



Little Gems Pre-School - Chandlers Ford

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341325
Inspection date	19 January 2007
Inspector	Susan Mann
Setting Address	Fryern Infants School, Oakmount Road, Chandler's Ford, EASTLEIGH, Hampshire, SO53 2LN
Telephone number	02380 265931
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Registered person	Gemma Louise Akins
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 Gems pre-school is one of a group of three pre-schools running in Hampshire. It is situated in rooms within Fryern Infant school in the Chandlers Ford area of Hampshire and serves the local area. It has been open since 2006 in the present location. Children have access to the main pre-school classroom with adjacent toilet facilities and a fully enclosed outside play area.

The pre-school is open from 09:15 to 12:00 during term times only. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 39 children on roll. This includes 35 children who receive funding for nursery education. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school employs five staff. Of these four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well through a range of effective routines. Children know to wash their hands after using the toilet, and before they eat, and they demonstrate understanding that they do this to limit the spread of germs. Robust procedures are in place to protect children from the spread of illness and infection. The setting has an effective sickness policy which parents adhere to by keeping children who are unwell away from the pre-school until they are fully recovered. In addition, the clean and hygienic environment helps prevent the spread of infection. Most procedures are effective in protecting children's good health. Children with individual dietary or health needs are very well provided for by knowledgeable and experienced staff who are thorough in their procedures to ensure children are given suitable foods.

Children enjoy a wide range of healthy and appealing snacks which make a valuable contribution to their nourishment. They learn about the importance of eating a variety wholesome foods in a sociable and fun way, through their snack times and when they partake in planned cooking activities, such as making French bread or pizza.

Children benefit greatly from extensive opportunities for physical exercise indoors and outdoors. Children enjoy daily outdoor play, where they can use a variety of equipment that assists their physical development. They enthusiastically pedal bikes around the playground, and display good co-ordination when throwing and catching balls. They run around in the fresh air, their arms outstretched to feel the force of the wind, laughing and chatting to one another as they go. Indoors, children are highly competent when they use a range of appropriate equipment that challenges them to extend their physical skills, such as balancing, crawling through a tunnel and performing bunny hops. Through these opportunities, children are able to develop their physical fitness, and promote their overall good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well-cared by kind and vigilant staff in a safe and welcoming environment. Children display a good understanding of how to prevent accidents: they know not to rush or run when they are moving through the school; they understand that it is important to take extra care when using the large pieces of equipment, such as balancing beams, to ensure that they do not fall. Staff effectively remind children of simple safety rules, which allows children to benefit from the stimulating physical activities in a calm and organised fashion.

Children benefit from being in premises that are highly suitable, and which allow them opportunities to fully explore the indoor and outdoor curriculum. They enjoy a wide range of well-maintained and interesting resources that promote their overall development. Children are protected from non-accidental injury and neglect because staff have good understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children's well-being. Staff are well-trained in this area and are knowledgeable about how to record and report concerns. This knowledge is supported by a comprehensive policy, which clearly details the responsibilities

and required processes the setting should follow in the event of concerns being raised concerning a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly when they arrive at the pre-school. They enjoy a wide range of well-planned activities and spontaneous events that encourages their development and learning. For example, they learn about the strength and sound of the howling wind by going outside, standing still, and listening. They are happily engaged and purposeful in their play. Children become confident because they have a number of opportunities to develop their independence on a daily basis. The pre-school is organised to allow them to hang up their own coats, to register they have arrived, and to select their choice of resources and toys. Children's self-esteem is nurtured by the experienced staff team who have a positive and cheerful approach. They effectively encourage the children and praise their efforts and achievements which motivates children and enables them to feel valued.

Nursery education

Teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy a wide range of activities and opportunities that offers them a purposeful level of challenge and supports their learning well. Staff are very knowledgeable in Birth to three framework and the Foundation Stage, and they plan and implement an exciting curriculum that allows all children to progress at their own pace. The planning and evaluation of the curriculum is thorough to ensure that all areas of learning are covered. From the outset, children's learning is accurately monitored by observation and assessment and regularly reviewed, enabling staff to ensure that each child is offered suitable opportunities to progress towards the early learning goals. Play based activities are skilfully differentiated to enable children of differing abilities to be challenged. For example, at a cutting and sticking activity, some children are able to use scissors accurately to cut a shape, whilst some younger children might be given a less complex task, and more adult assistance to enable them to complete it to their own satisfaction.

Children engage readily in conversation. They are confident to speak with their peers and with adults to express their ideas or talk about what they are doing. They especially enjoy chatting with one another as they play. Children listen very well to talks and stories. For example, they listen intently to a visitor who has come from the post office to talk to them about the journey of a letter between the post box and a house. They ask questions and show obvious interest. They have opportunities to incorporate writing into their play, such as making lists when playing in the role play area. Children can recognise their names in written form when they register on arrival, or for snack time, and many are able to write some letters of their names.

