

La Petite Academy Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206109
Inspection date	26 April 2007
Inspector	Justine Ellaway
Setting Address	10-12 Highfield Road, Littleover, Derby, Derbyshire, DE23 1DG
Telephone number	01332 774413
E-mail	
Registered person	La Petite Academy 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 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?

La Petite Academy Day Nursery opened in 1995, with the adjacent baby and out of school unit opening in 1999. It operates from converted retail premises in Littleover, Derby. A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 excluding bank holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 128 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these, 45 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is very well promoted in the setting as there are good hygiene procedures. A daily cleaning rota ensures the nursery is clean and tidy for children. There is a no shoes policy in the baby room so young children can roll and move around safely. Staff consistently follow good hygiene practice. They clean and tidy after messy activities and meals and use sanitising gel to clean their hands, for example, if they pick something up off the floor. Children wash their hands at appropriate times during the day, for example, before eating. They are encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch and there are attractive reminders in the bathroom area to encourage this.

The risk of cross-infection is well minimised within the nursery. Staff follow appropriate procedures when changing nappies. A clear sick child policy is shared with parents. Children independently use tissues to wipe their nose and throw these away in the bin when they have finished.

Children's good health is very well promoted when they are ill. There are clear written policies for accidents and administering medication. A high number of staff have a current first aid certificate. A log is kept of any first aid items used so that they can be replaced, and the box is well stocked. Detailed records are kept of any accidents and the nursery monitors these on a monthly basis to identify any trends or issues. Appropriate medication records are maintained.

Children enjoy regular and varied opportunities to be active and have physical exercise, which very effectively promotes development of their physical skills. There is a very well resourced and appealing outdoor space, split into different areas to provide different experiences for children when they play outside. The pre-school children enjoy free flow between the indoor and outdoor area for a good proportion of the day. They thoroughly enjoy the independence this gives them and are comfortable as they move frequently between the indoors and outdoors depending on what they choose to do. The pre-school children are developing good control of their small and large muscle skills. They move with control during a music and movement session, swaying their hips in time to the music. They show a good awareness of space as they move around the nursery, finding their own space to sit on the carpet at circle time. Children use cutlery confidently at meal times and ably use a spoon to fill a pastry case when they are making jam tarts. All children play outside each day. They play outdoors in all weathers and enjoy and explore the weather through the different seasons, such as playing outside in the snow. The covered area gives them the opportunity to play outside even when it is raining. Babies and young children are encouraged to stretch and move about, by the placement of toys and staff interaction. As they learn to crawl they move across the room to select their favourite toys to play with. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. There is a clear display of routines for children in the baby unit, which staff are familiar with.

Children learn about healthy living through a varied range of activities and discussion. Staff provide stimulating activities for the children to participate in to help them learn about a healthy lifestyle. A display of health and unhealthy foods in the pre-school promotes lots of discussions at snack and meal times. The pre-school children are engaged in a topic on healthy foods and they go to a local supermarket to choose fruits and make smoothies for their snack. When looking at brushing teeth the children had a visit from a dental hygienist to help them learn about this.

Children are well nourished. There is good promotion of healthy eating with lots of fruit and vegetables and healthy snacks for the children to enjoy. A high proportion of the meals are made from scratch so the cook can control exactly what goes into them. Any changes to the menu are updated so parents know exactly what their child has eaten.

Children's independence and social skills are very well promoted at snack and meal times. There is a jug of water in each room for children to help themselves to when they are thirsty. Children help themselves to their cutlery, choose where they want to sit and pour their own drinks at lunch time. They lay out their cutlery and are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Staff sit with the children and eat their lunch and engage the children in conversation. Children are given a choice about what they eat and staff ask them which items of the lunch they want before they serve them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, attractive and welcoming environment which helps them to feel secure and comfortable. The nursery is situated in very bright and attractive premises which are colourful and appealing. Each room has its own identity as they are painted in different colours linked to a fruit theme which contributes to a sense of belonging for the children who attend. There is also an attractive cloakroom area where each child has their own peg with their name above and there are photographs of the children displayed throughout the nursery. As a result children feel secure. There is a range of colourful and attractive displays of information, grouped in relevance, for example, a display for parents of pre-school children, along with displays of health and safety information to promote consistency of care.

There is a good amount of space available and it is very well organised to give children lots of different experiences. The pre-school children have a large through room with lots of space to separate into different areas, and the children also enjoy free flow to the outdoors for a large part of the day. Children in the two to three age group are split into two separate rooms which gives them time and space to enjoy small group activities and one to one support from staff. A separate baby unit has well organised space to meet children's needs. All of the rooms have a good amount of floor space for children to play freely. The outdoor area is very well organised to provide three separate spaces for children to play and learn. There is an attractive garden where children learn about growing as they grow their own herbs, fruit and vegetables. There is a large yard with a covered area where children play with a range of toys and resources including sit-and-ride toys, sand and water, role play as well as small sports equipment such as balls and hoops. There is also a separate play area with large climbing equipment.

