

Little Oaks Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY246821
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Sally Ann Hubbard
Setting Address	The Mobile, James Bradfield School, Wretton Road, Stoke Ferry, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE33 9QJ
Telephone number	01366 502150
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Registered person	Little Oaks Pre-School Committee
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 Oaks Pre-school opened in 1996. It operates from one room in a mobile building, which they moved to in 2002, in the grounds of the James Bradfield Primary School in Stoke Ferry. The pre-school serves the local area and outlying district.

There are currently 33 children from two to under five years on roll. This includes 21 children in receipt of funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties. The pre-school opens five days a week, for 50 weeks a year. It is open between 08.30 to 15.30.

Five part-time and one full-time member of staff work with the children. The manager is qualified to degree level and over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. Two staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a early years support teacher from Norfolk County Council.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to have good personal hygiene and to keep themselves healthy. They are always encouraged to wash their hands before they sit and eat, after playing outside and after using the toilets. Children say 'We need to wash our hands to get rid of germs' clearly demonstrating they understand why they need to do this. Staff also have discussions with them to reinforce their learning. Children learn about the need to keep their teeth healthy as they all clean them after they have eaten lunch. Staff help the children understand why this is important by giving them explanations about why they should do this. Children are well protected from risk of cross-infection as all areas of the premises are kept appropriately clean. Staff implement good hygiene procedures. Staff meet children's medical needs. They have information about each child and keep appropriate records for accidents and any medication administered to children. These records are shared with parents. If children have accidents staff can respond quickly and appropriately as they are trained to administer first aid. They have permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment in the event of a more serious accident occurring.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks and sit in small groups with their key worker which makes this a relaxing and social time for them. Children learn why some foods are good for them as staff talk to children about the milk making their teeth and bones strong. Children have drinking water readily available throughout the day and are becoming aware of their physical needs as they help themselves if they feel thirsty. They learn how their bodies change when they exercise as staff get them to feel their heart beating after they have been running around.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children learn about safety every day as they play, for example, indoors they are encouraged to walk and given explanations why. They know how to get out of the building safely in an emergency as they have regular practises of the evacuation procedure. Daily safety checks and periodic risk assessments enable staff to identify and take appropriate steps to minimise any hazards. The premises is generally secure, a keypad entry system on the main door ensures no unauthorised persons can enter the building. Children arrive to well prepared and inviting premises with a range of resources and activities prepared for them. The toilets and hand washing facilities are accessible enabling children to use them independently. Notice boards and displays in the entrance area make the premises attractive and inviting for children and their parents.

Children have a good range and variety of toys, equipment and resources. There is sufficient child height furniture to allow all children to sit at activities and take part. Staff ensure equipment is safe by undertaking daily checks and looking to see that it conforms to appropriate safety standards. Most staff have appropriate knowledge and understanding of child protection. They know some of the signs and symptoms that would cause them concern and are aware of the procedures to follow. They have the information about the referral process and the telephone number they need is readily available. They are all clear that the welfare of the children in their care comes first.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are all well settled and confident on arrival at pre-school. They quickly settle to the activities and are happy. Children enjoy an appropriate range and variety of activities that cover all areas of learning. They have good relationships with adults and respond well to them. Children are beginning to learn right from wrong and at times they demonstrate they know what behaviour is acceptable and they are given praise. Staff spend time playing with children and are usually available to support them as they play. However, when staff are busy their support for children is not consistent. As a result some children are not always purposefully playing and at these times their behaviour gets worse.

Children develop their independence appropriately as they are able to select resources for themselves. These are easily accessible on low storage units in labelled storage tubs. Children enjoy opportunities to play outdoors where they have space to run around and be active as well as indoor activities and quieter times throughout the day. Staff have developed an effective system for recording children's achievements and sharing their progress with parents.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching of learning is satisfactory. Staff have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. They all take some part in the planning process as they all complete their own activity plans. The planning system clearly shows how all areas of learning are covered and how all children are included. Staff interact well with the children and have good relations with them. They generally ask questions to support their learning and development; however, they are not always providing children with activities that are sufficiently challenging. Staff provide children with positive role models and generally children's behaviour is appropriate. Staff react quickly to disagreements and conflict between children, however they are not always able to prevent these situations occurring or escalating.

Staff make the learning environment attractive and welcoming. They have specific areas identified for different activities and children are still learning to use these areas with support, for example the writing area. Assessments of children's progress are well presented and appealing. They are compiled in a way that is visual and informative for parents. Staff are using information from these to identify children's next steps for learning and then bring the next steps into the planning.

Children's learning is generally effective, they are confident, well settled and enjoy themselves. They are beginning to learn to share and play together. They have many opportunities to develop their independence appropriately, such as selecting resources, pouring their own drinks at snack and taking themselves to the toilets. They confidently interact with adults and other children and tell their news at group time. Mark making is available in a variety of forms, such as painting, the writing area, and in role play. Most children are happy to sit and listen to the story; however some do not, which spoils the flow of the story for others.

