

# Foundations for Learning

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	316764
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	(Kate) Kathryn, Jane Ryder
<b>Setting Address</b>	Greenmount Nursery, Brick Barn Farm, Whipney Lane, Greenmount, Bury, Lancashire, BL8 4HT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 882 366
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Foundations for Learning Partnership Limited
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Foundations for Learning Nursery has been registered under the current ownership since 2001 and is one of nine nurseries owned by The Foundations for Learning Partnership. It operates from a converted farmhouse in a semi-rural area of Greenmount, Bury. Children are accommodated within five main playrooms according to their age. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00, 51 weeks of the year. The out of school provision opens term time only, from 08.00 to 09.00 and 15.30 to 17.30. A maximum of 80 children from birth to eight years may attend the nursery at any one time, including 12 places for out of school children. There are currently 71 children on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties. Children attend for a variety of part time and full time sessions.

The nursery currently employs eight members of staff. Of these, six have relevant early years qualifications and a further member of staff is undertaking a professional qualification. The setting receives weekly support by a qualified teacher employed by the proprietors.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is fostered well through the effective procedures members of staff follow for minimising the spread of infection. For example, the environment is kept clean, tables are washed with anti-bacterial spray and toys are routinely cleaned. Staff implement good nappy changing procedures to protect young children from cross infection. Children develop a good understanding of their personal care needs as staff promote consistent and regular routines, such as hand washing before eating and after visiting the bathroom. Photographs showing children washing their hands are displayed above the wash hand basins and encourage younger children to carry out the task independently. Procedures to care for children in the case of accidents or illness are good. There are relevant documents in place and members of staff with first aid certificates.

Children enjoy fresh air and exercise daily as staff plan good opportunities for outdoor play. Children independently and enthusiastically make choices from a good range of equipment which helps them to develop new skills and control of their bodies. For example, they climb, balance, throw, catch, peddle and push. Older children have weekly opportunities to participate in dance classes and occasional visits to the swimming baths. Young babies' physical development is encouraged as they are made comfortable on the floor and enjoy the movement of kicking their arms and legs and reaching out towards suspended shapes.

A varied and balanced diet ensures children are kept well nourished. Meals and snacks are planned on a three week menu and are prepared on the premises using mainly fresh produce. Staff take into account children's developmental stages and home routines when providing meals and bottles. They respond to young babies needs well, they cradle them in their arms as they are bottle fed and make good eye contact as they sit in low baby chairs for their dinners. Young children gain independence and learn to feed themselves as staff appropriately support them to hold a spoon and feed themselves. Older children serve their own meals and as a consequence develop independence and begin to recognise portion sizes to suit themselves. Fresh drinking water is made available throughout the day and children learn to recognise when they are thirsty and need to drink.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, child-centred environment. Their art work and photographs of them engaged in play are attractively displayed. The use of brightly coloured rugs, play-mats, floor cushions and sofas generate a homely, comfortable feel for very young children. Playrooms are set out with continuous provision which supports children's independence as they access the wide variety of good quality toys and activities for themselves. Resources stored at child height enable children easy access, independent choice and the ability to follow their own ideas. Staff do not set out play resources for children attending the out of school provision, as they are encouraged to select their own activities from the store cupboard.

Children's safety and security is maintained through the positive steps staff take to minimise risks. Good consideration is given to security and the nursery entrance is protected with a security key pad. There are appropriate fire evacuation procedures in place and children become familiar with and learn to keep themselves safe as they practise regular fire drills. Children's

safety is not effectively met during outdoor play, as the safety floor covering is damaged due to recent drain repairs. In addition, children are not protected from a disused hanging telephone junction box and access to a filled mop bucket.

Staff have a good awareness of child protection issues. They are able to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse in order to safeguard the welfare of children. They understand the procedures and know what their responsibilities are within them. Children are safeguarded through effective procedures in ensuring children are never left alone with persons not vetted. Staff photographs are displayed so that they can be easily identified by parents. The child protection statement does not fully reflect current national guidance and this impacts on staff's up to date knowledge.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and settle well in the nursery. They have developed good relationships with the staff and other children. The staff are caring and sensitive, in particular towards the very young children. Staff provide good opportunities for children to experience sensory play and each morning they enjoy exploring the smell, taste, touch and sound of different objects in the sensory bags. Staff spend time playing with children, interacting well and creating opportunities for children to have fun and enjoy the time they spend at the nursery. The children's key worker observes and monitors development, making sure that they support them in making progress. Staff have regard to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use it well to plan activities and plan effectively for the next steps in children's learning.

Children have a good variety of play activities that they independently access from within the continuous play provision. They are motivated and have a positive disposition to learning. They make choices and follow their own interests. For example, they enjoy listening to stories, which helps them become skilful communicators. They become strong and confident children as they explore climbing frames and roll balls to one another. They have frequent opportunities to develop their creative skills, as they access a wide variety of different media, such as sand, water, gloop, paint and collage.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and as a result plan a wide range of stimulating play experiences, which ensures a firm foundation for learning. Staff observe children very well, they know what their starting points are, their abilities, and through assessments are able to plan the next steps in children's learning effectively. Children have comprehensive progress files containing written observations, examples of their work and photographs of them at play which are linked to the stepping stones.

