

Lets Play Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	509372
Inspection date	06 December 2007
Inspector	Diane Ashplant
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Registered person	Susan Lorraine Belfield
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Lets Play Nursery was registered in 1995 and is a privately owned business. The nursery is situated in a residential area of the Hall Green area of Birmingham and can be easily accessed from Acocks Green, Olton and Solihull. The accommodation consists of two converted adjoining shops. The main nursery is situated in one building and is comprised of two play areas on the ground floor and two rooms on the first floor. The baby unit is situated on the ground floor of the second premises. A maximum of 37 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 51 weeks a year. The nursery also provides before and after school care and escort services for children attending Robin Hood Junior & Infant School. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 44 children on roll. Of these, 12 receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 staff of which nearly all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have good space to move around in which means babies can practise crawling and are assisted in early standing and walking. Older children move confidently between different areas, and have regular opportunities to play outside where they use a range of equipment and play games to help develop their co-ordination and physical skills. For example, children enjoy using the large parachute, music and movement sessions and take walks around the local community. Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment where on-going cleaning routines by staff and the work of the housekeeper ensure good standards are maintained. Children are learning to protect their own health, as they carry out daily routines such as hand washing before food and after toileting and are regularly encouraged to wipe their own noses, which some do independently. They also talk to staff about the importance of brushing their teeth. Children are well protected in the event of an accident or illness as several staff have current first aid training, and have also undertaken additional training in order to develop their skills in certain areas such as asthma awareness. There are appropriate procedures for recording accidents and medication which are well maintained, and the nursery has recently changed it's 'Calpol' procedure in response to information gained through training. Children's individual health needs are carefully discussed with parents and clearly recorded on alert forms with photos so that all staff are fully aware of how to protect children's health.

Children's health is well promoted through a balanced menu which offers a variety of nutritious food which is prepared by an outside caterer. Staff are aware of the appropriate procedures for serving food such as through well displayed information about temperatures for re-heating. Children enjoy healthy snacks such as fresh fruit daily and have access to regular drinks to keep themselves hydrated. Older children can independently drink at any time as water is readily accessible. Meal times are sociable occasions with staff sitting with children as they enjoy their food. Older children are encouraged to help themselves as they wait to be served and are beginning to develop their social skills such as clearing away empty plates. Staff understand that children have individual dietary needs and these are clearly recorded so that all staff are aware.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is reasonably protected as staff are generally aware of potential risks and have taken appropriate action in most cases to protect children from these. However, the daily risk assessment does not effectively highlight all hazards such as hot radiators and unprotected sockets which could compromise children's safety. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area, and they are developing their understanding of personal safety as they respond to the guidelines from staff such as not walking around in socks in case they slip, and using equipment such as scissors carefully. Staff and older children are clear about the importance of walking sensibly as they return from school. Children have access to a wide range of resources which are selected with regard to safety and suitability and are regularly monitored to check their condition. Many of these are placed at low levels so that children can access them independently. However, some of the high storage of equipment and boxes could be a risk to children's safety. All the required policies and procedures to ensure children's safety at all times are in place such as safe collection and staff are aware of these. Children take part in regular

fire drills so they can be evacuated quickly in an emergency, and older children are able to explain the procedures.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff are aware of their role and responsibilities as regards child protection and how to pass on concerns appropriately. This has been part of a recent in-house staff training initiative to ensure staff are very clear of their duty to safeguard children. The child protection policy is shared with parents who sign to confirm their understanding. However, although this policy has been updated since the last inspection it does not include the recent changes with regard to Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment where they have many opportunities to engage in a range of play and learning experiences. The space has been set out to enable children to make choices about how and where they play, for example in the two to three room children can move between the sensory play area, the craft room and the role play area. Children are generally well supported by staff who are aware of when to engage and encourage, but also allow children to play independently. Babies now have more space to explore and engage in different play experiences such as looking at books on the cushions or playing with musical instruments. There is a planned programme which is based around the 'Birth to three matters' framework which allows children to direct their own play and fully explore their senses. For example, the children enjoy examining cones, feathers, bangles and ribbons and looking through different coloured paper as they sit under the tent. Children of all ages enjoy being creative with a wide range of different materials such as cornflour. Children engage well during the day as most staff respond well to them, encouraging their exploration and offering lots of positive language and conversation. All children's progress is monitored to ensure they are developing appropriately and information about this is shared with parents. Children at the school club are very comfortable in their environment where they know the routine well and freely choose how they spend their time, engaging happily in such activities as making paper chains. They relate very well to the staff who respond warmly to them which enables them to talk freely and relax after a busy day at school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The learning environment is well organised and attractively set out to encourage children's participation and the different areas are well supported by appropriate resources, for example the role play area is currently set up as a post office. There is a well-planned weekly programme, which clearly links to the curriculum and within this there is a good balance of child and adult-directed sessions. The senior staff responsible for the pre-school have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. They respond very well to the children, and inspire their interest and engagement through their own enjoyment and enthusiasm. This means children listen and concentrate well and engage in their chosen activities with friends or staff, happily talking as they pursue their activity. Senior staff are skilled at using sessions such as circle time to engage and involve all children and naturally include all areas of learning. For example, during the activity to introduce Bertie Bear children are enrapt as they think about how they can include him at home, discuss items needed for his care and then listen to his story. However, not all staff are always alert to the opportunities to maximise children's learning through the daily routine. There is a daily evaluation of focus activities which is effectively carried out to ensure children are gaining from the experience. Children's progress is regularly monitored through

