



Little Dragons Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344912
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Inspector	Dorcas Forgan
Setting Address	St. Georges C of E Primary School, White Lion Road, AMERSHAM, Buckinghamshire, HP7 9HX
Telephone number	07702 559 116
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Registered person	Paul Kilby Aitchison
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Dragons Pre-school was re-registered in 2006 it is privately owned. The group operates from two rooms in a building in the grounds of St George's Infant School, Amersham, Buckinghamshire. A maximum of 20 children may attend the group at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.00 school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from two years to under eight years on roll. Of these 14 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. The manager and three of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to keep themselves healthy and to become independent in their personal care. They enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health; such as gardening and learning about cleanliness through activities that include bathing the dolls. They take themselves to the toilet and wash their hands using soap and paper towels. There is a bed for children to rest or sleep on if they feel the need. Practitioners follow environmental health and hygiene guidance. They attend training on subjects such as administering medication to ensure their practice is up to date. At present, one member of staff has the recommended first aid qualification; the remaining staff have the basic qualification.

Children are very well nourished they are learning about eating healthy nutritional foods. Snack and lunch times are pleasant relaxed occasions when children can take their time and chat socially. They pour their own drinks of milk and help themselves from a choice of snacks such as fruit or wholemeal toast with a variety of toppings. Parents support the groups' healthy eating practices by providing lunch boxes that contain healthy choices. Children help themselves to water from the dispenser as they wish. This helps them to understand their body's needs.

Children enjoy physical activity, they play enthusiastically in the outside areas. In the pre-schools garden there is a wide variety of activities for them to take part in; like riding on bikes and playing in playhouses. When they use the school's playground, they use smaller pieces of equipment such as balls and hoops; they learn to balance eggs in spoons. The children observe nature during walks around the school field and to the pond. Children are becoming healthy and developing their physical skills very well in the fresh air daily.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment. The bright cheerful rooms are convenient for the children because surfaces and storage are at their height; so that they can access most resources with ease. Staff carry out daily checks to ensure all areas are free from hazards. The front door has a keypad system and staff supervise the arrival and departure of children so that all remain secure.

The two main rooms are very well organised with clear areas for the various activities. One room has most of the creative craft activities and the inviting book corner. The spacious well-resourced role-play area is in the second room along with tabletop toys, the instruments and a large space for activities that are at floor level. Children are learning to keep themselves safe and others, staff remind them to be careful with the sand and not to run when inside the building. Staff are trained in fire safety, including how to use the equipment, they carry out regular emergency evacuations with the children but do not record when these are carried out or any problems incurred.

Children are well protected because staff understand their role in child protection and can put appropriate practices in place when necessary. A clear policy and procedure is in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children enter the group eager to take part in activities. Staff greet the children and make them welcome, parents help their children to settle at an activity. Children are happy and settled in the friendly small group, they are making good relations with the staff and other children. They play happily together such as when building the train track on the floor. They move around freely between activities and are learning that they can access resources as they wish, they are gaining confidence.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Children are well motivated through a good range of interesting activities. They are learning to spend time at activities and concentrate. The daily routines are effective. The senior staff have very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. The remainder of the staff are gaining an understanding through hands on experience and training. The plans are clear; they include all areas of learning and show the learning objective for the planned activities, these refer to the stepping-stones. They also illustrate how adaptations are made to activities for children of varied abilities, all are evaluated when completed. Assessments are made of the children's development but these do not show the children's next step of learning. Children enjoy the challenges they are set.

Children are interested in the activities especially when adults are with them to extend what they are doing, listen to them and encourage them. Children are learning to pay attention to others' needs, they realise that they need to sit quietly during stories so that others can enjoy them. The older children talk with confidence during group time answering questions about the day and the weather. Children are learning the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make; some are able to identify the letters in their names. Staff provide few opportunities for children to practice recognising their own names and making their own marks as first steps to writing. Children enjoy looking at books independently and take a very active part in the story telling especially with favourites such as a Gruffelo. Children are developing hand eye co-ordination through using various tools and practising skills such as pouring milk into a mug.

Children frequently use counting and numbers in their play. They make birthday cakes out of construction bricks and count the numbers of candles. They take part in games that involve counting. Children use simple calculation as they sing with enthusiasm a song about jellyfish using their fingers to illustrate the numbers left. Children are curious and investigate various media such as the cold wet sand, which they mould into a sand man and describe how it feels. They also mix melted chocolate into shredded wheat to see if they can make it stick together to make nests. They manipulate the mouse on the computer with dexterity and are able to describe what they are doing. Children are gaining a very good sense of place as they explore the outside areas available to them and the creatures and plants that grow in them. They have grown and eaten their own vegetables and measured their sunflowers. Children take part in creative activities where they can use their imaginations such as painting and creating collages.

They have a very wide range of musical instruments that they can make sounds with. The home corner is very well equipped providing various opportunities for children to act out their own stories.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work with the parents to meet individual children's needs and to ensure that they are fully included in the life of the setting. Children are becoming aware of the wider society through close links with the school and taking part in some of their activities. The school include them when they have visitors like the fire brigade and the owl man. They learn about other cultures and festivals through interesting activities, such as celebrating Chinese New Year, Pancake Day and Easter. Children have access to resources, which promote positive images of other countries, these include dressing up clothes, pretend foods, books and puzzles. All children have access to all equipment that is age appropriate. The setting have effective arrangements to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, although none currently attend. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well. They are beginning to understand responsible behaviour. They are learning to sit quietly and listen to others, to wait their turn. Staff have realistic expectations and explain carefully to children what these are. They frequently use positive reinforcement. Children show great pride when they have earned a sticker for their good work or behaviour.

Partnership with parents is good. They are provided with a wide range of information about the group and matters to do with children's health and care. Parents are asked to provide information about their child when they start at the group so that staff are well informed about the child's likes and dislikes and any special requirements. Time is made daily to exchange information. Parents are invited each term to look at their child's assessment file and to discuss their development. Parents are informed about the curriculum that their child is following, the themes and activities that they will be taking part in and are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning through home link books. These links help children make progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The careful employment procedures ensure that children are well protected. The policies and procedures have recently been reviewed to ensure that they are relevant and that they support the children's welfare, care and education. The group is organised well so that the sessions run smoothly and provide time for children to enjoy and develop their skills at activities. They are able to take part in group activities and to receive individual support as necessary; this is achieved through the good adult child ratios and the deployment of staff.

Leadership and management is good. The manager and her deputy are very good role models, they guide and support staff very well. The dedicated team work effectively together. The owner is frequently on site to offer help and support. All of the team are committed to making

improvement and are actively seeking out further training to ensure knowledge is up to date. The group have carried out evaluations with the children and the parents the results of which were very positive. The curriculum is delivered very well in a relaxed happy atmosphere. The provision meets the needs of the range of 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.

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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 emergency evacuations are practised regularly and are recorded

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 further opportunities for children to recognise their own name when written and develop their mark making skills
- develop observations of children further to record their next steps of learning so that these can be used effectively when planning

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