

Springfield Lodge Montessori Day Nursery
Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205547
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Inspector	Jill Scargall
Setting Address	Springfield Park, Springfield Road, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire, DN33 3LE
Telephone number	01472 874583
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Registered person	For Under Fives 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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Springfield Lodge Montessori Day Nursery opened in 1987 and is one of 14 nurseries owned by the company, 'For Under 5's Ltd'. It is located in a residential area of Grimsby and serves children and families from Grimsby and the surrounding area. The nursery operates from a detached two storey building. Children from birth to under eight years are accommodated on the ground floor.

There are currently 93 children from birth to under eight years on roll. This includes five funded three-year-olds and nine funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The nursery opens on Monday to Friday, all year round, except for public holidays. Times of opening are from 07.30 to 18.00. The nursery employs 20 staff, 19 of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications.

The nursery follows the Montessori teaching philosophy and it receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The company have obtained the Investors in People award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Cross infection is minimised because the nursery have very effective and rigorous procedures in place for changing nappies, toileting and hand washing. Adults act as good role models and even very young babies hold out their hands for 'gel' cleanser. Nappy changes are recorded and parents are informed by daily diary. Older children have a high level of awareness of good hygiene practice with appropriate routines. They are encouraged to take care of themselves and each other, they can put on coats and shoes for outdoor play and raincoats if it is raining.

Children who are not very well are made comfortable and given cuddles and re-assurance. Their temperature is taken and they are given lots of care until they are collected by their parents. Detailed comprehensive policies are in place for excluding sick children and maintaining the good health of the other children. Accident and medical records are well kept and there are sufficient staff with first aid training to make sure accidents are dealt with appropriately. There is a strong emphasis on outdoor play for children. They enjoy a range of purposeful play activities in the nursery garden. Children choose when they wish to play outside and only extremes of weather deter them. They can rest when they are tired on mats or cushions. Babies have mats, bouncing cradles or cots according to their parents' wishes and they are closely supervised whilst sleeping.

The nursery is committed to promoting healthy eating. Snack and meal times are a sociable time and children help to set the tables and they are very good at positioning knives, forks and spoons. Meals are planned to provide a nutritious diet, they are cooked at a companion nursery and delivered daily. Children's good health is protected because staff carry out rigorous temperature checks before serving meals. Children assist with serving, indicating what size portion they think they can eat. They enjoy, for example, a midday meal of fish pie and vegetables, followed by cheese and biscuits. Breakfast and tea are also available with children helping themselves to healthy snacks of fruit. They can also access water from water cooler machines at all times. A similar menu is given to the babies and toddlers with food liquidised or mashed as needed. Babies are given bottles according to parent wishes and they sit comfortable with an adult who talks to them and maintains eye contact whilst they are feeding. Staff are aware of children's special dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is very clean, safe and welcoming. Staff greet children in a friendly manner and they settle easily into the nursery. Children have plenty of available space and can rest, play and eat in comfort. Babies have a familiar environment in their own base rooms, however, children over the age of two rotate through three different inside areas and the garden play area. Children are very familiar with this and are comfortable and knowledgeable about their routines. Staff make sure there is sufficient flexibility so that children who are engrossed in a certain activity can continue with it even if their friends have moved on.

Children's safety is of paramount importance and there is a strong emphasis on keeping children safe. For example, a coded entry system is in place, together with stairgates and socket covers. Fire evacuation procedures are in position and practised routinely. Babies are wheeled to safety in a special fire evacuation trolley. Children are collected only by adults known to staff. Ongoing risk assessments are made and therefore they are kept safe and the risk of accidents reduced.

Children develop a sense of independence and ownership because they are involved in helping to get out and put away toys. They move around a wide range of well chosen age appropriate toys and resources. Most of these are at child height and are organised well. However, some books in the Montessori room have torn and dog-eared pages. There is a good range of equipment to support all activities, for example, buggies, high chairs, cots and seats for babies. However, the toddler room does not have a comfortable seat for an adult and child to work together comfortably. Children are kept safe when they are outside the nursery because staff are vigilant and there is a written agreement with regard to outings, and consent for emergency treatments. Children are further safeguarded as a result of staff having up to date training and a good working knowledge of child protection policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children progress very well in all areas of learning. They are happy and eager to play and learn. This is as a result of careful and efficient use of planning using the 'Birth to three matters' framework, a good range of resources and excellent staff teamwork. Staff use their experience and knowledge of children's needs to contribute their expertise towards planned activities, this is combined with a themed approach. At the same time they consider the resources available and they use a holistic approach to providing optimal challenge for children. Children have many opportunities to discuss what they are doing with staff and with their friends and they are becoming confident and self-assured communicators. They respond well to both adults and other children. They have many rich and varied experiences, for example, they look at recycling as a topic and have tried to make paper. They regularly plant and grow flowers, like daffodils, and vegetables and herbs in the garden which eventually they harvest, prepare and eat. Children routinely practice practical life skills, for example, buckles, buttons and laces and become expert at self-care. They spontaneously sing with adults whilst they are playing, join in with nursery rhymes and they have plenty of daily opportunities for imaginative and creative play so that they remain highly motivated.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make excellent progress because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage guidance and a clear picture of how children learn. There is a vibrant themed planned programme of activities linked to the Foundation Stage that is interesting to the children and this is specifically adapted to the needs of each individual child including those with learning difficulties. Curriculum planning ensures that all six areas are well covered, gives a clear indication of learning intentions, the resources and vocabulary to be used and how activities can be extended or adapted. Staff use time and resources well. They have a comprehensive understanding of the children's needs and their use of teaching techniques motivates and challenges the children. They extend their learning by asking open ended questions and children are regularly observed. Adults use these observations to skilfully plan the next steps for children's learning and ongoing observations are recorded in children's records of achievement and referenced to the stepping stones so that there is a full record of children's progress which is regularly shared with parents.