Children are very confident in the nursery environment. They initiate their own play and independently access a wide range of resources from within the continuous provision. They are developing good self-help skills as they put their own coat on for outdoor play and learn to fasten buttons and zips. They make good relationships with other children and after self-serving their lunch, make their way to sit with their special friends. They learn to concentrate for long periods, for example, they listen well to a member of staff who demonstrates the concept of big, little and medium. Children learn that print carries meaning as they practice writing their name on the computer. They enjoy listening to stories but do not routinely use the book area for the enjoyment of looking at books. Children are encouraged to count as they

engage in the playground game of 'What time is it Mr Wolf?'. They develop an awareness of mathematical concepts, such as full and empty as they play in the water and they explore length as they use a tape measure from the outdoor resource box to see how long the fence is. Children do not make good use of the resource materials provided in the outdoor environment, used to enhance an area of the curriculum. Children are becoming familiar with technology as they use programmable toys, computers and metal detectors. Children make good progress in physical development. They have weekly dance classes, play daily with wheeled toys and climbing frames to develop large motor skills and use a wide range of tools to develop dexterity, such as pastry cutters, rolling pins and paintbrushes. Interesting creative opportunities enable children to experiment and explore shape, colour and textures in a variety of media.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's transition from home to nursery is supported through an effective period of visits before a placement begins. During this time staff gather a wealth of information about children's individual needs from parents enabling them to understand a child's developmental starting point. Children develop a strong sense of belonging in the setting as they see their art work on display and they recognise where to hang their coat. The setting provides an appropriate range of resources which reflect positive images of diversity and which help children to develop an understanding of other cultures and traditions. Children's knowledge of diversity is further developed through the celebration of familiar and other less known festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Eid. There are very good systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and the staff team work closely with parents and other professionals, such as speech therapists to ensure each child's individual needs are met. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Staff manage children's behaviour well. They use appropriate strategies to discourage inappropriate behaviour and equally they praise and acknowledge children's good behaviour. They talk to children about making 'good choices', such as sharing, sitting nicely and taking turns. Where distraction and other well used strategies do not have the desired effect, staff remove a child's photograph from the 'good choices board' until they have responded positively and then their photo is replaced. Children show kindness to others, particularly the older children towards the younger ones. For example, during outdoor play, older children take the hands of younger children and walk them safely around the play area.

The partnership with parents is good. There are good systems in place for effective communication between parents and staff. For example, informal conversations, daily diary sheets, meetings every three months between parent and key worker to look at and discuss children's progress files and end of year meetings. Parents have access to a wide range of information, including weekly menus, short term planning, 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage. There is a complaints policy available for parents to see and staff are aware that a complaints log must be kept. However, the system used at the moment does not reflect current legislation and suggested format.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being with carers, who in the main, have early years qualifications. There is an appropriate induction programme, which makes sure newly appointed staff know about

the setting's policies and procedures. A clear procedure is followed to cover any staff absences, such as using staff from one of its 'sister' nurseries if possible, using regular casual staff or accessing staff from a supply register. Children are well supervised and their development appropriately monitored through using a key worker system and staff organise the environment well to promote children's learning and play.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff work well together because there are effective systems for communication, such as regular meetings between the manager and area manager, the manager and heads of room, and full team meetings. All of which ensures information is cascaded down. In addition, the setting benefits from weekly visits from a teacher employed by the company, who advises on curriculum issues, making sure that children have interesting and enjoyable activities to help them make good progress. Both the area manager and the teacher carry out periodic evaluations to assess the overall quality of the setting.

Documentation is well organised and stored to maintain confidentiality. All regulatory documents are in place as required by the National Standards. The registration certificate is displayed for parents to view and children's records contain accurate information. Comprehensive development files containing written observations and photographs linked to either the 'Birth to three matters' framework or the Foundation Stage stepping stones excellently monitor children's progress and ensure parents are well informed.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last inspection, recommendations were agreed in relation to amending the children's register to show times of attendance and to develop the range of safe and suitable toys and equipment. Children's hours of attendance are recorded and clearly show times of arrival and departure. A wide range of safe play resources are available which provide children with appropriate challenge for their age and developmental stage.

With regard to nursery education, the group was asked to provide greater opportunities for children to learn about cultures and lifestyles, information and technology, music and movement and in general provide greater challenges for more capable children. It was also agreed to implement a system of monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum and children's development. Since the inspection, staff have developed their practice to ensure children make good progress towards the stepping stones and there are effective systems to monitor children's progress and evaluate the curriculum.

### **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

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):

- take reasonable steps to minimise hazards to children, specifically in relation to, making sure children are unable to access filled mop buckets in the bathroom area; making the old telephone junction box and cable safe and making the outdoor safety surface safe
- review the child protection statement making sure it reflects current legislation and is based on the procedures laid out in the booklet 'What To Do If A Child Is Being Abused'
- make sure the complaints record is completed in line with current guidance and make sure it maintains appropriate confidentiality

#### 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):

- encourage children to routinely access the book area to look at books for enjoyment
- encourage children to make greater use of the outdoor resource boxes to enhance their learning opportunities.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)