



Little Dolphins Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY288333
Inspection date	08 July 2005
Inspector	Heather Tanswell
Setting Address	Goldolphin Primary School, Godolphin Crescent, Godolphin Cross, Helston, Cornwall, TR13 9RB
Telephone number	01736 763318
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Registered person	Little Dolphins Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Dolphins Pre-School is a committee run group that opened in 2004. It operates from a classroom within Godolphin School, situated in a rural village close to the town of Helston, in Cornwall. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday morning from 09:00 until 11:30 and on Monday and Wednesdays from 13:00 until 15:00, during term times only. All children share access to a secure enclosed play area.

There are currently 26 children from 2 to 4 years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The pre-school employs two full-time staff and one part-time volunteer. Both full time staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the Local Authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is safeguarded by staff who are qualified in first aid and know how to respond in an emergency. Staff follow medical procedures carefully, to ensure accidents and emergencies are recorded in detail and shared with parents.

Children are aware of good personal hygiene practices and routines. They are learning the importance of keeping themselves clean as staff explain how wounds can become infected if they are not treated correctly. Children independently access the toilet facilities and wash their hands at appropriate times. However, suitable hand dryers are not always readily accessible where they are needed.

Children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Staff have taught them an action song, which shows children how to protect themselves from the harmful effects of the sun. Children understand how important it is to cover up, wear a hat, use sun cream, and discuss what to do before going out to play in the sun. After vigorous exercise, children are encouraged to notice the changes in their heart rate and take a break. Children enjoy sitting together in family groups to share a simple healthy snack of fruit segments and dry cereal. Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the session and at snack time. Milk is available occasionally.

Children are refining their physical skills and developing good hand-eye co-ordination by using tools such as scissors and pencils as part of their everyday play. Children benefit from regular physical exercise out in the fresh air. They use the school playground most days for active play where they develop a positive attitude to being active. However, children have few opportunities to climb, slide and slither using large play equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children move about the indoor setting freely and safely. Staff lay out the room very carefully, using screens and furniture to create a variety of smaller areas for different types of play. This makes the setting very homely and welcoming and, encourages children to learn how to manoeuvre safely about the room as they play and help to

tidy away. Locked doors and gates keep children secure at all times. However, safety checks on the outdoor premises are not always rigorous. Brambles overhanging a boundary wall pose a hazard to children's safety.

Children use safe, good quality furniture and equipment appropriate for their age and stage of development. Some resources are stored in accessible, low-level storage units. Children show a good understanding of rules and routines relating to safety. They use tools like scissors independently, carefully and with confidence.

Children are protected well and kept safe from harm by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures. Regularly updated policies that have regard for the latest guidance are used effectively as part of the induction training for new staff and volunteers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a lot of fun at the pre-school. They enjoy their time in the group so much because staff take great care to plan a wide range of interesting activities. Separate sessions for younger and older children ensure all ages make good progress throughout their stay or until they enter school. A sense of belonging to the school community is developing through shared activities such as sports day and outings, where children get to know and mix with teachers and older children.

Children settle in quickly as those who are new or have missed sessions receive additional support from staff who are aware of their individual interests. Children are confident, independent and able to concentrate for extended periods. They become fully involved in play and learning and particularly benefit from the well-presented, large group activities. These are used effectively to introduce and re-enforce learning particularly well, in literacy and numeracy. As a result, children are keen to speak up, ask questions, share their ideas and use numbers in their play routinely.

Children begin to make sense of their world they live in. They act out scenarios based on their life experience and stories they know well. They grow plants from seeds and celebrate cultural events from their own and other cultures. For example, they join in with Helston Flora Day by learning the children's dance. Children use books for enjoyment, to gather information and expand on the knowledge and ideas for play. For example, staff encourage children to look at catalogues to decide what camping equipment they might need for their role-play campsite.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are enthusiastic, curious, keen to learn and making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. They concentrate for long periods, helping each other to complete a task. For example, children co-operate using magnetic fishing lines to 'catch' the correct numerals to complete a number sequence. They listen intently to stories, can recount them to others and use the themes and props to inspire their role-play. Children use marks readily as they write messages and

receipts for goods sold in their shop and attempt to write their own name on their work. They recognise their name in writing, some other regularly used words and use phonic sounds. Children behave very well. They respect the needs of others, as well as their own. For example, they move aside to make space for other children to sit down next to them. They recognise when their actions cause distress and take remedial action without needing a prompt from an adult.

