



## Ickle Pickles Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY319951
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Jane Wakelen
<b>Setting Address</b>	School Lane, Iwade, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8RS
<b>Telephone number</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Ickle Pickles Day Nursery Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. 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?

Ickle Pickles Nursery is privately owned and opened in 2006. It operates from four rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated in the village of Iwade, near Sittingbourne. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.15 to 18.30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, four children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports four children with English as an additional language.

The nursery currently employs 12 members of staff, including the director and manager. Eight members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health and well being are fully promoted because the staff implement thorough hygiene procedures, such as ensuring toilets are clean, changing mats are wiped between each child and table cloths are used for lunch time. Children are reminded about the importance of personal care such as washing their hands before eating, after using the toilet and after handling the nursery snails. Some children benefit from being able to clean their teeth after meals and learn about putting tissues in the bin once they have been used. Staff have comprehensive procedures in place to record information on each child requiring medication and obtain written consent from parents to ensure emergency medical treatment can be received.

Children learn about healthy eating and are able to make choices from the healthy options of snacks made available, including the fresh fruit bowl in the pre-school room. Staff adapt the snacks and meals to ensure they are suitable for each child's stage of development, such as porridge, cutting up fruit, or offering the whole fruit. They talk about foods that are good for their bodies and receive a healthy balanced diet, taking into account their dietary needs and food preferences, ensuring they receive their five pieces of fruit and vegetables per day.

Children recognize the benefits of exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a good range of physical activities outside, such as using the sit and ride cars, pedal the digger and practice their hand/eye co-ordination with the plastic golf clubs and small balls. Children are able to occasionally participate in obstacle courses and practising their road safety, using traffic signs and the drawn road and crossing. All children have access to the garden and enjoy crawling through the caterpillar tunnel or playing in the wooden playhouse. They learn to negotiate small steps on the slide and control their balance to sit and slide. However, some of the older, more able children have limited opportunities to use equipment that provides a challenge or enables them to build on existing skills.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming, well presented, purpose built building where they move around freely, in rooms designed for their age and stage of development. The premises are well organized so that children are able to see out of the low positioned windows to outside and the corridor, creating a more open environment and enabling them to see their siblings or familiar staff. Although, access to the bathroom, has to be supervised by an adult as it is accessed across the corridor through two high-handled doors. Children play with a good range of good quality equipment, which is being extended to provide for the new children joining the nursery. All rooms have equipment stored at child height to develop choice for the children and enable them to find activities which promote their interest.

Children benefit from the excellent safety measures put in place to protect children from unwanted visitors whilst attending the nursery. A biometric system, which identifies fingerprints is installed on the front door including CCTV around the premises. All visitors are greeted by

the manager or director and fill in the visitors book and wear an identification tag. Children's safety is ensured throughout the nursery, both inside and in the enclosed outside play area because practitioners carry out regular risk assessments to ensure accidents are minimised. The management have a comprehensive risk assessment policy and a good understanding about health and safety issues and ensure all staff implement measures to promote children's safety at all times. Children are constantly reminded about keeping themselves safe, such as taking notice of the yellow 'A' board on wet flooring, or not climbing on the caterpillar tunnel when it is near the wall.

Children are protected from harm and unwanted visitors, because practitioners have a sound understanding about safeguarding children. They gain an understanding about safe guarding children on their induction and all have printed information to ensure they understand procedures to follow. A policy is in place, although does not inform parents records will be kept.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel valued, respected and cared for by practitioners who have a good understanding of child development and recognize how children learn effectively. Children play in rooms with children of a similar age and stage of development and are able to move around freely, choosing toys that interest them. They have opportunities to use natural materials such as sand and water to explore and experiment with. They show great enjoyment with the paint, painting their hands, exploring the feeling and then printing on their paper. Babies explore a range of different sensory materials, that staff have collected for treasure baskets. They watch with fascination the hand-made mobiles, moving in the breeze and reflecting the light around the room. Young children become skilful communicators and competent learners as they practice their babbling, listening to the adult, maintaining good eye contact, and enjoying the response they get from their babbling. Practitioners give lots of praise and encouragement to all children, promoting their self esteem and encouraging them to take the next step.

Practitioners use the Birth to three framework to promote activities for the under threes and record observations of their development. They then plan their next steps and provide activities to meet this. Toddlers develop their physical skills using tools, such as cutlery, crayons and building bricks, gaining control and promoting their independence.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are working towards the early learning goals because practitioners plan some adult-initiated activities to promote children's development using the stepping stones. Practitioners have a fair understanding of the foundation Stage curriculum, and plan activities to cover most of the areas of learning on the short term plans. However, because planning does not list activities under the six areas, or have specific aims for all activities, including continuous provision, opportunities are missed to extend children's learning in all areas equally. Practitioners have implemented plans for long, medium and short term, but these are at present ineffective to support children's all round development. Children are enthusiastic learners and participate fully in activities when an adult is present,

such as learning road safety outside, or helping care for the nursery snails. Children's development is recorded through regular, spontaneous observations under the stepping stones and their next steps recorded to inform the short term plans. This link is not secure, because of the weakness in the planning system.

Practitioners show good interaction with the children and promote their self esteem, talking about their pictures and displaying them on the wall. They promote children's language skills, through effective questioning and providing new language to extend children's vocabulary. They use lots of facial expressions, eye contact and good verbal communication to be effective in their management of children's understanding. They use constant praise and encouragement to promote children's interest and involvement in activities, allowing children to lead their play, such as changing the planning to allow more time for children to learn about the snails and explore what they feel like. Children show good concentration and listening skills in group activities and become involved with the story telling using the puppets. They respond well to instruction and form good relationships with each other and the practitioners. Children learn to share and take turns, such as sharing the remote control for the car or taking it in turns to wear the fairy dress.

