



Little Scribblers LTD

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY332969
Inspection date	05 February 2007
Inspector	Kay Roberts
Setting Address	21st Bath Scout Site, Charlcombe Lane, Bath, BA1 6NS
Telephone number	07970 707935
E-mail	
Registered person	Little Scribblers Ltd
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 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 Scribblers Ltd first registered in 2006 and is located in a Scout hut within the city of Bath. Children have access to the playroom, a fully enclosed outside play area, and occasional use of the large hall. The provider offers full day care Monday to Friday from 08.30 until 17.30, for children from two to five years. Registration is for a maximum of 12 children and currently there are nine children on roll, and of these there is one funded three-year-old. The nursery also provides care to children who have English as an additional language. There are three members of staff who all hold a relevant child care qualification. Advice on the education programme is provided by a teacher advisor from Bath and North East Somerset local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where their health is suitably promoted. The risk of infection is minimised as staff are trained in food hygiene and follow good hygiene procedures within the setting, for example nappy changing. The policy for excluding children who are sick is shared with parents. The system for administering medication ensures that children's welfare is promoted. However children are not fully protected in the event of an accident, for although parents are alerted to children's injuries, they are not always asked to sign accident records. In addition, there is no written parental consent to seek advice or treatment in the event of a medical emergency. Children learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine. As children wash their hands before snack and after using the bathroom, they are independent in reaching the hand wash basins and paper towels which are placed at low level. Staff respond to children's requests so that they become independent and develop confidence. When a child says they do not want a nappy but pants, staff offer pants instead and when the child uses the toilet proud of his achievement announces "I did it". The success is rewarded with praise and a sticker.

When thirsty, children help themselves to a drink of water from their clearly distinguishable bottle or cup, depending on what is provided at home. Snack time is a social occasion when all children and staff sit together and chat. Children know what they are eating as staff name the selection of fresh fruit. Occasionally children prepare their own fruit salad and staff explain that it is good to eat a variety of food. At lunch time children eat a healthy hot meal, for example a roast chicken dinner, which takes into consideration special dietary requirements. Children develop independence as they set the table for lunch and reach the drinks from a low level shelf and put them onto the table.

Children have daily opportunities to play outside. They are protected from the elements. In winter children wrap up warm in hats, coats, gloves and Wellington boots. In the summer children do not get burnt as they play in the canopy of shade created by the trees, wear hats and have sun screen applied. Children listen to the birds and occasionally observe wildlife within the garden. They develop pencil control as they chalk on the wall and pretend to paint the fence with water. Children build towers and understand that if the blocks are to balance they must be placed directly on top of each other. Large muscle skills are developed as children push around buggies and move around on tricycles using their feet. One child pulls another child around in a trolley. Indoors children march up and down, lifting their knees high to 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. Children have opportunities to extend their physical skills as they use the large parachute and move with music using ribbons. They visit an indoor soft play centre and Larkhall playing fields where they have access to larger equipment, such as a climbing frame. Children recognise when they are tired. Those who require a sleep rest peacefully in a quiet corner where they are not disturbed by their peers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children relax as staff warmly welcome them into the calm environment, with music playing quietly in the background. It is a child focussed setting with pale painted walls and displays of bright colourful posters, displays of children's work and photographs. Opportunities for independence are maximised as everything is placed at child height. Children appreciate the small details and point out to their parents the different wild animals at the top of the coat hooks. The book corner is inviting with netting draped across the top. Children are comfortable on the small sofa and easy chairs. Organisation of activities on tables and cosy areas with space between each facilitates children moving around freely without disturbing their peers engaged in play. On a daily basis children freely access a broad range of clean, safe resources and activities. They remain interested in what is available as staff extend the range of toys and games by regularly using a toy library. Children also benefit from having access to a large hall and outside play area, some of the fencing for which has been draped with ribbons, beads and safety mirrors to stimulate children's senses.

Children play in a secure environment and are only released to authorised adults. The risk of children having an accident is minimised as there is a detailed risk assessment and daily checks are made of the environment and any potential hazards removed. Children are closely supervised by staff and are protected from people who have not been vetted. In the event of a fire children know how to evacuate the premises safely as they practice the drill on a regular basis. Children are aware that fire is dangerous having discussed the potential hazards with staff. As they observe a bonfire in the grounds, they know they must stand some distance away. On outings, for which there is a safe procedure, children are taught road safety. When using shaving foam staff read the instructions so that children understood that they should not get it in their eyes. Children are further protected as staff are well informed about local safeguarding procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children new to the provision are emotionally secure as there is an allocated worker who follows through on children's interests by ensuring their favourite toys are available within the setting. On one wall of the nursery there are photographs of 'special people' in the family. Children say they enjoy attending the nursery and are able to list their preferred activities. When young children see the new dolls clothes, they compare it to Christmas. Children understand where clothing should go on the body as they dress the dolls. Although staff help to the dress dolls, children develop fine muscle skills and independence as they put on simpler items, such as shoes and hat.

Children name the colour of the paper they have selected for craft activities. Fine muscle skills are developed as they spread glue over the paper and add pasta shapes. They are alert to their senses and watch as dried rice runs through their fingers. When the rice drops on the floor children are independent in using a dust pan and brush to sweep it up. They feel the shaving foam and squeeze it through their fingers and watch as it falls back into the tray. Children follow the example provided by staff and draw circles in the foam. They begin to understand

that print has meaning as staff read the instructions from the canister. Children join in with the words and begin to follow the actions for rhymes such as 'The Wheels on the Bus'.

