



Little Smarties Academy

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY152795
Inspection date	07 November 2006
Inspector	Karen Cooper
Setting Address	Rocky Lane, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1NG
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Registered person	Tasmia Khan and Salma Brown
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Smarties Academy opened in 2001. It operates from a converted and extended semi detached house in the Great Barr area of Birmingham. The nursery serves the local areas.

There are currently 26 children from one to five years on roll. Of these, six receive funding for nursery education. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00. Flexi-sessions are also offered from 09:30 to 16:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are seven staff employed to work directly with the children, most of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is appropriately supported within the nursery through the established daily routines. Children are taught the importance of personal care for example, washing their hands after toileting, craft activities and before eating. Good procedures are in place to ensure the risk of cross contamination is reduced. Staff wear disposable aprons and gloves when changing nappies and use anti-bacterial spray to clean tables. Children are becoming increasingly independent when attending to their own personal needs. Children's health is protected through the staff's knowledge of first aid, which they ensure is regularly updated through attending training. Staff are trained in procedures to support children with specific health needs for example, to use epipens in case of anaphylactic shock. A suitable first aid box is in place and its contents checked at regular intervals. Appropriate records are in place regarding accidents and medication. However, written consent prior to administering medication in the event of an emergency to children is not obtained from parents therefore, children's welfare is not fully safeguarded.

All aspects of children's individual dietary needs are discussed with parents and their wishes respected. Children's meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day. Menus are clearly displayed for parents to view. Meal times are relaxed social occasions when children and staff sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each others company. Children are provided with regular drinks and jugs or plastic bottles of water are always available.

Children are provided with plenty of opportunities to make progress in their physical development through well-planned indoor and outdoor activities. They eagerly join in with action songs such as 'five current buns' and 'five green speckled frogs'. They enjoy physical exercise and have opportunities to play outside each day. The children confidently use large climbing apparatus where they learn to manoeuvre their bodies in various ways, climb and balance. They also have access to a selection of suitable wheeled toys to promote their physical skills. Young children are able to rest and sleep according to their respective needs. Their individual sleep patterns are discussed and agreed with parents. Staff monitor children asleep and keep a record which is shared with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children access a broad range of good quality toys and resources. Equipment is kept clean and is regularly checked for safety, any broken toys are withdrawn from use. Good consideration is given to the organisation of the nursery to allow children to move around freely and safely. Children are able to independently access toys and resources from tables and boxes at child height, which also helps to create a stimulating, learning environment. Staff ensure toys and equipment are suitable, safe and conforms to safety standards.

Children are safe and secure in their surroundings. Full risk assessments have been carried out on all areas used by the children to ensure identified risks have been minimised. Staff actively

encourage the children to help tidy away toys and to play safely. They have a good awareness of security and ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. There are clear procedures to ensure children are collected only by authorised people. Appropriate fire equipment such as a fire blanket, smoke detectors and extinguishers are provided and are regularly checked to ensure they are in good working order. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed, which are discussed and practised with the children on a regular basis to ensure they know where to go to stay safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the staff have a good understanding of how to protect them. Staff are aware of signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child. The nursery has all of the required procedures and documentation in place to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted, which is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, eager to learn and respond positively to the staff's positive interaction. They enjoy all aspects of the nursery and are keen to participate in all activities. The children are sociable and close and caring relationships with staff increase their sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of belonging. The children have access to a good variety of resources that are suitable to their age and stage of development. Children are encouraged to make independent choices about their play. Staff are sensitive to new children's concerns, offering comfort and reassurance. Parents are encouraged to spend time with their children at the nursery for at least the first session. This ensures their children can be left happy and relaxed. Staff respond with genuine interest to children's questions and general conversations about their homes and families. Children complete 'Monday' books as a way of sharing their weekend news. All children benefit from a range of activities outside the setting. They go for walks to the local shops and supermarket. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this effectively to involve children and further their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff enhance their skills by attending short courses on specific subjects for example, co-operative outdoor play, planning and assessment. Activities are linked to the stepping stones. However, at present staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage is limited as staff have been unable to attend relevant training. Staff plan a well-balanced programme of interesting activities which cover all areas of learning. The children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. As a result are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Although, there are some missed opportunities during daily routines and activities to encourage children to make progress in their mathematical and literacy development. Staff manage the children's behaviour well. They use appropriate behaviour strategies such as, explanation and praise, as a result children behave well.

Planning is linked to the stepping stones and covers the six areas of learning. Staff monitor and evaluate activities to inform future plans. They make observations of children's progress

using photographs and post-it notes which are then added to children's assessment records. These also include dated samples of children's work. Staff with responsibility for children with learning difficulties, have a sound knowledge of the procedures to follow and have developed good relationships with parents and other professionals so that all children are included in all aspects of nursery life and make progress in their development.