Children learn about number and count in every day activities, some confidently counting up to 10 and beyond. They learn about the local community as they have made visits to the village, the photographs are used to promote discussions. They learn about their own beliefs and also about different cultures and beliefs by looking at some of the festivals celebrated. Creatively children use their imaginations well in the role play and other areas making props, such as space rockets to use in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are all involved and included in the range of activities available. They have appropriate resources to support their learning about our diverse society and other cultures and religions. Staff ask for good information about children so they can meet their individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are included in all the activities at a level appropriate to their needs. Staff are able to recognise if children need additional support and they work closely with parents to meet children's needs.

Children are beginning to learn about appropriate behaviour. Staff generally use positive methods to manage children's challenging behaviour, for example, they explain that it is wrong to hurt others and encourage children to share toys. They give children lots of praise but are not always available to intervene early to prevent situations from escalating. Staff are developing positive relationships with parents. Parents are given regular opportunities to exchange information and say that their 'children are happy and enjoy coming to pre-school'.

Partnerships with parents and carers of funded children is good. They are given a very informative brochure which tells them about the Foundation stage and areas of learning. Parents share details about their children and staff make sure they obtain good information about children's starting points so they can plan for their future progress. Parents are told about topics and themes and can bring items in, such as anything red for the colour table. They have good opportunities to come in and meet their children's key worker to discuss their progress and look at the observation records that staff keep.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are appropriately protected as all staff undergo checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Anyone who has not been vetted is not allowed unsupervised access to children. Employment procedures are detailed and are implemented to ensure staff are suitable. New staff are given an appropriate induction where they are made aware of the group's operating policies and procedures and health and safety information. Sufficient staff are available to ensure ratios are met and attendance of staff, visitors and children is accurately recorded to meet standards. The pre-school employs an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff and additional courses are offered to enable staff to update their knowledge and skills.

All the records required for the safe management of the pre-school are in place. These are kept securely on the premises so are readily available when needed. The pre-school are aware of their responsibility to inform Ofsted of any changes. Overall children's needs are met.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The pre-school have clear aims in place. Staff work well together and have good relationships with each other. Clear plans are in place for staff deployment however these are not always effectively implemented to provide consistent support for children's learning. Management and staff have effectively addressed most of the issues raised at the last inspection. They have a process for self-evaluation in place which is reviewed and updated. Effective systems are in place and used to monitor children's progress. Staff receive regular appraisals and again areas for development have been identified and acted upon. The manager and staff all show a commitment to improving the care and education they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality and standards of care and nursery education were judged as inadequate and as a result nine actions were raised.

An action was raised asking the pre-school to develop good routines for managing children's personal hygiene, so that the risk of the spread of infection is minimised. Staff now have effective systems in place for helping children to manage their personal hygiene. A new hand dryer has been fitted and children are always encouraged to wash their hands before meal times and after outside play, therefore the risk of infection and illness is minimised.

An action was raised for them to request written parental permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. New forms have been signed by all parents giving the pre-school permission to do this, therefore staff will be able to respond appropriately in the event of a serious illness or accident involving a child.

An action was raised for the pre-school to ensure an accurate record of attendance is maintained for children, staff and visitors and for them to review and update the vetting of staff and complaints policy. The register is now clearly marked showing times of arrival for staff, visitors and children. This means that staff are fully aware who is on the premises in the event of an emergency occurring. Staff and the committee have reviewed and updated the policies and procedures in particular the vetting of staff and complaints. These policies are detailed and contain clear details of processes to be followed to ensure staff are suitable and what parents should do if they have any concerns. The manager has implemented an appropriate system for recording any complaints received.

An action was also raised for the pre-school to ensure that behaviour-management strategies are consistently applied by staff, so that children are given clear boundaries and understand what is expected of them. Staff have received some in-house training in appropriate behaviour management. As a result their management of children behaviour has improved and they are using some positive strategies and giving children explanations. However, staff are not always being pro-active and intervening early to prevent children behaviour getting worse and situations getting out of hand. This remains an area for improvement and will be carried forward following this inspection.

In nursery education the pre-school were asked to provide adequate arrangements for parents to be informed of their children's progress encouraging them to be involved in their children's learning and to use assessment records to effectively plan the next steps of learning for individual children. Parents have good opportunities to be informed of their children's progress. They have individual consultations with their child's key worker to discuss their records. They are well informed of topics and themes and encouraged to contribute by bringing in items. This effective partnership benefits the children who are happy and well settled. Staff are effectively using the assessments of children's progress to identify the next steps for learning and are incorporating these into the planning to help children make progress towards the early learning goals.

The last actions relating to children's education were to improve the leadership and management of the setting so that all staff are encouraged to work together to help all children make progress towards the early learning goals, and to improve the use of resources to ensure that activities set sufficient challenge to older and more able children. Staff do work well together and they all have some involvement in the planning process to help children make effective progress. Children have a good range and variety of resources and staff ask some questions to challenge

children. However the use of resources and activities is still not sufficient to ensure all children are appropriately challenged and extended, therefore, this remains an area for improvement and will be carried forward following this 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.

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 staff consistently support children to develop their play and learning
- continue to improve behaviour management strategies to ensure staff are able to effectively manage a wide range of children's behaviour appropriately
- continue to implement and refine plans for staff deployment so that their responsibilities throughout the day are clear. 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):

- ensure staff appropriately intervene to engage children in activities to ensure they are sufficiently challenged and extended.

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