

Little Rascals Day Nursery (Barwick Rd)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319370
Inspection date	26 April 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Patricia Walter
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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 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 Rascals Day Nursery (Barwick road) is one of a chain of privately owned nurseries. It opened in 1994 and operates from four rooms in a converted school building. It is situated in a suburb known as Seacroft, in Leeds, which is in West Yorkshire. A maximum of 92 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 07.30 to 18.00 hours for 52 weeks of the year. The children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 130 children aged from six months to 10 years on roll. Of these 35 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 24 staff, 12 of the staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are also six staff are working towards early year qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because practitioners are very active in following current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, they implement good procedures, such as ensuring at least one person in every room has an up-to-date first aid qualification and that the first aid kits are appropriately stocked by regularly checking and replenishing their contents. This ensures children have good access to emergency treatment when it is required. There is a suitable sickness policy in place, which helps to prevent the spread of infection and parents are fully encouraged to work with staff in promoting this as a result of information on childhood infections being displayed in the setting.

Staff implement good routines for cleaning toys and equipment. They regularly wipe down equipment, such as high chairs and tables, as babies and young children use them. They recognise signs of tiredness in children quickly and provide appropriate support and rest, whilst ensuring each child has their individual bedding. Children are developing a very good awareness and understanding of simple good health and hygiene practice. They are familiar with everyday good hygiene routines. For example, they participate in washing their hands after using the toilet, before their meals and they also clean their teeth after eating their lunch. They also enjoy visitors to the setting that use additional resources, such as puppets, to promote good dental hygiene. As a result, younger children are familiar with routines and older children are aware of the importance of good hygiene and why they need to do this.

Children are very well nourished through staff providing healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Health and nutritional needs are well met because the cooks ensure they provide daily freshly cooked food, that incorporates dishes of meat, fish, fresh vegetables and fruit. In addition to this, staff meet individual dietary needs very successfully. For example, they initially collect detailed information from parents on children's special dietary requirements, likes and dislikes on record forms, and then complete daily checklists with the cooks to ensure there are no changes. Children are given regular drinks throughout the day at both meal and snack times. They can also access drinks independently in each room, from either jugs or bottles that are easily accessible. This in turn encourages children to understand the importance of drinking plenty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's overall safety is promoted well in this welcoming, secure and safe setting. Staff take positive steps both inside and outside the setting to minimise risks. For example, they use a key pad security system to ensure unwelcome visitors can not access the building and safety gates on doors to ensure children do not enter any areas unsupervised. They also conduct risk assessments of every room, which are then displayed to allow staff to continue to check and eliminate the risks. As a result, children can safely play and use all designated areas. Staff implement good fire procedures, which means children are protected suitably from the risks of fire. For example, fire evacuation plans are displayed in rooms and drills are regularly conducted, and fire fighting equipment is annually checked by appropriately qualified professionals.

Children are kept very safe on outings as a result of the staff being fully aware of, and implementing good operational procedures. They ensure a first aid kit and mobile phone with

appropriate contact numbers are with them at all times and conduct a written risk assessment on the routes and the venues visited. Staff are fully aware of the lost or missing children policy and implement very good procedures, such as recording details of what each child is wearing before they go out. They encourage children's understanding and learning in keeping themselves safe, through implementing simple routines, such as encouraging children to walk sensibly and to hold hands when moving from one room to another. They talk to them about the dangers of running inside the setting and show them how to use equipment, such as scissors safely. Children are also beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe by participating in fire drills and staff support them well in their role play when they act out reporting a fire.

Although management and some senior staff are fully aware regarding the signs, symptoms and procedures to follow regarding child protection, some of the staff have limited understanding and knowledge around these issues. For example, they are not fully aware of possible signs in all the areas of abuse, some have not updated or undertaken any further training since their initial qualification training. Others are not sure who their child protection designated officer is, although they know to report concerns to line management and would make records of any concerns on the message sheets. Staff are also unaware of what procedures to follow if staff are alleged to have committed child abuse. However, management is fully aware of these weaknesses and have arranged for appropriate training to be completed in the very near future. They are also in the process of updating the child protection policy to include procedures should staff be accused of child abuse. This means that children's welfare is suitably protected and safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

There are trusting, friendly relationships between children and staff. Older children are confident in approaching staff for help and are developing good self-assurance through the close relationships promoted. For example, they confidently approach and ask for staff to help when dealing with construction equipment and the babies gain confidence in moving between home and the setting as a result of staff encouraging their parents to bring in comforters from home. In addition to this, staff listen to and value what the children are saying, they know the children's individual needs and most children settle quickly and are happy.