both planned and impromptu observations which help to build up a profile of children's progress. This folder together with a report is shared with parents twice yearly at parents' evening and staff and parents then discuss together how they can encourage children's learning.

Children are confident talkers as they are eager to answer questions and offer their thoughts and experiences during circle time. They talk with their friends and the staff, most of whom are able to extend these conversations well. Children respond well to the spoken word as they listen intently to the discussion around 'Bertie Bear' and to his story and to instructions about around making cakes, freely using words like 'ingredients' and commenting that when mixing it makes a noise because 'that's the sugar at the bottom'. They independently seek out books to read and are learning to recognise their own names and others as they self-register. Children are making marks for different purposes as they access the writing area and use different resources every day such as crayons, felt tips, chalks or they make letters in the post office. Children learn about shapes and sizes through different resources as they enjoy puzzles, make patterns, thread and construct and use positional language as they line up cars and talk about next and behind and discuss different sizes. They have lots of opportunities to explore and be creative as they play with sand and water and engage in lots of creative play. For example, they explore all the senses as they mix the ingredients for chocolate cakes and talk about what happens to the chocolate when you heat it. They have a role play room which changes from a bedroom to a shop or to a post office as they mirror adult roles and talk about where they go in the community, sharing their own experiences and ideas.

Children's behaviour is good. They listen and engage well and respond to routine directions because they are part of an environment where learning is made interesting and fun. This means they are interested and concentrate well and gain much from the daily conversation and activities they are involved in. Children are developing their independence and social skills as they choose when to have their snack, collect their own lunch and decide how much they want. They respond well to direction and listen to information shared with them such as discussion about the daily routine, developing good manners and respect as they co-operate within the group and allow their companions to speak. Children are encouraged to talk about themselves and their families so they build up a clearer understanding of their place in society, and feel valued as their thoughts and work are valued. Children are learning about their local community as they visit the park and the church and enjoy celebrating different festivals so they develop an understanding of the world around them. They watch and discuss how to care appropriately for the nursery pets. Children have opportunities to use equipment such as the computer and regularly talk about the weather and how things change as they, for example, make different vegetables into a soup. Children clearly benefit from their time at the pre-school where they have fun and develop a real interest in learning. They want to explore and discover new things and are offered a wide range of different learning and social experiences which help them to develop their own individual potentials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into this nursery by staff who are friendly and respond and respect children as individuals. The use of the key worker system effectively supports parents by providing them with someone specific to liaise with about their child. All necessary information is taken from parents at registration which enables staff to respond to individual needs appropriately. For example, babies' routines are clearly documented, displayed and followed. Children are developing an awareness of their own individuality as staff talk regularly to them about home and family. Items such as the laminated family picture albums for babies and photos

of older children provide comforting images and also encourage recognition and conversation about them. Children are learning about the local community as they get to meet the fire officer and visit the local park and the church. They can choose freely from a wide range of resources including those which reflect diversity and they have special activities and food tasting around the different festivals such as Divali. Staff are aware that some children have specific needs and are alert to any concerns which they pass on to their co-coordinator. Staff liaise closely with parents to support all children and also use outside agencies for advice and guidance. Staff show a positive attitude to including all children. For example, most staff have learnt baby signing which they feel is a very effective way of communicating with all children.