Children are confident and self-assured, they are very good at looking after themselves and happy to help their friends, for example, putting on their coats and fastening them. They have superb communication skills, they are happy to talk individually and to one another, they share their experiences of their birthdays and families and of going to a new school. Discussions are an integral part of their day and actively contribute to the ethos of the nursery. Adults and children discuss their daily routines and this develops their language skills. They ask and answer questions and enjoy listening to stories, join in with rhymes, singing and making music. They have regular opportunities for writing and for exploring books, they are beginning to recognise some individual letters, their names and even some simple words. Older children can hold pencils correctly and turn the pages of a book 'telling' the story. They are aware that the text goes with the pictures, and their vocabularies are extended when they discuss stories, for example, why it would be more appropriate for a gorilla to live in the jungle rather than a house.

Children are keen to learn and approach new learning experiences with interest. They use role play to develop their imaginations, whether they are ordering Chinese food in their restaurant, washing up in the home corner or playing at families in the outdoor Wendy house. Routine activities are used to promote children's number skill. They are constantly challenged as they count the numbers in their group, the number of forks needed on the table, or how many children are lining up. They regularly count and sort during the day. Most children can identify simple shapes and some children are aware of the names of the more complex shapes with more than four sides. Positional language is used regularly especially when children are playing on large equipment when they describe going around, over, through and under. They move with control and coordination.

Children have many positive play experiences when they learn about the wider world. They enjoy local visits in the area and planting and digging in the garden. They grow vegetables and salad crops and taste their own produce. They have daily discussions about the weather, the day and the date so they become familiar with the seasons and the calendar. They have many opportunities to use tools outside and inside when they are taking part in creative activities, such as painting, play dough and mixing gloop. They can practise using scissors and paste spreaders. Children are becoming skilled at managing the computer mouse and they have experience of computational toys in their imaginative play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about the wider world and develop positive attitudes to diversity and their understanding of others through an excellent range of resources and activities. Children are all treated equally and they play a full part in the nursery and in turn, learn by example to respect all members of society. Adults are seen by children as positive role models and the nursery actively promotes multi-cultural education by celebrating diversity and other cultures. For example, Chinese New Year. Children have made a Chinese restaurant and kitchen and have sampled Chinese food and utensils. There are detailed pictures around the nursery so children can identify equipment and written notices are in six languages.

Children with learning difficulties have their needs very well met. Staff have extended their knowledge through training and acquired expertise in order to monitor children's opportunities and identify their needs and adapt activities appropriately. There is a strong partnership with other childcare professionals and parents to provide an individual approach to learning supported by appropriate staff. Inclusion is promoted very well because all toys and activities are adapted for use with those children with learning difficulties. Children have many opportunities to learn

about the world around them through planned activities and about themselves. They have outings in the local area, where they visit sheltered accommodation and to places of local interest. This positive approach means that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children have thoughtful discussions with adults. They have warm and affectionate relationships, and they are beginning to show care and concern as they learn to share and take turns. Adults are sensitive to children's feelings and they are good at promoting positive experiences. Children have clear boundaries and they recognise that they must be polite and well mannered towards one another.

There is an excellent partnership with parents which contributes to children's well-being. Staff and parents work together effectively before their children start in the nursery, to build a profile of the child's likes and dislikes. This shared information continues because parents input is given a high priority. However, children's privacy is not always maintained because individual children's dietary needs are not always discreetly displayed.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are acknowledged as the child's first educator and can be as involved in their child's learning as they wish. Parents are given a wealth of written information about the nursery before their child starts and this includes information about the complaints procedure and the Foundation Stage guidance, and working towards the early learning goals. They are consulted regularly with regard to their child's care. Key workers discuss children's progress on a daily basis at doorstep meetings as well as giving parents an opportunity for a more formal report. Babies have diaries which travel with them to home and back. Parents have recently completed questionnaires about the nursery which shows that they are very happy with the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children feel secure and at ease in a very well organised nursery where they are cared for with an excellent level of adult support. The environment is organised flexibly so that children can choose to access different play areas and extend their play and develop independence.

The leadership and management are outstanding. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery with a strong focus on the development and achievement of the children in her care. She is committed to building a cohesive team of staff and provides them with regular staff meetings, in-service training and appraisals. Their training needs are discussed and their needs monitored. An induction process is in place for new staff and students, and work experience placements are guided and show how to fit in with nursery routines. Staff work well as a team and all adults are familiar with the nurseries policies, procedures and routines. They are committed to continuous improvement and development. Many, including the manager are pursuing further childcare qualifications. The manager regularly monitors and evaluates the children's progress and identifies strong areas in the curriculum and improves areas where she sees a need. All staff work closely with other childcare professionals. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Documentation is accurately kept, stored and updated appropriately. Confidentiality is clearly understood and implemented. Documents are very well used to support the provision and helps them to offer an exemplary service to parents and children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery were asked to ensure children have access to an area for quiet play and relaxing activities when grouped in the messy room. Since the last inspection the nursery has been extensively refurbished. The area for creative activities has a quiet area and book corner with child sized furniture in order to meet the needs for children to have an area for rest and relaxation.

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 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 outstanding.

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):

- make sure that personal information about children is kept securely, whilst being easily accessible
- make sure books are in good order
- make sure there is appropriate seating for adults so that they can work with children in comfort

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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