Children are acquiring new knowledge and skills through staff planning and providing a suitable range of indoor and outdoor stimulating resources and activities, which reflect all areas of play and meet the needs of the children attending. For example, babies have access to a mirror fitted low down on a wall, which allows them to explore and recognise that they are separate and different from others. Older children have good opportunities to independently access resources, such as musical instruments, glue and glitter, where they enjoy exploring and developing ideas, which are not restricted by adults. As a result, they are interested in the activities and equipment available and use them to extend their play and learning. However, when assessing children's individual progress, the written observations do not always include the next steps of learning and this in turn may hinder children from reaching their full potential.

There is some good quality interaction from some staff as they talk to young children and extend their learning through opportunities that arise during their play. For example, children's knowledge of shape and colour are extended and consolidated by staff asking them to find these during the construction activities. Children respond to the world imaginatively using role play equipment and are learning to express themselves and develop communication through staff playing with them down at their level. There are good opportunities for older children to

sit and enjoy conversation. For example, at meal times older children are able to talk and socialise around the table. However, although staff have created cosy corners in rooms within the nursery, the out of school provision does not provide somewhere for children to relax and play quietly.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some staff have sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use their knowledge and understanding of how children learn very well. For example, they use additional resources and interactive displays to stimulate and extend children's learning. However, when working in large groups, little consideration is taken into account regarding the children's ages and abilities. As a result, some children quickly lose interest and start to disrupt the others from both participating and learning. Staff provide a welcoming and stimulating environment that reflects the wider community and organise it well so children can be independent and develop choice and decision making skills. Children are able to serve themselves their meals and drinks, and can easily select their activities of their choice, from resources, which are set out and labelled on low level shelves. New planning, which is broad and stimulating has very recently been implemented. However, there is no systematic approach currently being implemented to ensure the children's skills and knowledge are developing towards all early learning goals, as staff currently rely on noticing gaps in the children's assessment profiles. This has resulted in minor gaps in the curriculum, such as limited opportunities and experiences for children to recognise changes that happen to their body when active. A new assessment system has also been recently introduced and staff have started to now collect good information at the start of the children's care regarding their individual abilities and interests. However, as with the assessment system for the under three's it does not identify what individual children's next steps in learning are.

Children make sound progress in their learning and achievement. Most are happy and settle with confidence when entering the setting. Older children have high levels of independence and are sufficiently confident and self-assured to work and play alone. They respond appropriately to realistic adult expectations and most are learning to accept responsibility for their actions with adult support. For example, with encouragement from staff, children make suggestions of how they could have dealt with a situation better. Children form good attachments with adults and other children and most are confident in talking about their home and experiences during impromptu conversation. They enjoy books independently and three and four-year-olds are able to link some sounds and letters. For example, children find their name by matching phonic sounds to the first letter of their name and discuss with staff how their names start with the same sound. Children can count up to five confidently and some beyond this. They are beginning to use some mathematical and positional language in their play. For example, they explain to staff how they have climbed up a slide and go downwards splashing into water twice. They are developing good skills in using a range of tools and techniques safely and more able children are able to construct with a purpose in mind. For example, they make fire engines out of boxes and bottle tops. Children are gaining appropriate skills in operating equipment, such as computers and role play telephones, and enjoy finding out about living things. For example, they use magnifying glasses to look at tadpoles and plant flowers in small pots to watch how they grow. They move freely with pleasure and confidence, and are developing appropriate skills in climbing, sliding and scrambling in the outdoor area. For example, they enjoy scrambling up a hill racing staff and using the climbing frame and slide. Children are developing a good awareness of healthy practice regarding eating, sleeping and hygiene. However, they have very limited understanding of changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. They are able to differentiate colour. For example, they ask for specific coloured plates at meal times and both three and four-year-olds are developing appropriate

skills in playing alongside other children engaged in the same theme. For example, they role play together sometimes sharing their hoses and role play axes when acting out the role of a fire fighter.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing a sound understanding of responsible behaviour. They are supported well by staff who implement very good strategies, such as lots of verbal praise and encouragement for positive behaviour. Staff implement action plans with parents using reward charts and use short time out sessions for serious issues. These are supported well by discussions that incorporate methods, such as encouraging the children to suggest ideas for appropriate behaviour. As a result, in general, children behave well with older children beginning to become self-disciplined and offering to share their equipment without adult intervention. Children are all involved and fully included within the setting. A new designated person has recently taken over responsibilities in assessing and coordinating care of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, she has limited understanding of the code of practice and therefore any additional support that children require may be hindered.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are gaining a suitable understanding of the diversity of the wider world through an appropriate selection of resources and activities that promote positive images. For example, there are cultural dolls and dressing up clothes, which provide awareness of other cultures along with small world equipment and books that promote physical disabilities positively. Children are able to develop a good sense of belonging and good awareness of their local environment through trips outside the provision. For example, they visit the local library and the park. In addition to this, they enjoy and welcome visitors into the setting who offer first-hand experiences, such as 'Zoolab' who bring in insects and reptiles.

