



Little Freddies Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY330765
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Karen Cockings
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Registered person	Little Freddies Nursery School Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 Freddies Nursery School Ltd registered in 2006 and operates from a renovated building in the Springvale area of Penistone, near Barnsley and Sheffield. The nursery serves families living locally and in surrounding areas. The setting is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00, throughout the year. A maximum of 49 children aged nought to eight years may attend at any one time; of these, not more than 12 may be under two years. Babies are admitted from the age of six weeks and out of school care is available for children up to 14 years. There are three nursery rooms and three rooms for out of school care. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 24 children under five years on roll. Of these, three children receive funding for early education.

The nursery currently employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The nursery environment is warm, clean and well maintained. Children are protected from the risk of infection because staff carefully implement cleaning procedures and follow safe hygiene practice. For example, they wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies and keep all food preparation areas and floor surfaces thoroughly clean. Children begin to learn about the importance of good personal hygiene and move towards independence in managing daily routines, such as hand washing. Toilet facilities are easily accessible from play rooms and are suitably equipped with child-height sinks and toilets. Children have the opportunity to bring their toothbrushes into nursery to clean their teeth after meals, if parents wish.

Children enjoy well balanced and freshly cooked meals and snacks, which include a varied range of healthy foods, such as fresh fruit and vegetables. Babies begin to feed themselves with finger foods, while older children develop some independence as they help to serve themselves and to clear away. They enjoy using the small water dispensers to pour their own drinks. Staff consider parents' wishes, so that individual health and dietary needs are met. Before babies are admitted staff consult parents about all foods offered at the nursery and introduce new tastes very carefully.

Children have opportunities each day to enjoy some outdoor play, which contributes to their overall good health. They develop coordination and control of their bodies as they negotiate space and obstacles. They throw balls of different sizes and laugh with excitement as they play games, such as 'What time is it, Mr Wolf?' There are limited opportunities as yet for older children to practise balancing and climbing skills although there are plans in place to provide suitable equipment, such as a climbing frame. Babies and toddlers practise new skills as they crawl around, investigating toys and resources. They safely learn to climb shallow steps while using the soft play cubes and slide down gentle slopes. Suitable equipment is available to help them to pull themselves up and learn to stand and walk. They are well rested and alert because staff make sure that they can sleep comfortably when they are tired.

The nursery is suitably equipped to deal with any accidents that may occur. Several staff have a current first aid certificate and first aid materials are readily available. Records are kept of accidents and medication administered and these are shared with parents. Children are protected from the spread of infection because parents are made aware of the nursery's policy with regard to the care of sick children and information about communicable illnesses is displayed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure, welcoming premises, where staff give high priority to keeping them safe. They are protected from potential hazards because staff conduct regular checks,

both indoors and outside. Effective measures are taken to minimise risks. For example, safety gates, radiator guards and socket covers are all in place. Safety valves have been fitted to children's taps to prevent scalding and notices are posted near play rooms to warn persons entering that there may be children behind the door. The outdoor area has grassed and soft surfaces to reduce the risk of injury when children fall.

Fire safety has been satisfactorily addressed and there are suitable appliances, such as smoke detectors, fire blanket and fire extinguishers in place. Emergency evacuation procedures are displayed. These have not yet been practised formally, although all procedures are discussed with staff as part of their induction. However, it is important that all children and adults have regular opportunities to become familiar with the procedures to be followed.

Children have access to a varied range of attractive and good quality resources. Toys and play materials are organised in low-level storage, making them easy for children to access safely and independently. Staff regularly check and clean equipment, especially resources in the baby room, which are frequently in babies' mouths. Children begin to learn about keeping themselves safe as they play. For example, staff remind them not to run about inside in case they fall. Toddlers learn how to come down the soft slide on their bottoms, to avoid accidents.

Staff understand their responsibilities with regard to child protection and there are relevant guidance materials available for reference, should there be any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settling well into the nursery and enjoy the time they spend there. Staff recognise that as the nursery has only been operating for a few months, some children are quite new to the setting and need lots of support and reassurance. Babies are cuddled and comforted when they cry and staff talk gently to them as they feed them and change nappies. They sit close to them as they play, giving them confidence to explore and to try out new challenges. For example, they support toddlers as they play on the soft shapes, learning how to climb the steps and to slide. Early communication skills are fostered as staff sing songs with children and echo the sounds they make. Transition between rooms is managed sensitively and on an individual basis with opportunities for children to spend short periods of time getting used to their new environment.

Children enjoy a balanced range of developmentally appropriate activities, which help them to learn new skills and build confidence. Resources are attractive and capture children's interest. Children have opportunities for exploratory play as sand, water and paint are readily available. A treasure basket of natural materials and household items stimulates children's curiosity and encourages them to use their senses. Children enjoy stories and sing along to familiar songs and rhymes. Staff are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support their planning for the younger children and to enrich the play experiences they offer.

Children begin to play harmoniously together, enjoy each other's company and show concern. For example, a child notices another's 'poorly' finger and asks if she can kiss it better for her.

They are becoming familiar with daily routines, such as snack time and outdoor play, and gaining the confidence to select toys and play materials for themselves.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. The nursery has only very recently become eligible for nursery education funding and so is in the early stages of developing its educational provision for the older children attending. However, staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provide a balanced range of activities to support children's learning. They use a satisfactory range of teaching methods, working with children individually and in small groups, and responding to children's interests.

