Regulatory documents are

well maintained, for example registers clearly show the times each child is present, and accident reports are very thorough. There are some discrepancies in ensuring that parents countersign records of medicines given.

A keyworker system is used throughout the provision and this is very effective in enabling children's development to be monitored and activities planned accordingly. For example, staff working with younger children make excellent use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework as they assess the progress of each child, and they use this knowledge effectively to plan activities that encourage and challenge children well.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Strong systems of staff appraisal and self evaluation ensure that areas for development are quickly identified. Commitment to training and development means that children benefit from skilled practitioners who are confident in their implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and therefore children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Monitoring systems are very good and are used extremely well to identify the next steps in children's learning. Assessment records overall reflect the excellent progress children are making in all areas of learning, although there are minor discrepancies. For instance, children regularly use everyday technology, such as taking photographs using the digital camera, staff are aware of their skills and ensure children's folders contain examples of their work. However, some children's records do not accurately reflect their competence in this area because staff do not consistently link what children do to the appropriate stepping stones relating to this one aspect of learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed to further improve the care of children by ensuring that accident records are available for inspection. Records of any accidents to children in the setting are now readily available.

It was agreed to improve the provision of nursery education by improving children's access to books, and to review planning and assessment to ensure activities are appropriate to the learning needs of individual children. Books are now well displayed and children regularly select them independently during play. Assessments of children's progress are used very well in planning activities that consistently provide challenge. The introduction of individual learning plans for each child ensures that staff identify the next steps in learning for all children, and plan accordingly to ensure individual progress.

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

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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):

- further support children's health and wellbeing by: ensuring that records of all medicines given to children are consistently countersigned by parents, and ensuring that cleaning routines do not overlook any areas used by children.

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 that all children's assessment records are consistent in clearly showing the excellent progress children make in all areas of learning, with particular reference to not overlooking the good skills children are developing in the use of everyday technology.

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