



## All My Friends Childcare Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY336103
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Angela Cole
<b>Setting Address</b>	87 Barnwood Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL2 0SF
<b>Telephone number</b>	07799133978
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	All My Friends Childcare 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 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?

All My Friends Childcare Ltd is one of three nurseries currently operating under the private management. It was registered under new ownership in July 2006 and operates from a large detached property situated on the Barnwood Road, a main commuter route into Gloucester city centre. Nursery facilities include base rooms for each of the six groups that provide areas for imaginative play, arts and crafts, music and dining. There are also sleep rooms for babies, a soft play room, a sensory room and an enclosed, outside play area with grass, bark and safety surfaces. A maximum of 70 children aged from three months to five years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round except over Christmas and the New Year.

There are currently 98 children under five years on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for early education. Children come from within the city or from the surrounding villages.

The nursery employs 25 members of staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have varied opportunities for exercise. They negotiate the stairs and have indoor space to move around, play with small physical equipment and visit the setting's ball pool and soft-play area. Children have timetabled use of the outdoor area and use larger equipment when all of the garden is available during better weather. Older children join in action games and go on walks whilst babies go outside most weeks. Children often use small tools such as scissors, pencils, knives and forks to develop their small muscles. They gain independence in toileting and dressing, although are not regularly involved in the preparation, serving and clearing away of their snacks and meals. Though children do not learn to clear away after their own activity, they willingly help to tidy toys after group sessions.

Children benefit from the intense cleaning and decorating programme that is being carried out. Staff maintain the premises on a daily basis, including the floor after children come inside without removing their outdoor footwear. Children benefit from secure nappy changing routines as staff always use protective clothing. They begin to learn the importance of personal hygiene through regular hand washing and brushing their teeth though the reasons behind these are not always shared. Their care is consistent with that at home as parents are effectively made aware of medication that is administered with their consent and of accidents. Parents receive clear notification not to send children when they are ill and the setting acts swiftly and appropriately to deal with any outbreak of infection.

Children begin to recognise the importance of regular drinking as they have free access to water and staff offer regular and nutritious drinks throughout the day. The nursery has recently revised the menus that are shared with parents so that children eat only healthy meals and snacks. The children see posters around the walls so they occasionally discuss the value of healthy eating. Staff are well aware of children's preferences and dietary needs so these are suitably met.

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

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in premises that are secure as only senior staff open the locked doors and internal stair gates are consistently used; the outdoor area is fully fenced and protected by closed circuit cameras. They play in safe areas as staff are vigilant and communicate any new hazard, such as the loose toilet seats, to the management. Children are effectively protected through detailed risk assessment completed for each nursery area and, in practice, for all outings including the weekly bus and swimming trip. They are well supported by staff to regularly practise emergency evacuation of the premises and the adults are well aware of the procedures, including those for the baby rooms. Sleeping children are checked each five minutes to keep them safe.

Children effectively learn to keep themselves safe as staff remind them about how to move around the nursery and negotiate the stairs. They learn to use equipment and tools safely and are sometimes reminded of the reasons. Children play with a range of safe toys that is currently being extended with high-quality resources. They safely access those items that are stored at their level and play with equipment that is safe for their stage of development.

The children's welfare is given high priority as several first aiders attend each session and staff are trained in child protection. The clear understanding of child protection issues is underpinned by comprehensive policies and procedures to support staff to take appropriate action in line with local procedures in the event of any concerns.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their play in the nursery. The babies are cuddled and well stimulated by staff who are attentive to their interests and effectively foster their early communication. They feed, sleep and are changed according to their needs. They enjoy different activities for the morning and afternoon sessions including body painting and play with sensory materials such as home-made shakers. The youngest babies are brought other toys to interest them and the 'middle' babies play with some appropriate construction toys and other equipment from a storage unit. Babies do not have direct access to a wide range of suitable household implements or 'treasure' baskets for them to choose and explore independently. The older babies and toddlers enjoy more movement around the nursery and are engaged in their own play, for example, in the sand box. Their individual approaches to other materials, such as the drawing easel, are suitably supported. These young children enjoy listening to staff spontaneously singing favourite songs though these are sometimes sung too fast for them to join in with the actions or words. Children enjoy weekly sessions with a visiting musician when they move and play instruments following her lead on a guitar. Two-year-olds begin to understand about the nursery's seasonal theme. They occasionally enjoy other activities based around local happenings, such as the diggers on a nearby building site. Staff use their growing understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to clearly plan two appropriate daily activities for each group. Usually these are suitably organised, though, occasionally, different groups require resources at the same time, such as tea-sets. Within each week, staff plan a balanced range of adult and child-led experiences to support the children's language development, mathematical thinking, creativity and use of imagination. However, as children become older there is increasing emphasis on following the nursery's timetable to move around the play areas. This reduces the children's opportunities for independent choice and their time for settling to concentrated play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Funded children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. In communication, language and literacy, children develop their talking and listening skills to share weekend news and show items from home. They understand instructions and gain some new words such as 'cocoon' though attempts at grammar are not always developed by staff. Three-year-olds begin to learn initial sounds on their name cards and calendar words rather than through informal activities with everyday objects starting with a given letter. Children enjoy stories though staff do not

