



## Little Gems Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	129035
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Justine George
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<b>Registered person</b>	Filiz Ayer
<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?

Little Gems Day Nursery opened in 1996 and is privately owned. It is located in the New Cross/Brockley boarders, within a residential area in the Borough of Lewisham. It operates from two buildings. The first is a single storey community hall for children aged between three months to two years. Children have use of a playroom, sleep area and changing area and toilets, there is also a small milk kitchen. The second part of the nursery is in the ground floor of Aldham House, which is opposite the hall. In this part of the nursery children are cared for in two groups; one for children aged between two and three years and the other for children aged between three and five years. Each age group has access to two playrooms, book room and toilets. There is also a music and sensory room available for small group activities. Children in both buildings have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 08.00 to 18.00, all year round, although it is closed for the Christmas and Easter period.

There are currently 18 qualified staff plus two cooks on role, with a majority of staff with NVQ level 3 or equivalent. All are suitably experienced and qualified or working towards a higher qualification in child care. Currently, there are 75 children on role who attend various sessions. At present, 24 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery receives support from Lewisham Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership (EYDCP) and Lewisham Early Years Advice Support Network (LEARN).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a suitably clean and hygienic environment and steps are in place to minimise illnesses. Information is made available to inform parents of childhood illnesses and exclusions periods, and families are encouraged to keep their child at home if unwell. In the event of children needing medication, staff are aware of their responsibilities in obtaining written parental consent and recording the required details, in line with regulations. However, good practice of parents signing medication forms once medicine has been administered is not consistent. As a result, parents may not be informed of the time the last dose was given. Children use clean toilets and staff check these during the day to ensure standards are maintained. Consistent hand washing routines are in place and the provision of soap and paper towels promotes good hygiene habits and minimises the risk of cross infection. However, nappy changing procedures are inconsistent in ensuring children's good health. This is because staff do not consistently change gloves or wipe changing mats after every use.

Children are fed in line with parents wishes and all staff are well informed of children's dietary needs. Children's nutritional health is suitably fostered as they have a range of healthy snacks given including rice cakes, crackers, dried and fresh fruit. A choice of water and milk is also given to ensure children are hydrated. Although, they do not have free access to this throughout the day, but can request drinks if required. Some children bring in their own snacks of crisps or chocolate and younger children are given chocolate milk or juice. However, snacks are not monitored and this does not promote healthy eating.

Children's meals are prepared at the setting and include a range of freshly prepared and processed options. Children enjoy their lunch of rice, chicken and green beans followed by semolina and jam for dessert. Lunch times are sociable occasions where general chat takes place. However, staff supervise such times and are busy with the routine, rather than sitting with children. As a result, children become disruptive and noise levels are high. Furthermore, snack and meal times do not promote children's independence and they are not encouraged to make healthy choices. Children do not choose what they would like to eat and staff cut up their food and pour drinks. Furthermore, children use only a fork to feed themselves and are

prevented from developing bodily awareness due to set snack times. As a result, children do not have the opportunity to recognise when they are thirsty or hungry.

Children's physical health is suitably promoted, although the temperature is very warm and few windows are left open to ensure fresh air is circulated. Most children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise, although this is not well planned to ensure they are sufficiently challenged. Staff tend to supervise outdoor play, rather than interact with children to promote learning and skills. Children have good opportunities for rest and relaxation. Areas are sectioned off to ensure children have peace and quiet and darker surroundings. Children sleep on mats and have separate bed linen and staff monitor sleep times to ensure children's wellbeing and comfort.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a stimulating environment which is made welcoming. Posters, children's creations and displays are attractive and children have excellent access to toys which are labelled and stored in clear boxes or where they can be seen easily and reached safely. As a result, children make independent choices in play and toys are suitable for their age and stage of development. The premises provide children with ample space to play and relax and they use suitable furniture to ensure their comfort and safety.

The premises are secure preventing adults from gaining access, but some of the fire doors can be opened by children and exits lead onto a road. However, staff do supervise children to minimise the risk of them being able to leave the setting unsupervised. Most hazards have been identified and minimised as daily risk assessments are in place to ensure the setting is safe for children. However, some storage cupboards are not locked and as a result, children can access cleaning substances. Children have use of a garden area and set times are planned for when they can use it. This is because some children have to cross the road to access it. The garden is suitably maintained as soft flooring is laid, although some of the ash felt area is uneven, presenting a tripping hazard. Children are well protected in the event of an accident as staff have kept their first aid knowledge up to date and ensure the required records are in place and signed by parents. As a result, parents are informed of their child's safety throughout the day.

Children's safety is fostered as staff are aware of who will collect children and records are kept. Staff ensure communication is effective in protecting children from unfamiliar adults, as children are not allowed to go off with others until contact is made with parents. Vulnerable children are protected as staff have recently updated their safeguarding children knowledge. Staff are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse, written records are kept and concerns are shared with the management team. Reference materials are in place to inform staff of procedures to follow in the event of any child protection concerns or allegations made against staff.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's emotional development is fostered as staff are sensitive and very caring towards the children and offer lots of cuddles and support. Therefore, children settle quickly and have developed positive relationships outside the family home. Furthermore, staff's sensitivity enables children to explore the toys and experiences available aiding confidence.