Children's behaviour is good as staff offer regular praise and encouragement which helps them develop their self-esteem and confidence. For example, there are lots of displays of children's work around the nursery and kept in their own folders so that children can return later to finish their work. Children's efforts are rewarded by genuine enthusiasm from staff and also stickers which acknowledge their effort. Children are learning to respect each other as they take turns and wait while others finish. They respond well to requests to sit at the table, to line up and to help tidy up and take up the responsibility of being a helper with pride. They are generally attentive to staff and concentrate on their chosen activity. Several staff have recently completed training in 'Early Intervention' which has enabled them to focus on the strategies they are using and make changes when they feel these will be more successful, such as the use of the large sad and smiley faces. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents works well and staff are always available to talk with them about their children. All necessary information is shared at registration and the effective use of noticeboard displays and regular newsletters ensure that parents are kept up-to-date with relevant information. Weekly plans and topic information as well as posters such as those around the 'Birth to three matters' framework are displayed in each room and the effective use of photographs provide parents with clear images of what their children do. Parents are invited to attend the open evening when they receive information about their child's progress through discussion with staff and the report received. This enables nursery and parents to work effectively together in the best interests of the child.

Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. They receive clear information in the parent handbook and notice board displays about the Foundation Stage and what each area of learning means for their child. Weekly plans and topics are displayed with clear links to the stepping stones and parents are invited to bring in items from home such as for junk modelling. They are encouraged to talk to the pre-school manager and view their child's development folder at any time, and the twice yearly parents' evening provides a more formal venue for exchanging information about children's progress when parents are invited to comment on their child's learning. A good link is formed between home and nursery as parents welcome 'Bertie Bear' into the home and child and parent keep a diary to share with the other children. Staff also encourage the use of the 'Firm Foundation' packs at home so parents share in and enjoy their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery offers children a caring and stimulating environment and provides them with a good range of play and learning opportunities. It is attractively decorated and creates a welcoming environment where children can engage in their own play choices, and discover different learning areas which are well supported by appropriate resources. The staff team work

effectively together and are well supported by senior staff who are accessible and active within the nursery. Staff are encouraged to evaluate their own practice and the nursery's performance to ensure they are succeeding in the outcomes and have regular meetings to pass on ideas and discuss practice. For example, staff are given scenarios to consider and discuss to ensure their full understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures. There are appropriate recruitment and selection procedures in place to ensure the suitability of staff working with the children and the flexibility of some staff enables absences to be covered by those who know the routines and the children well. Annual appraisal and a good commitment to on-going training helps supports staff's professional development and keeps them aware of current ideas and practices.

All the required paperwork is in place and is regularly reviewed, although some such as the child protection policy needs further revising to bring it in line with the latest guidance. All daily records such as rotas and attendance registers are well maintained as staff are aware of the importance of these.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The staff responsible for the pre-school children have a very good awareness of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn and have created a bright and interesting environment where children are regularly stimulated and inspired. They have a clear vision for nursery education which centres around supporting each child appropriately according to their individual needs and providing a environment where children are happy, involved and learning. The nursery works well with the parents to include them in this so they all work consistently to help children achieve their potentials. The learning programme is regularly evaluated to ensure it is achieving it's outcomes for children and planning is adjusted to offer the appropriate challenge for each child. The nursery works well with the teaching support service and also seeks other advice to ensure all children are fully included.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were several actions set in relation to managing behaviour, maintaining good hygiene procedures and the preparation of food and drink. Staff show a sound understanding of how to manage children's behaviour and several have completed the 'Framework for Intervention' training since the last inspection. The nursery has now employed a housekeeper and have recently achieved a high award for food hygiene and staff carry out appropriate cleaning and food preparation procedures to maintain children's health. The nursery was also set actions around providing a suitable range of activities based on children's level of development, which promote equality of opportunity. Children are generally well occupied and engaged in an interesting curriculum and encouraged to make independent choices by staff who respond well to them. The nursery was also required to develop staff's awareness of safety issues and to develop their child protection and complaints procedure in line with current guidance. The complaints procedure now includes the address and number of the regulator and the child protection policy includes action to be taken in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. However, the procedure still does not fully comply with the recent amendments as regards the Local Safeguarding Children Board and a further recommendation has been set around this. Also, although the staff do carry out daily safety checks these need to be reviewed to ensure all hazards, such as unprotected socket covers are identified and addressed and a further recommendation has been set in relation to this.

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):

- review the risk assessment to ensure it effectively identifies any hazards and sets action to minimise these, particularly with regard to unprotected sockets, high storage and hot radiators
- review the organisation of all documentation to ensure this is easily accessible and contains up-to-date information for example the child protection policy with regard to Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

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):

- maximise all opportunities to increase children's learning within the daily routine.

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