encourage them to use books for information, for example, on a growing bulb, or challenge them through recapping about the group story. Children watch adults scribing their news and they 'write' their names on daily breakfast sheets or from cards. However, they do not use writing for their own purposes, for example, in imaginative play. Children usefully develop their handwriting through large paintings and easel drawings, though staff place inappropriate emphasis on the use of work sheets to develop pencil control.

The children make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points in mathematical development. They use some numbers in play, for example, when placing birthday candles on a cake. Although they do not seem interested in the numbers for the date or year. They regularly sing number songs when staff usually encourage them to use their fingers for finding one less rather than physically involving them in acting out the song or handling objects to find the answer. The children gain suitable understanding of shape, space and measure through play, activities and in conversation, for example, when they describe the train-track 'circle', place an apple 'upside down' and talk about the 'last' picture. There is no difference in learning between groups of children such as girls' and boys' creative development. During each week, all children explore colour and texture through a satisfactory range of media and materials. However, children do not have free access to a wide range of mark-making, manipulative and natural materials for them to experiment, develop their ideas and repeat their experiences when they choose. Children satisfactorily use their senses as they taste different foods and occasionally visit the nursery's sensory room. They enjoy listening to music and respond through free dance. They get to know some songs very well and explore these using loud and soft sounds. When children have uninterrupted time, they effectively use their imaginations to develop their play ideas. Though only home corner items are currently to hand, they confidently adapt the resources that are available to represent others, for example, when a carpet square becomes a blanket over a cot.

Children gain some new ideas and skills to satisfactorily develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore sand and water and handle other natural materials such as clay during brief adult-led activities. They notice changes to trees and plants as the seasons progress but do not fully link these to activities such as sticking pine needles collected by staff to create hedgehogs. They are asked to discuss changes in materials such as chocolate before they experience the changes for themselves. Children are interested in different items such as balls brought from home, but they are not challenged to learn as staff experiment to see how high the balls will bounce. The children make straightforward designs with construction bricks. They are interested in press-button toys and have occasional access to a computer. Some children gain an accurate sense of routine and know what happens at specific times of the day. They enjoy weekly bus journeys for swimming sessions and occasional trips to local places of interest, for example, to see different animals. During the topic 'People who help us', children see a fire engine and handle fire-fighting equipment though this is followed by less meaningful activities such as colouring outline pictures. Children learn about some aspects of celebrations and cultures such as St Andrew's Day and Diwali through collage and drawing.

The staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. They adequately plan the learning environment to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across six areas of learning. Staff partially monitor this by highlighting stepping stones as these are covered in planning for the group during the

year. They observe the children informally and use occasional notes to highlight their termly progress towards the early learning goals. However, this does not ensure that the learning environment and experiences are fully planned to be suited to the needs of children. Staff tend to rely on routine changes of play area and the novelty of activities to ensure children are interested, rather than helping them to become focused, to resist distraction and to persist for some time. They offer some useful starting points for learning including visits and visitors, though these are not continued through meaningful, practical opportunities such as well-resourced role play. Staff use discussion and some open questions to challenge young children, though these are not always based on what is significant for the children or their first-hand experiences. The nursery has begun to resource the play areas to reflect different areas for learning. However, children do not yet receive effective support to become independent learners through selecting and carrying out activities that focus on their ideas and interests.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle with the support of an established programme to come into the nursery contentedly and go willingly to their own room. They are known individually to their main and assistant key workers and to other adults in their current base area. They receive appropriate support during the handover period as they move to the next of six closely-communicating groups within the nursery. The children are aware of younger and older ones in the setting and play with, and alongside, each other as is appropriate for their stage of development. Pre-school children begin to learn to support each other, for example, by choosing a friend to walk with when they move outside. Children have some opportunities to learn about the community during local outings. The staff ensure that there are sufficient resources for the older children to develop a positive attitude to those who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. However, there are few such resources for the youngest children.

