

# Little Learners Day Care

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	303769
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Helene Anne Terry
<b>Setting Address</b>	Church Lane, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, HD6 1AT
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<b>Registered person</b>	Little Learners Pre-School Day Care Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Little Learners Pre-school Day Care has been registered 1990. It is run by a voluntary committee and is situated in Brighouse, West Yorkshire. The nursery operates from two main rooms in the Brighouse Adult Education Centre. The group serves families from the local community and surrounding areas. A maximum of 25 children may attend the setting at any one time.

The setting is open from 09.30 to 15.30 each week day, term time and some holidays. Children have access to an outdoor play area. There are currently 52 children on roll, of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

There are six members of staff employed to care for the children and they have appropriate child care qualifications to Level 2 and 3. The setting receives support from the local authority and the National Day Nursery Association.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have daily opportunities to play outdoors to enhance their physical skills, as well as health growth and confidence. Their physical control and skills are developed through the use of a good range of equipment, such as wheelie toys, balancing and climbing equipment and hoops. They also enjoy dancing to the music and playing games indoors. They delight in playing musical statues and games with the hoops.

Children's health is promoted effectively on most occasions through suitable health and hygiene procedures. They are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment and use resources and equipment that are frequently cleaned, to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Effective procedures are in place if children hurt themselves or fall ill whilst in attendance at the setting and a well stocked first aid box is easily accessible. All required health documentation is in place and is well maintained, such as accident and medication records. Parents provide written details of their children's individual health and dietary needs, which ensures that staff are well informed to effectively meet their needs. Children have the opportunity to learn about the importance of good hygiene and health through activities and posters that are displayed. Although children are reminded to wash their hands before they eat lunch and after visiting the bathroom, they are not encouraged to do so before they eat snack. This potentially puts children at risk from infection.

Children enjoy reasonably healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. Snacks are offered mid session and although they occasionally consist of fruit, this is not a choice that is offered to children each day. Drinks are readily available to ensure that children are well hydrated. Children enjoy a packed lunch at lunch time, provided by their parents. They sit with their peers and enjoy their meal as a sociable occasion, chatting about their day. Staff have a clear understanding of children's individual dietary needs. This is achieved through consultation and working in partnership with parents. Children develop an understanding of the benefits of eating a healthy diet through discussions about healthy and less healthy foods and their individual likes and dislikes. At circle time they talk about vegetables, naming their favourites. Children confidently announce that 'Carrots are good for you because they help you see in the dark'.

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

The provision is good.

The nursery uses the premises well. It is welcoming and stimulating, as child-centred posters, information for parents and examples of the children's creative work are attractively displayed, making a welcoming environment for all. The playrooms are effectively organised to allow the children to participate in the full range of activities offered. The age groups have recently been separated into two groups, two to three's and three to five's, to meet, more effectively, the needs of the children. However, children can flow between the two rooms if they desire. Children are able to freely select a good range of quality toys and equipment, which are provided to foster all areas of their development. The premises are accessible, light, ventilated and maintained well.

Safety throughout the setting is fully considered. Risk assessments are completed by staff, alongside regular safety checks to ensure risks are minimised for children. Security is maintained with the outdoor play area fenced and secure. A bell on the door enables staff to monitor access

to the provision and children are not allowed to leave unless with a known adult. The children are learning well about their own safety. They participate in regular fire evacuations and the staff frequently discuss safety issues with them. For example, they learn about road safety, safety in the sun, stranger danger and how to use equipment safely. Staff also remind children to consider rules of games when playing musical statues and musical hoops. They ask 'What do we do to keep safe', and children reply confidently 'No running but dancing'.