Children enjoy playing with a varied and stimulating range of toys and resources that are in good condition and very well displayed. The toys are attractively presented in small baskets on low-level shelves resulting in children making their own decisions about what they play with. This successfully promotes their independence. Toys and equipment are checked regularly by staff, with a log maintained of any items that need to be replaced to ensure they are always safe to use.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe indoor environment. Staff are consistently vigilant in monitoring access to the nursery. A camera allows the manager to view the front entrance and staff scrutinise identification before permitting any visitors entry to the nursery. There are a range of detailed safety policies in place including a health and safety policy, security procedure which covers answering the door and the procedure for collecting children from school. Detailed

risk assessments are maintained for both within the nursery along with any outings the children go on.

Children's safety is well promoted outdoors. The outdoor area is fully enclosed with padlocked gates. Staff carefully supervise children when they play outside. Children's safety is effectively promoted when they go on outings as detailed risk assessments are undertaken and there is a clear written policy.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through a varied and interesting range of activities. Staff are very effective in extending the activity and consequently children's learning by inviting visitors in from the local community such as a lollipop person and a fire officer.

Children are well protected because staff clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. They know what the different types of abuse are and possible signs and symptoms. A record is maintained of any existing injuries. The designated person is clear on their responsibilities and the procedures for reporting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and comfortable and enjoy their time at the nursery. They gain good self-esteem as they receive regular praise and encouragement from staff. Children engage in a varied range of activities and play opportunities. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively to promote younger children's development through play. Free play is interspersed with different activities such as painting, cooking and music and movement to promote children's learning and development in an interesting way. Children receive lots of attention and support from staff whilst they play. Staff mostly join in with children's play and usually adopt appropriate methods to help them learn such as asking questions to encourage them to think. On occasion children are restless because they are not fully stimulated. Staff make effective use of observation and assessment to plan for children's next steps. They regularly update children's progress records and use these to inform their planning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage. They understand how children progress and that children are at different levels of development. They are able to explain what areas of learning can be covered by a particular activity. Appropriate systems are in place to monitor children's progress which is regularly updated. Staff know their children and what they can do. Planning is effective. It identifies the area of learning within an activity to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff use children's development records to plan an activity to help a child develop in an area where they are not achieving as well as others. However, children are not consistently challenged through activities as on occasion all children participate in an activity at the same level regardless of their stage of development. Appropriate methods are used to help children progress, staff are effective in engaging the children when they are sitting on the carpet, asking questions or showing the children how to do something. The use of resources is good, as lots of thought is given to the range of resources for activities. Children have lots of free choice and choose what they want to play with during free play.

Children are very confident and independent. They move around the nursery comfortably and carry out tasks on their own such as going to the toilet and tidying away. They follow instructions from staff carefully and sit and listen quietly on the carpet during circle time. They are forming good relationships with each other and will play a game with their friends without adult support.

Children are developing good communication skills. They take turns and make relevant comments in discussions, for example, a child explains what happened when he was lost. They are beginning to link sounds and letters; some of the more able children recognise several letters in their own name. Children love looking at books and listening to stories. They help themselves to stories during free choice and a child makes a good attempt at re-telling a story after it has been read to him. Children write for different purposes, such as a child notes down what is wrong with another child when she visits the doctors. Children make good attempts at writing recognisable letters.

Children have lots of opportunities to count during the day, for example, they count the number of children at register time. There are attractive boxes filled with different numbers of objects to help the children to learn and to recognise numbers. The children regularly use these and more able children count to 10 and beyond. Children have suitable opportunities to learn about calculation. They recognise common shapes and are beginning to learn positional language through activities, including using a programmable toy that moves in different directions.

Children have lots of opportunities to look at features of living things and changes, for example, growing plants, melting snow, making cakes and looking at the changes when it is mixed and then cooked. They have suitable opportunities to design and make, build and assemble, as they have free access to the art room for a large part of the day. Interesting and engaging toys help children learn about information communication technology. They enjoy using the computer, photocopier and programmable toys. Children have good opportunities to learn about a sense of place through activities such as exploring their local environment. They go on regular visits to local places such as the library and supermarket, as well as visiting the train station.

Children have good opportunities for free creative expression. They enjoy using the art room to develop their own pictures and also drawing and colouring in the pre-school room. There are frequent opportunities to join in with music and movement which the children enjoy. They enthusiastically join in with singing and have regular opportunities to play with musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well to ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of the children they work with. As children move up the nursery they have visits for a month to the next room to help them settle. Staff also work with children to prepare them for the transition, for example, giving younger children different cutlery and an open top cup. Additionally, children have their lunch in other rooms within the nursery so they are comfortable when they make the transition.