Children develop a meaningful understanding of numbers through practical activities, such as counting carrot pieces on their plate at snack time, or through correctly identifying written numbers that indicate how many children are present that day. They enjoy opportunities to calculate through singing finger rhymes and when playing with bricks and cars. For example, children count how many cars are queuing at the entrance to their toy car park, and correctly identify how many will be left if two cars are removed.

Children are able to develop their creativity in many ways and they particularly enjoy using a wide range of craft materials and resources to cut, stick and paint. Their development is enhanced by the sensitive level of support provided by staff, who allow children sufficient time and choice to complete activities at their own pace and to their own level of satisfaction. Children learn about their own community through local outings, such as to the library and the post box. They also benefit through meeting a variety of people who come to visit the pre-school to talk about their jobs, including a policeman, a post lady, and a recycling specialist.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children flourish in the inclusive setting where every child is cared for according to their individual needs. They learn about a range of cultures and beliefs through appropriate activities and resources that promote a greater understanding of a diverse society. Children are very well behaved, and display a high level of care and consideration to one another. They treat one another with respect, and exhibit good social skills as they play co-operatively and interact with good humour. For example, as they wait for a turn on the tunnel, children chatter and laugh with each other, whilst patiently waiting for their turn.

Children with additional needs make good progress because their requirements are assessed efficiently and well planned support is put in place. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the support of well informed staff who participate in effective liaison with parents and other agencies to ensure that children's needs are fully met. Children who have English as an additional language are warmly welcomed in the pre-school. Staff know how to access external translation and support services to assist children and their families to settle well, and they learn basic words, such as 'hello' in the home language to enhance the child's sense of belonging. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. There are well-planned and effective induction procedures which include an agreed individual settling in plan, which ensures that children are integrated into the pre-school at their own pace. Parents are able to accompany their child for a part or whole session to enable them to gain confidence. This gentle and coherent contributes to the continuity of care for the children. This process is assisted by intelligible documentation, including an informative prospectus which provides information on the Foundation Stage. Parents give positive feedback about the pre-school, and have strong and effective relationships with staff, who are very approachable and friendly. Parents are kept informed of the curriculum, policies and procedures, events, and other general information through regular newsletters, notices, and verbal exchanges with staff at the beginning and end of each session.

Parents and staff work very well together to help children progress towards the early learning goals. Assessments made of children's learning are thorough, clearly identifying the progress of children through the Birth to three framework and the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage. Parents contribute to children's records through providing information concerning their child's development when they start at the pre-school, and through making ongoing contributions to assessment records. This produces a meaningful dialogue between home and pre-school that is extremely beneficial as it greatly assists children to progress. Parents are able to review these records on a regular basis, and have discussions with their child's keyworker.

This enables accurate identification of the next steps in a child's learning, and this information is included in the planning of the curriculum to ensure that each child's needs are accommodated in future learning opportunities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of children for whom it provides. Children are happy and benefit greatly from their time at pre-school. Staff work very well as a team, and are properly deployed to enable children to receive a good level of support, which enables them to become confident and motivated to learn. Most staff hold appropriate qualifications, and all attend regular additional training which enables them to develop and update their knowledge and skills which benefits the curriculum and care provided for the children. Children are confident with familiar routines that are well-planned to allow children opportunities to become independent whilst feeling secure, such as self registration and snack time.

The successful organisation of the pre-school is underpinned by a comprehensive range of policies and procedures. Most of these are highly effective in promoting the well-being of the children. However, the procedure for parents signing the accident book could compromise confidentiality, and medication records are not currently countersigned by parents to confirm they have been told when medication has been administered to their child.

Leadership and management is good. The owner and manager work very well together to provide consistent leadership which provides a forward-thinking approach to the running and the development of the pre-school. The overall aims lying at the heart of the pre-school focus on the needs of the children and their families. The provision of education is carefully monitored by the owner and manager to ensure that children are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities to promote their development. They enjoy liaison with other settings and advisory services to share ideas, which enables them to develop existing practices. For example, staff regularly meet with staff from other settings in the local area to exchange ideas and discuss common concerns. This benefits children's learning because it broadens the range of ideas and experience of the staff. Efficient systems of recruitment, induction and appraisal allow staff to perform and develop their roles successfully. This effective support ensures that children receive good interaction and care from the adults at the pre-school.

Improvements since the last inspection

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.

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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):

- ensure the medication book is always countersigned by parents to protect children from possible harm
- ensure that procedures for countersigning the accident record maintain confidentiality.

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):

- provide parents and carers with suggestions of activities that may be enjoyed in the home, to further support children's learning and progress
- incorporate information about the Birth to three framework in the pre-school's prospectus, to provide parents with advice about how younger children development is promoted.

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