Children play happily and are learning to co-operate with each other. They are keen to join in activities and develop new skills such as, using scissors to cut up collage items. Staff encourage children to be independent and provide many opportunities for them to develop their self-help skills. For example, helping with the serving of food at snack time.

Children's language skills are developing well. They are able to speak within a familiar group and make their needs known. They have daily opportunities to practise their mark-making skills and with adult support they are developing an understanding of sounds and letters. However, opportunities are missed during daily routines and activities for children to see their name in print. Children enjoy listening to stories, singing songs and taking part in action rhymes. They show great enthusiasm when acting out 'I wonder what your name is?' song.

Children respond positively to number rhymes and are learning to count with confidence some beyond 10 with adult support. Activities reflect a variety of opportunities for children to sort, match and understand shapes. However, there are less opportunities for more able children to develop their understanding of simple problem solving such as, simple subtraction.

Plans reflect a variety of different topics to support children's understanding of their environment. For example, they have grown potatoes and tomato plants and planted sunflower seeds and watched them grow. They are developing their knowledge of technology and use the computer and peripherals with confidence and skill. They enjoy designing and constructing using a variety of materials such as sand, collage, cornflour and dough. They have a sense of place and talk about significant events in their lives on a daily basis.

Children use and handle a range of small tools appropriately, such as pencils and glue sticks. They eagerly participate in a fireworks craft activity using paint and spray bottles. They are developing their imaginative skills through interesting role play activities. Staff vary the play in this area to stimulate children's interests and which enables them to explore different roles, for example a bakers shop. Children enjoy taking part in music and movement and have developed spatial awareness and good co-ordination. Children have daily access to outdoor play. They talk about their senses and explore texture through planned activities and have tasted exotic fruits such as dragon fruits, star fruits and pomegranates.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Through planned activities children are becoming aware of different festivals from around the world such as Diwali and have tasted food from other cultures. They are treated as individuals and with equal concern and their individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Any specific requirements are noted to ensure they are met. However, the children's knowledge of diversity is limited because of the lack of resources that provide positive images of disability.

The nursery welcomes children with learning difficulties and disabilities and ensures that they can access and participate in all activities offered.

Children play happily and are confident, sociable and secure. They respond positively to the staff that ensures their behaviour is managed with the use of praise and explanation. Music is used effectively to promote good behaviour, for example by highlighting tidy-up time. Children are encouraged to show consideration for others and respond with enthusiasm to requests for help from staff at tidy-up time. Younger children are well settled into the daily routine and are happy and eager to learn. Older children are confident, independent and self-reliant as they choose activities. Children are listened to and the staff value what they say, which helps them to feel good about themselves.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are learning to work and play together. They are encouraged to share, take turns and consider the feelings of others. Older children offer help to the younger children at meal time and show them what to do.

All aspects of children's individual needs are discussed and agreed with parents. The daily diary ensures that parents are well-informed of their children's progress and events. Time at the beginning and end of each session is made available for parents to talk with staff. All parents know their child's key worker and share information with them about their children.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Staff strive to establish positive partnerships with parents. A comprehensive range of relevant information about the day-to-day organisation of the nursery and educational programme is displayed and shared with all parents. Staff encourage parents to share what they know about their children's learning and to work together to help their children make progress in their learning and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The majority of staff hold an early years qualification and regularly attend training to ensure their knowledge and skills are kept up today. Children are grouped effectively to ensure they receive appropriate care. This promotes consistency, enables children to build effective relationships and help ensure they feel secure and confident with their carers. The environment, both indoors and out, is organised creatively so children can choose to access resources which help to extend their play.

The overall organisation of the nursery ensures that children's needs are effectively met. All legally required policies and procedures are in place. These are often comprehensive and are known to staff so that they contribute to children's health, safety and well-being. Documentation is well organised, regularly reviewed and shared with parents. Children's personal information is stored securely, which helps to maintain confidentiality.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The manager has a clear vision of the strengths and areas for improvement of the nursery and is committed to improving the care and education for all children. Management regularly evaluate practice issues and

responds to parental requests and comments. Regular meetings ensure staff have a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. Staff are happy, motivated and work well together as a team.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was requested to improve hygiene routines with regard to the communal towel and carry out risk assessments. Children's health is now protected as good procedures are in place to ensure the risk of cross contamination is reduced. For example, liquid soap and paper towels are readily available for children's use. Children's safety is now protected as full risk assessments have been carried out on all areas to ensure identified risks have been minimised.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted.

Concerns were raised regarding changes to the registered persons and staffing ratios. These concerns relate to National Standard 1: Suitable Person and National Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted made an unannounced visit and no actions were raised by the inspector. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concern, and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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):

- obtain prior written permission from parents to administer medication to children
- develop children's knowledge and understanding of diversity for example, by increasing resources that reflect positive images of disability

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 and improve staff's understanding of the foundation stage curriculum
- use daily routines to maximise children's learning and develop activities that challenge and extend more able children.

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