Children become aware of wider society through a very well thought out range of activities and resources. They celebrate lots of different events and festivals including Australia day and participate in themed days. Careful consideration is given to the range of activities, and on a themed day on France staff and children dressed up, the children learnt some French words, they tasted some French food and did a 'tour de France' outside with the sit-and-ride toys.

There are a good range of resources including posters, books and stories about different cultures and religions, multicultural dolls, dolls in wheelchairs, older play people and male and female dolls. A clear equal opportunities policy states what the nursery will provide, in relation to equal opportunities.

Children with additional needs receive a good level of support. Staff provide support to parents and children, spending time identifying what the needs are and involving external agencies if appropriate. Staff working with the children discuss any issues with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator within the nursery to provide appropriate support. Detailed notes are kept of support provided and achievements made. A clear policy includes relevant information and it is easy for parents to understand what support will be provided.

Children behave very well at the nursery and listen carefully to staff members. A tape is played in the pre-school room to signify tidying up time, and children remind others that it is time to tidy away. Children are aware of the rules as they are given clear reminders from staff, for example, 'can everybody line up because we need to wash our hands before lunch'. Children play together and take turns. Two children get out a game and begin playing this together, they negotiate how they play the game and then how they set it up again when they have finished and want another game. Staff demonstrate an understanding of appropriate methods to manage behaviour and apply them consistently. They are positive role models and give lots of praise and encouragement. They are friendly in their interaction with the children. There is an appropriate behaviour management policy with a separate anti-bullying policy. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Consistency of care is promoted because a good relationship is developed with parents. A suitable information leaflet is provided for parents at the time of placement. There are lots of colourful displays of information, with different boards for different age groups. The setting has a website which parents can access. Information is regularly shared with parents, staff feed back to parents when they collect their children. Parents can see their child's progress report whenever they want to and are invited to attend regular parents' evenings. The nursery carries out a regular survey with the parents and there is a suggestions box. A very clear complaints procedure is in place which exactly meets the requirement of the National Standards.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are provided with suitable information about the Foundation Stage as the staff give them the Sure Start leaflet which explains the areas of learning. Parents are well informed about their child's achievements and progress, because they are invited to parents' evenings to discuss progress and are given their child's development record to take home and look at. They receive daily feedback from staff and can look at their child's development record at any time. Parents are encouraged to become involved with their child's learning, as staff display cards listing the current topic, what activities the children will be doing and what parents can do at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A committed, friendly and supportive staff team work well together to provide good quality care for the children who attend. A good proportion of the staff have worked at the setting for a number of years which promotes consistency of care. Constant communication between staff during the session ensures that children's needs are met. Effective systems have been developed so that staff are kept up to date on any changes through meetings and memos.

Good support is given to children throughout the day. Staff are effectively deployed, there is a clear staff rota to ensure adequate cover during the day, for example, at meal times. Good organisation of time, space and resources supports the care provided for children.

The nursery demonstrates a commitment to improvement through training and self evaluation to improve the quality of care and Nursery Education for the children who attend. Detailed action plans are regularly updated with clear targets and timescales. Staff regularly attend training to update and improve their knowledge and skills. Since the last inspection staff have attended a number of training courses including child protection, creativity drop-in, resource workshop and behaviour management. The nursery is working towards a quality assurance scheme run by the local authority.

A range of clear and detailed policies and procedures underpin the good practice in the setting to effectively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The policies are regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date and include any relevant changes, and staff demonstrate a sound understanding of them.

The leadership and management of funded nursery education is good. Both the owner and manager are clear on their role and responsibilities and have a clear vision to provide high quality care for children who attend. There is a clear mission statement, along with detailed aims and objectives. The management team regularly update action plans and are unafraid to make changes to benefit children who attend. The recent introduction of a free-flow system for the pre-school children is being monitored to observe its effectiveness, although the positive impact for the children who attend is already evident. The management team also regularly monitor and evaluate the Foundation Stage using Early Years support and guidance, as well as internal systems such as evaluating activities, meeting with staff to discuss planning and observing and monitoring practice within the pre-school room.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was asked to ensure the outside of the premises are maintained; to increase and use resources which reflect society and provide positive images for children and staff; and to record full details of accidents consistently throughout the nursery.

The nursery regularly checks and carefully maintains the outdoor area to ensure it is safe for children to use. Activities and resources that reflect society and provide positive images have been significantly expanded so that children develop a good understanding of the wider world. Accident records have been updated to ensure that children's health needs are fully met when they have an accident.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the nursery was asked to ensure planning consistently includes all aspects of learning and that all children have the opportunity to access the full range of activities, and to ensure continuous use of resources and language to develop children's knowledge, especially in communication, language and literacy and mathematics.

Planning clearly covers all the aspects within the six areas of learning equally to ensure that children experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Regular opportunities for children to develop their language and mathematical skills means that children make good progress in these areas.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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

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 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 children are consistently stimulated and engaged during activities and play

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 that children are consistently challenged through activities and play

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