Children's welfare is safeguarded well due to effective child protection policies and procedures, which are in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) guidance. All staff have a clear understanding of the known indicators of child abuse and the action that they should take in the event of a concern about a child in their care.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a very good range of activities and play opportunities to foster all areas of children's development. They are happy and enter the nursery enthusiastically and know the routine and staff well. Staff make very good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support young children's learning. The planning of the activities and children's assessments are used well to extend learning. Children delight in taking part in a wide range of sensory and creative experiences, such as water play, painting, collage work and dough. They explore the texture, feel and smell of the shaving foam as they make tracks in it with car wheels, scrunch it in their hands and enjoy the feel of it on their face. Young children explore shapes, developing early mathematical skills as they place pieces together on the inset boards. They also find shapes in the collage materials and get excited when they find stars. Activities and resources in all the playrooms are age specific for children attending and these are all easily accessible ensuring children have free choice, which promotes independence. Children are developing their social skills and self confidence very well. They enjoy circle games where they roll the ball to one another, introduce themselves and say something special about themselves, for example, 'I have pink shoes on'. This boosts children's self-esteem and confidence as they get to know each other and take part in a group situation.

The daily routine is varied and flexible with times for children to have snacks, meals and activities indoors and outdoors. The interaction between staff and children is very good, ensuring that warm trusting relationships develop and that children are happy and settled. Staff spend most of their time playing with the children, using playful talk and encouraging them to explore their environment. Children who become upset are given lots of one to one support and cuddles until they are ready to play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn and progress. Consequently, children make very good progress towards the early learning goals. The learning environment and programme of activities is planned effectively to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning. Planning provides clear guidance on the learning outcomes of the activities for the children. Differentiation is clearly identified for children with learning difficulties to ensure that they achieve their full potential. Although planning documents do not state how activities can be tailored for individual children, staff's knowledge of the children's stages of learning ensures that activities are tailored to meet individual needs. Staff set good challenges for the children and use spontaneous events to extend learning well. For example, children

who decide they want to write on the note pads are given support to write their own names. They are further challenged to find the names of their friends on the registration board and then attempt to write those names. Time and resources, including accommodation are well managed to enable children to make progress. Staff maintain children's assessment records well and these are used to inform future planning. Regular ongoing observation is completed with information gained from assessments and evaluations of activities used to help move children to the next stage in their learning. Warm caring relationships are established between staff and children, this provides an environment in which children feel secure and confident in order for them to explore and investigate.

Children make good progress in all areas of their learning. Children are interested, motivated and excited to learn. They sit quietly when appropriate and listen to others talk, for example, during circle and story time. Children are learning about their feelings and expressing them in words. They talk about 'what makes their heart shine', when discussing what makes them happy, mentioning their mummies, their bedrooms and their toys. More able children are using empathy when they discuss what they would do to make another child happy. Children's independence skills are very well promoted. They operate within their environment confidently linking up with others for support and guidance. Children pour their own drinks, wipe up their spillages, help themselves to resources from shelves, tidy away toys and give out snack. They undertake these little tasks with pride which boosts self-esteem.

Children initiate conversation well and listen and take account of what others say. They listen to one another at circle time, talk about their activities and what they are going to do. They are learning to recall events and stories through role play, words and creative activities as they recall the 'enormous turnip' story. Children use language for thinking when they use talk in imaginary situations. They add voices to the small world play figures as they pretend to go and get something to eat. More able children are developing good emergent reading and writing skills when they link sounds of letters in words, especially those linked with their own names and those of their friends. Younger children write squiggles to represent words and letters, and more able children write their own names as they record the names of children who have had a turn on the computer.

Children use numbers and problem solving skills during their play and everyday activities. They talk about how many play figures they have got, representing numbers using their fingers. Children confidently solve number problems using simple calculation skills as they count the number of children sitting at the tables at snack time, and deduce how many cups and plates they need for those children. The more able children can recognise numerals one to five and can place them in the correct order. Children match shapes well as they complete inset boards and complicated jigsaws. They also recognise shapes in their environment as they find rectangles and circles in objects in the water tray.

Children examine objects and living things to find out more about them. They enjoy planting cress, observing the changes and measuring its growth. They look at mini beasts that they find through the magnifying glasses and go on walks to see the spring flowers. Children know how to operate simple equipment as they play on the computer using software programmes. They also build and join construction pieces together using a variety of materials.

Children enjoy being creative. They explore using different media that they combine, such as recycled and collage materials. They explore mixing colours to create brown for their 'enormous turnip' paintings. They use instruments well to create different sounds, for example, hitting and shaking the tambourines. Children use their imaginations through many aspects of their

play, such as in the home corner, writing area and as they play with small world resources. They have the opportunity to capture experiences and explore ideas through music, paint, sand, water and malleable materials.