The children have regular times for free play with familiar resources stored in the room that is timetabled for that period. They make some decisions about their activities, including the songs and stories for the group. Staff are caring and encourage the children through their enthusiasm, particularly during activities that are fresh to them. Younger children receive individual care when they are changed or fed and there is a warm rapport between staff and the child. However, some care routines are managed for the group as a whole. At these times, some children and babies are required to move, sit and wait together rather than benefiting from organisation that is tailored to their individual needs. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn to behave as the staff use consistent procedures that include warm praise for their efforts as well as less developmentally appropriate strategies such as 'time out' and saying sorry. The children with additional needs receive appropriate care. Their key workers are well aware of how they respond during the day and liaise sensitively with their parents so they benefit from the support of relevant outside agencies.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children suitably benefit as parents have confidence in the setting to care for their children. They compliment the nursery on its new décor and feel welcomed. Their wishes are closely followed, for example, about feeding and collection, so children receive consistent care which is shared through diaries or in daily conversation about

older children. Families are happy with the level of information about the nursery so children benefit from their knowledge about the provision. The newly-revised welcome pack is interesting, easy to up-date and includes reference to some of the available policies and to the Foundation Stage. Parents of older children are invited to attend open evenings and some make appointments to share their children's learning progress. However, staff do not include parents' observations of their children's progress outside the setting in the records of development. Neat noticeboards are maintained in the entrance hall and outside each base room. These enable parents to talk with their children using, for example, the menus and brief activity details included in the routine. Additional information is soon to be shared in a termly, company newsletter and this is being made accessible for parents through an attractive, illustrated format. This information and use of some systems such as the children's library, satisfactorily supports parents to be meaningfully involved in their children's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The adults who provide day care, those who look after children and those who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so. There are robust procedures for appointing and vetting new staff and to foster their professional development through training. Ofsted is effectively kept informed of significant changes and events. The operational plan shows appropriate reorganisation of the nursery so children of a similar age are grouped more closely together and toddlers experience less distraction. Staff are organised into cohesive teams that work smoothly together and they follow planning systems that are potentially appropriate. However, for toddlers and older children, adults tend to focus on the implementation of established routine rather than on children's needs and their interests.

All legally required documents are suitably maintained. These are stored safely and are accessible with due regard given to confidentiality. Some written policies are incomplete though these are suitably carried out in practice. For example, the risk assessment for local outings is carried out in practice though not recorded by the member of staff. The nursery has a log to use if there was a complaint and this is compliant with the regulator's requirements. The systems of daily registration for children, staff and visitors suitably include their hours of attendance.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Great strides have been made in the short time since registration and the management has a clear vision for the future. Essential changes, such as cleanliness and some reorganisation of the nursery building, have been carried out immediately and practicalities such as decor and increased resources are currently being addressed. Senior staff are aware of the adults' personal needs and are working on team support. Through corporate strategies and wider recognition of the contribution of individuals, staff are being enabled to increase their self-esteem and further develop their ability to care for children. The leadership encourages staff to evaluate some aspects of their daily practice. However, the monitoring of the assessment and planning processes does not actively identify curriculum and teaching areas to improve, including the challenges for children. The setting has signed up to work towards a quality assurance award. Meanwhile, the management has begun to revise and detail the setting's documentation so that, in the future, this will reflect the desired practice

to focus on the personal development and achievements of all the children. 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 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):

- provide more opportunities for children of all ages to develop their independence and to access a wide range of indoor and outdoor materials for expressing their thoughts and ideas in different ways. (also applies to nursery education)
- record the assessment of the risks to children in relation to all outings from the premises.

#### **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):

- plan to support children to have more independence in selecting and carrying out activities that focus on their ideas and interests, including exploring, investigating and creating
- monitor the observations of each child's responses and ensure that staff use these, as well as parents' contributions, to challenge children and support their individual progress through the stepping stones.



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)