The partnerships with parents is good. There are professional, friendly relationships in place and as a result, children's overall care benefits. Staff share information on the setting well. For example, in addition to the general notice boards for each room, menus, dietary information and what children learn through the continuous provision and focussed activities are displayed in all the rooms. There is also good quality information on how development is promoted through the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Staff ensure information on the children's development is shared well. For example, a written record on the young children's food intakes, their activities and sleeping patterns are made by staff, and then shared with parents verbally on a day to day basis. Profiles are made available at any time and opportunities, such as parents evenings are held annually which enables individuals to be fully discussed. This helps to promote consistency and continuity of care. Staff have developed strong links and respect and value parents' views and expertise. They actively encourage them to help children's learning at home through monthly topic sheets and by recently introducing a parents page in the profiles to encourage information on children to be shared. They also ask parents to share their knowledge and skills through a parents' forum and by visiting and sharing their expertise during related topics. This means that children are able to develop information and understanding on roles, such as being a health visitor.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place. For example, written references are taken up, original qualifications certificates are checked, and suitable arrangements are in place to ensure children are protected from adults that are unvetted. The nursery's overall ratios regarding qualifications is appropriate, with 50% of the staff having at the least a Level 2 qualification in early years childcare. A thorough induction procedure is undertaken by all staff, which ensures they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities. For example, in addition to discussing and going through the policies and procedures with the manager, all staff sign a record to confirm they have read and understood the information. As a result, children are protected and supported appropriately in developing to their full potential.

Staff have a good regard for the well-being of all children. They demonstrate a commitment to improving the quality of the provision, which means children's overall care and learning benefit. For example, they have completed training courses, which include Food Hygiene, An Introduction to the 'Birth to three matters' framework, Risky Play and workshops promoting Language and Interaction. The staff are also working towards the Leeds Quality Assurance scheme.

Almost all policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Most documentation is maintained appropriately, stored securely, easily accessible and reviewed and retained for the recommended periods. However, although most rooms and activities are organised well, the out of school provision is not set out to encourage individual choices and a sense of belonging at the beginning of the session. For example, children are only able to access a very limited amount of equipment, such as books and some drawing equipment. As a result, they spend quite a great deal of time bored and aimlessly walking around whilst they wait for children to arrive, wash their hands and eat their tea.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. There are some systems in place for reviewing the educational practice and monitoring of children's progress. For example, staff evaluate activities as part of their planning. In addition to this, the manager and room leaders observe and discuss good practice or weaknesses as they work alongside the staff. Management and staff demonstrate a commitment to improving the quality of care and education through working closely with Local Authority development workers, welcoming and implementing new ideas, such as planning and observation systems. Development plans, which include development ideas for the nursery as a whole, as well as the previous inspection recommendations are discussed and fully implemented to improve the quality of care and education. Regular room and senior staff meetings are held to encourage team work and one-to-one appraisals are used appropriately to monitor and review the effectiveness of what staff do and any training required. Staff have a clear understanding of the provision's philosophy and in most areas work well as a team using their time well. For example, in the three and four-year-old room they spend time actively playing with children and organise the changeovers in activities smoothly. However, there are weaknesses in the organisation of space and resources in the out of school provision and in the methods of teaching in some large group activities.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last day care inspection, it was recommended that: staff ensure that times of children's attendance in the out of school provision and visitors to the nursery were accurately recorded;

that all creams and aerosol sprays were made inaccessible to children; that children engage in good hygiene routines when in the out of school provision and staff make sure parents clearly understand the child protection policy. As a result of this, staff have taken positive steps to improve children's health and safety. For example, they have implemented appropriate record systems to record arrival and departure times of children and visitors. They have removed creams and aerosol sprays safely out of reach of children and have introduced good routines of hygiene in the out of school provision, such as washing hands before their meals and after toileting. Staff also now display their child protection policy in the reception area of the nursery so parents can be fully aware of procedures.

At the last educational inspection staff were asked to consider developing opportunities for the children to investigate and find out about living things. As a result of this, they have introduced visitors to the setting, which give children first-hand experiences in finding out about insects and reptiles. They have also introduced activities, such as interactive displays to help children find out about tadpoles and children are also able to grow their own plants.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st 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 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 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):

- develop staffs knowledge and understanding of the code of practice for children with learning difficulties and disabilities
- ensure the resources and space in the out of school provision is effectively organised to ensure children are able to access resources easily as they enter the premises and relax or play quietly during the session.

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):

- develop assessment systems to include what needs to be included in the next steps of learning (also applies to care)

- develop methods to help children learn and focus effectively when in group activities
- develop further opportunities for children to recognise changes that happen to their body.

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