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

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is exemplary and they know the routine well. Whilst the younger children are learning to share, the older children competently take turns, share and are very cooperative when playing with toys and games. They cooperate as they do large jigsaws together and wait their turn at the computer. They understand the rules of games and in discussion with staff about group ring games say 'It's okay if you are out', as they sit on the side lines waiting for the game to finish. Staff create a happy and calm atmosphere in which children's self-esteem is positively encouraged. Children receive lots of praise, comfort and reassurance during their play and care routines. Positive behaviour is rewarded with a smiley face stamp or a sticker, which children wear with pride. Staff model good behaviour, encouraging children to be polite and caring towards each other. Older children help the younger ones as they put on the aprons at the water tray. Staff are good role models for the children as they develop good relationships with the children and each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff take positive steps to promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice so that all children are respected and valued. Children and parents are made very welcome into the nursery and time is taken by staff to greet everyone as they arrive. Staff liaise closely with parents to ensure that the individual needs of each child are met. Children are beginning to learn about the significance of different festivals and customs as they celebrate Chinese New Year and Diwali as well as Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter throughout the year. There are good resources within the everyday environment to enable children to see positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability. This raises their awareness of diversity and promotes their understanding of others. Staff effectively support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual educational plans are in place and staff work with other professional agencies to support the families and ensure that children reach their full potential. Activities and resources are accessible to all children to promote an inclusive environment and to promote their independence.

Children benefit from the good partnerships between staff and parents. Children are cared for according to parents' wishes, which promote continuity of care and their well-being. There are very effective systems in place to ensure information is shared on a regular basis about the child's progress and daily activities, for example, through daily, home link books and files and access to development records. A notice reminds parents that they can access the settings policies and procedures and a newsletter is used to update them on any changes and forthcoming events. Parents' views are sought by management through the suggestion box in the entrance area. Any concerns and ideas are acted upon to enhance the care provided for the children. Parents are involved on the committee and take part in sponsored events.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage and their child's progress. They are invited into the setting to speak with staff about their child's development and receive a transition report as their child leaves to go to school. However, parents currently do not have the opportunity to add their own observations of their child's development in their child's progress records in the setting. Parents are encouraged to bring in items associated with themes and topics ongoing

in the nursery to involve them in their child's learning. They also receive information on how they can extend the activities and their child's learning at home, for example, they are given examples of how to form letters of the alphabet correctly and ideas on early mathematic skills.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the nursery. All of the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place, carefully stored, well organised and effectively maintained. Records are regularly reviewed and are only accessed by staff, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained. The setting's range of policies and procedures promote positive outcomes for children. These documents are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that they reflect current good practice and professional advice.

Children are able to freely explore their environment, making self selections from the good range of toys and resources. Staff work very well together as a committed and dedicated team. They regularly attend training courses to update their skills and knowledge in the childcare field. Staff are very well supported by the committee, who hold regular meetings and provide clear leadership to staff. Staff meetings are regularly held, these are supported by informal exchanges of information that occur each day. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities within the setting and are further supported with an appraisal system. There are suitable recruitment, vetting and induction procedures in place, however, these are not very clear or concise at present.

The leadership and management is good. The manager, supported by staff, effectively monitors and develops the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. This is achieved through activity evaluations and observation and assessments of children's progress. Management are aware of the settings strengths and areas that need improvement. Changes have recently been applied to the playrooms and the benefits are currently being monitored. The manager and committee seek support and advice from the local authority development team and the National Day Nursery Association. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, it was recommended that improvements were made to documentation and that safety of the electrical sockets were considered. Good improvements have been made to enhance the welfare of the children. An operational plan is in place and is available for parents. The medication records now consist of parent's consent to administer medication and they sign to confirm that they are aware of when medication was administered to their child. Confidentiality is also maintained with these records. A statement regarding children with learning difficulties and disabilities is now available in the policy and procedure file. All electrical sockets in the playrooms are now protected and inaccessible to children.

## **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 complaint 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 follow good hygiene practices before eating snacks
- devise stringent recruitment procedures for new staff.

#### 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):

- provide opportunities for parents to add their observations of their children to the development records.

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)