Children are eager to enter the setting as it is attractive and inviting. Children have access to an excellent range of toys which is a particular strength of the setting. As a result, during free flow sessions, children make independent choices of what they would like to play with, enabling them to develop their own play ideas and pursue their interests. However, due to the routines and structure of the day free flow sessions are short. As a result, children's experiences are often interrupted, preventing them from fully benefiting from the session. Furthermore, the structure and routine of the day impacts on children's effective use of time as they often have to wait for others to wash hands, fetch coats or sit in large groups while staff organise the next part of the session.

Children enjoy staff interaction as they engage in their play and learning, although staff tend to supervise rather than introduce possible learning intentions to develop children's knowledge and skills further. This is because staff do not fully understand the outcomes promoted in the Birth to three matters framework and possible learning intentions are not identified in the daily plans. As a result, some staff are unsure of the purpose of activities on offer.

Children have access to an outdoor area on a daily basis, although very young children do not regularly go outside. Children use bikes and enjoy pushing themselves along using their feet, avoiding obstacles. Some staff interact well with children as they introduce group actions songs or throw frisbees to each other. However, the outdoor area is not well planned as only a few resources are set out. As a result, some children wander around with no clear purpose.

Children enjoy singing and join in with the words and actions of various songs. They enjoy using their loud voices and playing musical instruments, exploring various sounds and rhythms. As a result, children's musical creativity is fostered. Children enjoy mark making activities and use pens exploring a variety of colours. They colour pictures and enjoy making random marks on paper and they explore creative messy activities of tea bags, splatter and roller painting, printing and collage. However, younger children do not have ample time to explore such activities at a pace suited to their needs. This is because adults often lead the activity, selecting colours and rolling the sponges for children. Furthermore, not all children get to explore the activity as it is tidied away after only a few minutes.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have suitable knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the areas of learning, although they are not familiar with the stepping stones children work towards to achieve the early learning goals. Furthermore, staff do not liaise with parents to find out about children's starting points in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum. As a result, activities do not consistently build on what children

already know to ensure their knowledge and learning is extended. Children benefit from planned key group activities as staff are clear of the purpose of the activity and identify possible learning intentions. However, these reflect the early learning goals, rather than the stepping stones. As a result, such activities are not consistently differentiated to meet the learning needs of the range of children and some loose interest. Staff monitor children's learning and development through regular written observations and link these to the different areas of the curriculum. Observations are consolidated to identify children's stage of progress, although the next steps in learning are not identified to inform staff or parents of how to develop children's knowledge further.

Children make progress in their mathematical and personal, social and emotional development through use of various games. They enjoy playing a hedgehog game, taking turns and following rules to ensure successful and fair game play. Children also develop mathematical concepts as they roll the dice and count the dots. Staff support children in counting out spikes to put onto the hedgehog, developing their awareness of number names and sequence. Children in another group are supported in developing one-to-one correspondence as they count objects one at a time. Children also match, identify and name colours correctly. Children show good levels of concentration and are focused throughout the activity.

Children show good levels of communication and language. They share their experiences during large and small groups, showing confidence in speaking. Children sit well during story times and enjoy looking at books independently. They turn pages one at a time and understand that pictures convey meaning, talking about what they can see. Staff engage children well, asking open ended questions, encouraging children to think and make closer observations. As a result, children pay attention to detail and use pictures as clues to discuss the sequence of the story.

Children enjoy mark making activities and choose which writing tools they would like to use. Children draw their own representations significant to them and ask for help in writing their name. Staff encourage children to try for themselves and use additional aids of letter land cards so children can identify and copy letters. Children receive praise for their attempts, aiding confidence and encouraging them to try new experiences.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

In the main, children are well behaved as staff supervise children well during most parts of the day. However, due to the organisation of snack and group times, and staffing ratios over the lunch period, children's behaviour becomes challenging. This is because groups are too large and there are not enough adults to support children. As a result, children tend to annoy others, noise levels are high and food and cutlery are dropped or thrown. Staff use appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour as they are calm and consistent in their approach. Children benefit as staff are caring and encourage positive behaviour through praise and encouragement. Children develop respectful attitudes towards others and are encouraged to use their good manners of please and thank you. Children are made to feel secure and confident and approach adults to share any concerns they have about others. Most children have developed positive relationships with others in the setting, engaging in play. They enjoy exploring in the role-play area, trying on various dressing up clothes and acting out different roles. As a result, children's

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is suitably fostered. This is further supported as staff are aware of children's identity and steps are in place to ensure children are made to feel positive about themselves. Staff are aware of any additional languages spoken at home and take time to learn key words or phrases to use with children in the nursery environment.

Equal opportunities is suitably promoted in the setting as children celebrate various festivals and experiences including Chinese New Year, Black History month and United Nations day. Children participate in making lanterns, a pig and lucky bags. Children also bring in flags to represent their country of origin. However, some celebrations do not take into account children's age and stage of development. As a result, very young children do not understand or benefit from the celebration. Children have access to resources to depict positive images of culture or those with learning difficulties or disabilities. These include books, puzzles, dolls and play people. Other equipment is also available, but is not readily available to children. Therefore, the everyday environment does not inspire children to reflect on the diverse society in which we live.

