

Little Lanes

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY262858
Inspection date 27 November 2007
Inspector Jill Nugent

Setting Address Green Lanes, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL10 9JY

Telephone number 01707 262556

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Registered person Little Lanes

Type of inspection Childcare

Type of 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Lanes out of school care opened in 2003. It is one of two sister out of school provisions in Hatfield. It incorporates a breakfast and after school club and operates from a classroom within Green Lanes Primary School. The club also has use of various other rooms in the school and children share access to an outdoor play area.

Little Lanes is open from 07.55 until 8.50 and from 15.15 until 17.45 every weekday during term time. There are currently 65 children between the ages of four and eleven on roll. The club supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

A total of eight staff are employed across the two settings to work with the children. Of these, four members of staff, including the owner/manager, hold relevant early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because there are good procedures in place. All medical records are well maintained. Staff request information on children's medical backgrounds so that they can identify any particular needs. Children are excluded if ill so as to protect others from infection. In the event of an accident they are well taken care of as staff hold up to date qualifications in first aid. There are written guidelines in place concerning hygiene in order to avoid the possibility of cross-infection. Children are aware of the need to wash their hands after using the toilets and before eating tea. These procedures contribute effectively to keeping children healthy.

Children enjoy a variety of healthy foods at breakfast and tea time. For example, they like eating eggs, yoghurts, hot dogs and fresh fruit. They learn about the importance of healthy eating when taking part in creative activities based around the subject of different foods. Children are offered a choice of drinks at tea time. However, fresh drinking water is not easily accessible to children throughout the sessions so as to help avoid the risk of dehydration. Children with special diets eat appropriately as all staff are made aware of their dietary needs. Overall, children are well nourished.

Children have very good opportunities to take part in physical activities. They enjoy playing outdoors, for instance, kicking balls around or balancing along a tyre track. Staff make good use of equipment in the school hall to offer a variety of sports and games. Children develop manipulative skills, such as cutting, gluing and modelling when taking part in free choice play in the classroom. Consequently, children keep fit and develop physical skills in a range of activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. They have sole use of the classroom and enjoy easy access to a variety of interesting resources. The play environment is enhanced through the display of pictures and art work. Staff promote children's safety effectively through a system of risk assessments. This helps to minimise potential risks arising from activities and illnesses. In this way staff can ensure that children are safe while on the premises.

Children are always well supervised, for example, when escorted around school, during mealtimes or at home time. Staff are proactive about safety issues, continually finding ways to ensure that all children are safe whilst in their care. For example, they have recently introduced a new system for the collection of children using an intercom and this helps to keep others safe while children are collected. Children use a range of suitable and safe resources and equipment. These are checked each term to ensure that they keep in good condition and children can play safely. A close check is kept on resources that are loaned out to children for use at home.

Children are aware of personal safety and reminded about safe play when necessary. They practise an evacuation plan so that they know what to do in the event of an emergency. When moving around school they do so in an orderly and safe manner. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. They have a system in place for recording concerns confidentially

and all staff know how to seek advice. They ensure that children only leave the premises with a known adult. Therefore, children are well protected in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well settled and happy at the club. They have fun taking part in free play activities and enjoy each other's company. For example, they like to devise imaginary games, share books or explore water play, computer games and construction equipment. They often become absorbed in independent exploration and concentrate hard on self-chosen tasks. Children develop good relationships, talking and sharing with others happily. They benefit from the opportunity for a variety of choice and also the chance to just relax if they wish. Their needs are met well by staff who interact with children in different situations, increasing their enjoyment of the activities on offer.

Children become involved in a range of play experiences which support their skill development. Staff plan a set of weekly activities based on various themes. Children particularly like the daily provision of arts and crafts. They enjoy using creative materials in different ways to produce pictures, cards and models. Staff are always on hand to offer support or help out with homework. They make good use of other areas of the school to offer children alternative activities, such as cooking, decorating biscuits or doing research on computers. Children's self-esteem is boosted when praised by staff for their achievements. Overall children enjoy good access to a range of interesting pastimes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and included in the setting. They respond positively to members of staff, are generally content and play purposefully. Staff demonstrate a caring attitude, checking regularly on children's well-being. They assess children's satisfaction with the club through occasional questionnaires. This helps them to make continual improvements to their provision. They are very aware that children have differing needs and pay particular attention to helping younger children settle in. They offer good support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The leader liaises closely with the school and ensures that staff are well trained in meeting these children's needs.

Children's behaviour is good and they keep themselves busy. Staff have appropriate strategies in place for managing children's behaviour and treat all children consistently. Children are reminded to respect others, to be friends and take turns. They have an increasing awareness of a wider society and use resources that reflect diversity. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that all children are safe and happy at the club. They provide parents with information about their procedures, and details of the weekly menu and activities. In this way parents are kept informed of their children's involvement in the club. Parents are satisfied with the care on offer and also enjoy the opportunities for communal events, such as barbecues.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The club's policies and procedures work well in practice to promote the outcomes for all children. The necessary written policies are in place and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up

to date. Various notices around the room act as a reminder to staff about maintaining health and safety requirements. Parents complete registration forms which also include up to date emergency contact details. All information on children is kept in a secure place. Children are signed in and out of the club so that staff know who is present at any one time. A link book is maintained to ensure that information from the school is always conveyed to parents when collecting children. This documentation provides a good framework for children's care.

Staff are committed to the ongoing improvement of the provision. The leader actively encourages teamwork and has introduced induction and appraisal systems to support staff in their professional development. The club belongs to a local authority network which is particularly useful for accessing training and advice. At present five of the staff are taking early years degree courses in order to increase their knowledge and understanding of childcare. They make good use of their time at the club, being involved with children and ensuring there are good opportunities for a range of indoor and outdoor activities. As a result children enjoy a setting which is both stimulating and relaxing. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the club was asked to check their procedures for lost or uncollected children and demonstrate how half of the staff would hold an early years qualification. Staff were also asked to ensure that medical records were maintained appropriately.

A half of all staff now hold relevant early years qualifications. The written policies for lost or uncollected children are in place. The medical records are maintained appropriately. This response has improved the outcomes for all 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 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 good. 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 fresh drinking water is easily accessible to children at all times.

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