Children are developing confidence in selecting resources for themselves and taking part in activities that interest them. They are beginning to form relationships with others and more settled children are helpful towards those who are not yet as familiar with daily routines, such as finding their name label and placing it on the board. They are able to concentrate and are learning how they should behave in different situations. For example, they are gaining an understanding of how they should sit and listen at group times. They are managing their own personal needs well and are confident about washing their hands and fetching themselves a drink if they are thirsty.

Children are developing good language skills and some use language confidently to make their needs known. They enjoy books and stories and take an active part in singing and rhymes. They are fascinated by the squirrel puppet used to help them with listening and communication. Their early writing skills are fostered as they engage in activities to develop hand-eye coordination, such as threading beads and using scissors and paintbrushes. Some are able to write their names legibly on their work, while others are moving towards this. Although imaginative play areas are generally well resourced, there are currently more limited opportunities for children to practise writing for a purpose as part of their role play.

Children take part in a range of activities to promote mathematical learning. They use their counting skills as part of daily routines and spontaneously during play. For example, they count the number of placemats they need at the table and count their steps as they play games outdoors. Staff help them to count accurately as they play with construction toys and thread beads. Children are encouraged to think about size and volume while playing at the water tray. They identify different sized containers and begin to think about how many small jugs they will need to fill the large one. Staff use effective questioning to help children begin to think about simple mathematical concepts, such as shape and pattern.

Children show curiosity and interest in how things work and begin to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For example, they carefully fit an attachment to the sand tray and observe how the sand makes the wheels turn as it is poured through. They show awareness of technology as they switch the electronic keyboard on and off and use digital cameras to take photographs of themselves for display. They have opportunities to use their design skills as they make models and collage pictures. For example, they use a large construction toy outside to make a castle, which then becomes a bridge for them to walk over. In some instances, staff lack confidence to tune in to children's interest in the world around them and

to stimulate discussion. There are also limited opportunities at present for children to examine natural materials and living things, although this is identified as an area for further development.

Children's creativity is nurtured as they choose colours for painting and drawing and select items for their collage pictures. They explore different media, such as dough and clay. They have access to well equipped role play areas, with dressing up clothes, telephones, tills and utensils, although these are not yet used to their full potential. Children enjoy a varied range of musical instruments and particularly like the electronic keyboard. They spontaneously dance in response to the music. Children engage in imaginative play and develop stories as they play with the dinosaurs and other small world toys and equipment.

Focused activities are well planned, identifying the role of the practitioner and what the children should learn. Staff are beginning to use their observations to determine what progress children are making towards the early learning goals, and to consider how they might be helped to take the next steps in their learning. There are systems in place for assessing and recording children's development, although these are not yet well established. Staff help children to understand what is expected of them and warmly praise children's achievements, which builds children's confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to develop a sense of belonging at the setting as they are warmly greeted by staff and see their work on display. They are becoming familiar with daily routines and know where they can find toys and play materials. Staff find out from parents about children's individual needs, such as sleep and feeding patterns, which helps them to provide consistent care. Resources, including small world figures, books and posters raise children's awareness of different cultures and needs within society. However, the planning of more activities to increase children's understanding of diversity is identified as an area for further development. At group times and spontaneously during play, children talk with staff about their homes and families and there have been some opportunities for outings in the local community. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are building positive relationships with staff and with each other. Staff help them to understand boundaries and expectations so that they learn to manage their own behaviour. The nursery's 'golden rules' are shared with the older children, encouraging them to consider the needs and feelings of others. Staff give praise and acknowledge children's efforts, which makes children feel positive about themselves and promotes good behaviour. They learn to share and to play cooperatively together.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The nursery operates an open house policy, welcoming visits from new parents at any reasonable time. Information about the service is shared with them by means of the welcome booklet, notice boards and newsletters. Staff take advantage of opportunities at arrival and collection times to talk to parents and share information verbally about the day's events. This is supplemented by daily record sheets, which parents value. Information is displayed in play rooms about current topics so that parents may be involved in their children's learning by continuing activities at home. Systems for sharing

of development records are not yet fully established, although parents can see them at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment, where their safety and welfare are given high priority. Recruitment and vetting procedures for new staff are implemented well to ensure that children are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so. Clear induction procedures help staff to understand their roles and responsibilities within the setting. A system of regular appraisals provides opportunities to identify strengths and future training needs.

Staff use their knowledge and understanding of child development to create an environment which supports their welfare and learning. Play rooms are inviting with easy access to a good variety of play experiences and attractive resources. Children are grouped appropriately according to age and stage of development. Clear policies and procedures underpin the operation of the nursery and record keeping systems are well maintained and thorough.

Leadership and management of the educational provision is satisfactory. Staff are developing positive working relationships with each other, supported by the owner and manager of the nursery. They work together to formulate planning of the curriculum. Some aspects of children's learning are not yet fully developed as the nursery is still establishing itself. However, there is a strong commitment to continual improvement and a willingness to work with other professionals. Regular staff meetings are held to keep staff up to date with current issues. The owner and manager spend time each day working alongside staff, which provides them with opportunities to review practice and offer support as necessary.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the 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

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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 that staff and children are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures
- further develop the range of resources and activities to promote children's awareness of diversity.

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 opportunities for children to practise large physical skills, such as balancing and climbing
- increase opportunities for children to explore natural materials and learn about the world around them
- continue to develop ways of sharing information with parents about children's progress and involving them in their children's learning.

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