The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the layout of the building and children's accessibility to provisions ensures an inclusive environment for all. Children also have access to a sensory room which enables them to explore using all their senses. The setting has a special educational needs coordinator SENCO and receives support from the local authorities area SENCO. In supporting children with additional needs, staff liaise with parents to share concerns and to find out about the care involved. Information is also sought from any other professionals involved in supporting the child. This ensures continuity and consistency of care. The SENCO supports key workers in devising individual education plans for each child to ensure they make progress in all areas of development and participate in the nursery environment.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They receive written information about the setting and policies and procedures are made available. A complaints procedure is in place to promote professional and open relationships, although the provision of a complaints log is not yet made available. A display board and newsletters also informs parents of forthcoming events. Parents are made aware of the Foundation Stage curriculum through written information and planning is displayed to inform them of what children are involved in. However, parents are not made aware of the learning and development programme for children under three.

Staff seek information from parents about children's general health, any routines, favourite items and contact details. However, information is not sought about children's stage of development. As a result, children's starting points in learning are not identified to ensure experiences are planned at the appropriate level. Parents are informed of their child's wellbeing as daily written information is provided for those with younger children. This includes information about sleep, feeds and personal care routines. Informal daily chats also take place. Children's learning and stage of development is discussed regularly and parents are encouraged to discuss their child's progress with their key worker. Progress reports are also sent home should parents not be able to attend meetings.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Suitable recruitment procedures are in place and the required checks have been carried out to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Children are protected from un-vetted adults as they are never left alone at any time or deal with children's personal care. Induction periods are in place for new staff and this ensures they are informed of the settings policies and procedures to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting. Most of the staff team are qualified to NVQ level 3 or equivalent and NVQ level 2 trained staff are working towards a higher qualification. Staff have also had the opportunity to update their child protection knowledge and are due to attend training on behaviour management and supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The setting has a consistent staff team and children benefit as all staff have worked with the various age groups. As a result, staff know the children well and are well informed of the day to day running of the setting. Most staff are involved in planning and delivery of the curriculum and have key children to work with throughout the day.

The organisation of the daily routine means that children's use of time is not effectively spent. They often spend time sitting down in large groups before coming together for stories or lengthy whole group snack times. Furthermore, free flow sessions and planned activities are only available for a short period of time. As a result, not all children participate in the experiences on offer and the short amount of time prevents children from independently exploring and making sense of such experiences.

Children benefit as adult to child ratios are maintained and the attendance register consolidates this. However, actual hours of attendance are not consistently recorded. Furthermore, the organisation of staff lunch breaks does not ensure that children are well supported at such times. As a result, noise levels rise and children's behaviour becomes challenging. The setting complies with the conditions of registration and the certificate is displayed during hours of operation in line with regulations. The setting has most of the required documentation in place. However, good practice of parents signing medication records are not consistent and the provision of a complaints log is not yet made accessible to parents. All the required parent/carer and children's records are in place to ensure staff are well informed of children's needs and to ensure contact can be made easily with parents if required.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection several recommendations were raised to improve the outcomes for children. Staff were to improve the nappy changing facilities specifically for children over the age of two. This has been addressed and suitable furniture has been purchased.

To improve children's safety, staff ensure the hall way is free from obstruction. Although some doors are not locked to prevent children's access to cleaning substances. Outside play areas are regularly checked and risk assessments are in place to ensure the ongoing safety of such

areas, however, some of the flooring is uneven. A visitors book is now maintained to monitor the adults on the premises and staff ensure children hours of attendance are recorded, but this is not consistent.

Staff were to improve documentation by obtaining the government booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and include Ofsted's contact details in the complaints procedure. This has been addressed.

To ensure children's progress is monitored effectively, staff have made improvements by ensuring such records are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Assessments reflect the different areas of learning and observations link with the Foundation Stage curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework.

Recommendations were also raised to improve the quality of nursery education for children. This included providing opportunities for children to link sounds and letters of the alphabet, provide practical mathematical opportunities to enable children to develop awareness of calculation and improve the evaluation of activities to ensure next steps of learning are identified and planned for. All of this has been addressed and is effectively implemented through play and planned experiences and written plans. However, next steps of children's learning and stage of development are not included in their developmental and progress records.

### **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**

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 nappy changing procedures are effective in preventing cross infection and ensure medication records are consistently signed by parents once medication has been administered

- ensure children's access to cleaning products are minimised
- further improve staff's knowledge and understanding of young children using an approach in line with the Birth to three matters framework
- ensure the complaints log is made available to parents
- review the structure of the session to maximise and ensure effective use of children's time (also applies to nursery education)

### **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):

- review the structure of meal and snack times to increase children's independence and to promote bodily awareness
- ensure assessments identify children's next steps in learning
- ensure the daily opportunities available to children are evaluated and learning intentions are identified to inform staff of the purpose of activities (also applies to care).

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)