Children's learning in all aspects of mathematics is very good. They predict how many and solve simple problems. For example, the number of children present and how many cups required at each table at snack time. They are able to count and combine two groups of objects to find out how many they have all together. Children carefully place different shapes to make recognisable models of correct proportions. Children's physical skills using small tools such as scissors and pencils are well developed. However, they lack sufficient opportunities to use large equipment to develop their physical strength and agility. The limited range of suitable low-level storage units means children have a limited choice of tools and materials to use for their own purposes to enhance their independent learning. However, they make good use of resources selected for them to support planned activities.

Staff have a good knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and use this effectively to plan a wide range of meaningful experiences for children of all abilities. Staff are enthusiastic with high standards and expectations for children's learning and behaviour. They ensure children are developing self-discipline and esteem by being very good role models. Staff are careful to explain the rules and remind children what is expected of them and offer praise for their endeavours. As a result, children have a positive attitude towards others and are enthusiastic learners.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave very well and co-operate willingly. They enjoy the company of enthusiastic staff who are positive role models for good behaviour. Children help to clear away and read each other stories. They are highly motivated by the reward sticker and 'high five', which they take with glee and laughter. Children receive individual help and support which ensures they succeed and learn from their mistakes. They know the daily routines and rules they must follow to stay safe. Children show respect for each other and their environment as they play together in harmony.

Children have many opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world about them through planned activities, chance conversations and visitors to the pre-school. They handle toys, look at books and pictures, and listen to stories about people and animals from around the world. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All children and members of their family are welcome into the setting and play a full part in the pre-school. Partnership with parents is good and contributes to the children's well-being and learning within the pre-school. On entry to the setting parents receive valuable information about how the group is run. The detailed

prospectus provides them with valuable information about the group's aims, management structures, routines, policies and procedures and the curriculum. Newsletters and displays keep them up to date with everyday activities and sends out the invite to take part in a variety of ways. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing. Their first hand knowledge is sought and used to influence the planning of future activities.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for by suitably qualified staff who attend training to update their knowledge and skills. Management and staff use the induction and appraisal systems to identify training needs. Staff have attended additional short courses, such as Birth to Three Matters, and are beginning to follow the framework to enhance their practice when working with under 3's. Some staff lack confidence and are not clear about where vital documents are during opening hours. Not all personal records are securely stored on the premises, which compromises confidentiality. The good adult to child ratios supports children's care, learning and play. The effective organisation and presentation of large group activities contributes positively to children's achievements, particularly in the development of mathematics and communication skills.

The operational plan is being re-written to take account of recent guidance from the Local Authority. The committee relies heavily on the experience and knowledge of the person in charge for leadership and guidance, and does not always fulfil their management role effectively. For example, no-one is checking that safety procedures are fully implemented which results in children's safety being compromised when playing outside.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. Enthusiastic leadership makes learning interesting and fun. Comprehensive planning and assessment systems ensure a broad curriculum is delivered. Staff are committed to inclusion. They take positive steps making families feel welcome and are beginning to use sign language with the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection recommended that the pre-school ensure all policies include all relevant information in accordance with the national standards, in particular the equal opportunities policy. The setting has re-written all their policies following documentary guidance from Cornwall Family Services. The equal opportunity policy now refers to relevant legislation, which helps the setting demonstrate how equality and anti-discriminatory practice applies across the National Standards for the benefit of children, families and staff.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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 overhanging plants along the boundary wall do not pose a hazard to children
- maintain privacy and confidentiality by storing children's personal records securely, and readily accessible to all staff
- provide suitable hand drying facilities

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 children with regular opportunities to develop increasing control in using equipment for climbing, scrambling, sliding and swinging
- encourage children to find, use and return materials for themselves

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