Children under three years make sound progress. Their progress is monitored in well presented learning diaries which include daily observations, samples of children's work and photographs. Although progress is monitored against the Birth to three matters four areas of learning, there is no system for identifying each aspect within the learning areas. As a consequence, although staff plan for children's next steps in learning and focus on children's interests, there may be gaps within their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and provide children with a broad education. Children's achievements are monitored in well presented learning diaries which include both the learning area and aspects. However diaries do not show how children are moving through the stepping stones. Planning takes into consideration the next steps in learning for each child and their interests so that they are motivated to learn. Staff are appropriately deployed to empower children and support their learning. Time is well managed so that children are not forced to leave an activity they are enjoying or lose interest in an activity.

Flexible use of resources and first hand experience, such as a bus ride to the library, stimulate children's imagination. They play alongside others engaged in the same theme as they sit on a row of chairs, one behind the other, and pretend to go on a bus ride. One child turns the steering wheel and as they do so makes the sound of an engine. Children are developing social skills as they participate in group games. They enjoy each other's company and name their friend. An opportunity to extend social etiquette is provided when children visit the coffee shop, when they also have an opportunity to handle money. Children count on a one to one basis six cars and are able to recognise written numerals up to five. Problem solving skills are used as children complete simple, six piece wooden jigsaw puzzles. They are able to match and name the animal pictures on domino cards and understand that a farmer looks after the animals. Children are beginning to use mathematical language to explain the position of their photograph on the board. Familiar with technology children explain that when they take a photograph using a digital camera they were able to see other children in the camera.

Children's interest in spoken words is demonstrated by the continual question 'why?'. Staff use good intonation and ensure all children can see the pictures, so that children remain interested in listening to stories. After listening to 'Room on the Broom' children say they enjoyed the story. Children share books with each other and are careful as they turn over each page. Children participate with others in singing rhymes and occasionally sing 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' to themselves. They are beginning to develop a sense of time as staff provide the initial letter for the day of the week, and children know it is Monday. Children recognise both their own and the name of peers in print. Pencil control is developed as children draw circles with a pen.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are well behaved, able to share and take turns. With the support of staff they are learning negotiation skills so that minor disputes over toys are quickly resolved. Although behaviour incidents are recorded and signed by parents, they are not confidentially maintained. The behaviour management policy does not include a statement on bullying. Children show respect for the environment and without a reminder from staff tidy away toys they have finished playing with and place paper towels in the waste bin. Children develop confidence as staff respond to what they say, praise each achievement and meet their individual needs through an effective key worker system. Staff talk to parents and other professionals about children's additional needs so that all children are valued and included. Children are proud of their art work and photographs of themselves and family members. They are eager to point out and name the different people in the photographs when parents come to collect them.

Children develop a respect for nature as they plant bulbs and watch them grow. When purchasing bird feeders from the pet shop, children had an opportunity to gently stroke the rat. In the garden they listen to the birds, watch squirrels and go on bug hunts. On one outing children visited a horse sanctuary. An awareness of the local community is extended through the numerous outings to places, such as the park, indoor play centre, coffee shop and library. Staff help children to develop a positive attitude to difference through the provision of resources reflecting images of diversity and learn about the cultures of others through planned activities.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents comment positively about the provision; good communication, children's progress being clearly evident and the warm welcome provided by staff, not only on a daily basis but also the inclusion in events, such as the Christmas party. Parents are aware of practices within the setting as they each have a copy of the handbook and are updated via monthly newsletters and notice boards which include details of daily activities and meals. Children's well presented learning diaries are available at all times and within the next month it is hoped that formal meetings will be arranged between key worker and parents to discuss children's progress. Future plans include providing parents with opportunities to become involved within the setting and formally seeking views on the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Although most documentation is in place, there are minor issues, for example confidentiality of behaviour incidents. Unaware of the October 2005 revision to the National Standards the provider has insufficient knowledge and understanding of the requirements with regard to maintaining a complaints log. There is a further breach of regulations as recruitment procedures are not rigorous. Ongoing suitability of staff to work with children is checked via an appraisal system. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities as there is a detailed handbook. Staff attend regular meetings and are encouraged to undertake further training. Since the nursery opened a few months ago staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage, Birth to three matters, inclusion and equal opportunities. Children play in a welcoming, child focussed environment,

where they have opportunities for relaxation and physical exercise. Diverse use of resources extends children's experiences. They receive a high level of support as there is an effective key worker system and adult to child ratios are well above minimum requirements. Appropriate deployment of staff ensures that children's health, safety and welfare are promoted.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management are able to identify the key strengths and weaknesses with regard to the education programme. Children receive a broad education and are motivated to learn as staff follow through on their interests and where practical children's learning is reinforced through first hand experience. As a new nursery the managers are still developing systems and as yet have not addressed how they can effectively monitor children's progress against the Foundation Stage stepping stones. Plans for the future include the provision of more resources, such as a climbing frame and encouraging parents to be more involved in the provision.

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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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 children are fully protected should they have an accident, by obtaining written parental consent to seek advice or treatment in the event of a medical emergency and asking parents to sign all accident records
- further develop planning and assessments for children under 3 years

- ensure incident records are confidentially maintained and the behaviour management policy extended to include a statement on bullying
- develop and implement rigorous recruitment procedures to ensure staff are suitable to work with children
- devise a system for recording complaints in line with the revision to the National Standards (October 2005) and make the complaints log available to parents

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):

- ensure children's progress records effectively show how children are progressing against the stepping stones in each area of learning and use this information to plan a broad curriculum that encompasses all areas and aspects of 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