Children have good opportunities to explore their world around them. They have opportunities to find bugs in the garden and try to catch some in their buried pot. They show fascination and wonder when looking at bugs under the magnifying pot and enjoy opportunities to dig in the soil with miniature tools. Children use the CD player, to play music for tidy up time and gain an understanding of how to make the car move around the room using the controller. Children enjoy the electronic bug game and using a range of construction toys to construct and build. Children competently handle tools, such as glue sticks and paint brushes and begin to use tools for the wooden Meccano set. Children are beginning to recognise their names, from name pegs and place mats and are occasionally encouraged to label their work. However, they have few opportunities to recognise letters around the environment and make links between the sounds and letters. Children show good concentration at story time and enjoy participating in group story sessions also choosing books on an individual basis to read, handling books with care.

Children develop their imagination dressing up in a range of outfits from 'people who help us' to fairytale characters. They enjoy acting out familiar roles as they move around the classroom, such as being the fireman to put out the fire and rescue the cars. Children experiment with paint, using brushes and then their hands, enjoying its sensation. They choose objects from around the room to print certain shapes and enjoy the sensorial range of creative resources to stick and create collages. They use musical instruments on occasions, but are unable to self-select this activity, or the collage resources, due to storage. Children learn to identify 2 dimensional shapes and use them to sort, compare and match. They build with 3 dimensional shapes but do not use their names or are informed of them. Children use number in games and to talk about the date, but have limited opportunities to use number in purposeful, practical, daily routines. Children have opportunities to learn about volume and quantity, but limited adult interaction results in learning opportunities being missed.

Children are well settled within the nursery. They are cared for and supported by practitioners who show an interest in encouraging them to play together, support their social skills and provide a range of activities to maintain their interest and enthusiasm. Unfortunately, the lack

of effective plans impacts on the progression children make in their development towards the early learning goals.

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

The provision is good.

Children have opportunities to learn about the society they live in and the wider world through planned activities, such as celebrating 'Ramadan' and using photographs and a world map, to discover countries and where children have been on holiday. Children learn to be sensitive towards one another's feelings and become aware of their own and others needs through stories and discussions. They look at the similarities between themselves and others through topic work and use a small range of equipment to provide positive images of culture and disability.

Children learn about acceptable behaviour through supportive practitioners who offer guidance with praise and encouragement, when children display kindness or alter their behaviour. Children learn the rules of the setting and understand what is expected of them. They are well behaved and learn negotiation for toys they want to play with or learn to take turns on a favourite piece of equipment. They show pride, when staff reward them for good behaviour and all help to support children who are trying to gain a particular skill or independence such as using the toilet unaided and are rewarded with a sticker for their book. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are fully involved with the care of their children and share information on a daily basis, verbally and through the use of a diary sheet, soon to be a contact book. Parents benefit from the enthusiasm and interest the practitioners show towards the care they offer the children and their good understanding of child development. They receive regular newsletters and have access to the nursery policies at all times. A parent forum has been set up to obtain parents views and to liaise with the managerial staff to voice concerns or offer suggestions for practice changes or ideas for fund raising. Parents are also given social evenings to get to know one another.

Parents of children receiving nursery education are given information to explain the requirements of the nursery to offer education following the Foundation Stage curriculum. It explains the six areas of learning and informs parents about observations and assessment records their children will have, using the stepping stones, leading to the Early Learning Goals. They are kept well informed about their children's progress through bi-annual parent's evenings and regular communication with their child's keyworker. Parent's with particular skills or knowledge in any particular area relating to the nursery theme will be asked to contribute to support their children's learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The nursery has only been operating for three months, but is exceptionally well lead by two highly motivated and dedicated individuals, the director and manager. They have put a rigorous system in place regarding the recruitment of enthusiastic, qualified individuals who can deliver

high quality care in a warm, welcoming purpose built environment. The documentation and organization is outstanding in its quality. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures are in place with extensive consent forms and forms to collect information about each individual child to ensure their needs are met, especially regarding the medical information for children with additional needs or requirements.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Children benefit from a staff team who are dedicated in providing a positive experience for all children. They benefit from caring staff who have a sound knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and provide some interesting activities and experiences to enhance children's knowledge and skills. However, the lack of effective planning prevents all six areas being given equal attention and therefore observations to inform planning is a weak link. At present due to the small group size, practitioners have good individual knowledge of children's development, but the monitoring system to evaluate nursery education has not been fully implemented and therefore is not supporting some staff's development at present. All staff have regular appraisals where their individual strengths are recognized and training identified to further enhance practitioners knowledge and skills.

Children receive exceptional support due the small group sizes as the nursery is so new. Staff are effectively deployed throughout the day, so that children receive continuity of care from familiar staff, able to build strong relationships and are continuously stimulated and well cared for.

The management recognise the importance of working together with staff, parents and outside agencies to provide a high standard of care to benefit all children attending. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

#### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

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

Since registration 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 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 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):

- provide opportunities for children to be offered physical activities that provide a challenge and extend their existing skills

### **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):

- develop planning to include all areas of learning, ensuring all areas are given equal attention and staff understand the purpose/aim of the activity
- extend opportunities for children to develop their mathematical skills in practical, purposeful activities and to link letters and sounds in familiar words and daily routines
- ensure children are able to access resources independently to develop their creativity, including regular access to musical instruments.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)