

# Little Oaks

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	156384
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sue Taylor
<b>Setting Address</b>	29-41 Sorrel Drive, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 8BH
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<b>Registered person</b>	Little Oaks
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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

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.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Oaks opened in 2001 and operates from rooms in a purpose built unit. It is situated in the Sorrell Drive Children's Resource Centre in Eastbourne. A maximum of nine children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each Tuesday from 10:00 to 12:30 term times only.

There are currently six children aged from birth to under five years, on roll. The setting does not cater for funded nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area and the setting offers respite care to parents and carers. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting employs 10 staff, of whom nine hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Staff ensure that the areas children use are very clean. There are good routines in place to ensure the cleaning of resources and equipment. Nappy changes are done in private and hygienic practices, such as the staff using disposable gloves, are in place. Staff have a very good knowledge of each child's health and medical needs. This is supported well by written procedures and record keeping.

Suitable procedures ensure children's hands are clean before snack time. Children have a healthy snack of fruit or yoghurt. Any perishable food that parents provide is stored in the fridge, to prevent it spoiling. Drinks are available throughout the session and given to children, as appropriate to their individual needs.

Children's physical development is promoted well, with a good range of play opportunities. Children's involvement in physical play depends on their ability, with staff spending time with them to ensure they gain something from each experience and opportunity. The relationships that staff have with the children supports their emotional well-being.

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

The provision is good.

The premises are secure and all staff, working with the children, have completed suitability checks with the Local Authority. The staff are very vigilant and supervise the children well. Children's safety needs are met, as the staff help support children as they play. Equipment and resources are appropriate for the children. They are enabled to have safe and easy access to toys and activities. For example, a member of staff takes a bucket of water to a child to explore, as they can not access the water tray. Different seating enables children to sit at the table and enjoy a sociable snack time.

The staff are very aware of their role in protecting children. Some staff have recently had child protection training to update their understanding. There are positive links with social workers and parents. The systems in place ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded.

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

The provision is good.

There is a good settling in process at the group, helping children to feel secure and gain confidence. The planning of the session provides a good variety of activities and play opportunities. Each child has their own targets that are devised with the key worker, parents and other professionals. Any individual needs are met during the session with the keyworker. Each child is ably supported by their keyworker as they explore resources or take part in activities.

The session has a routine and set up that is similar to other pre-schools and nurseries. This helps with a child's future integration into mainstream groups. The staff are very aware of the children's needs and possible short attention spans. A record is kept of any achievements or issues that arise for each child during the session. The planned activities are fun and provide learning opportunities for children. For example, children listen to a story and enjoy the musical instruments or singing.

They have free play and the staff encourage them to investigate the resources and activities. The range is good and of good quality, encouraging children to use their senses, although there are no natural or few recognisable household items to balance the selection. Children enjoy sticking items to a picture, whilst they feel the textures. They have great fun in the sensory room. Some lay quietly looking at the different light systems and the more energetic play in the ball pool or in the soft play area. The attention from the staff ensures all children benefit.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff work hard to ensure that all key workers are fully aware of children's individual needs. This helps reassure parents that their child is well cared for and safe. Each child has individual targets that are regularly reviewed. There is a positive attitude towards equal opportunities and inclusion, with each child encouraged to reach their potential. The warm and caring relationships staff have with the children, shows that every child is valued for who they are.

The staff have a good understanding of meeting children's needs in behaviour management. Distraction is used well. If appropriate to the child, they are kept occupied and involved by the staff, lessening the potential for disruptive behaviour. Children are encouraged to follow the routine and there is effective use of Makaton and visual signs to aid communication.

Parents and carers are provided with information about the group and are able to access the policies and procedures. Parents are less informed about the complaints procedure as it does not meet the required regulatory detail and there is no written procedure for the non-collection of children, which is a breach of the Children Act regulation. There are positive relationships developed with staff. Parents are able to settle children in or stay during the session for as long as they need. They get to know their child's keyworker and this helps ensure clear communication about individual needs.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The majority of the mandatory and relevant policies and procedures are in place. The clear recording systems aid the smooth running of the group, though not all staff are ensuring parents countersign the accident reports. There is an efficient recruitment and induction process that helps ensure the suitability of staff. Staff are supported in their professional development with supervision and appraisals, with further training needs identified.

There is a good level of qualified staff and the excellent adult to child ratio ensures children's needs and enjoyment are met well. The organisation of the day, environment and resources supports children as they play, develop and learn. The staff work well together and communication systems are effective. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

Progress has been made since the last inspection. With regards to documentation, as requested more detail is recorded to the attendance register to clearly show when children are present, however, not all staff are aware of the need to get parents to countersign accident records. The staff ensure children are kept safe from unsupervised persons entering the premises, who

are not vetted. The provision of individual towels or by using separate wipes minimises the risk of cross infection when children wash or dry their hands before snack time.

### **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**

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.

### **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 the written procedures for the non-collection of children and complaints, meet the Children Act regulations, are available and shared with parents
- consider developing sensory exploration by providing natural and household items.

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)