



## **Princess Christian Day Nursery - Letchworth**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY289914
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 July 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Diane Mary O'Neill
<b>Setting Address</b>	Icknield Way, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 4GY
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<b>Registered person</b>	Nord Anglia Nurseries Limited
<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?

Princess Christian also known as Leap Frog Day Nursery is one of several run by the Princess Christian organisation. The nursery has been open since February 2000, but was taken over by this company in 2004. It operates from seven rooms in a purpose built building. It is situated close to the town centre of Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 104 children under 5 years attend the nursery, of these no more than 39 may be under 2 years at any time. The nursery is open each

weekday from 7.30 to 18.30 for 52 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 87 children aged from 3 months to 5 years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most parents travel to work in and around the area of the nursery. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 31 staff, 10 of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three staff working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing and learning the importance of personal hygiene through well planned daily routines, such as washing hands after using the toilet, before meals and snacks. Positive adult support and guidance helps children to gain a good understanding of hygiene and to become increasingly independent in their personal care. The staff wear protective aprons and gloves when changing children's nappies and special aprons at meal times. Any person entering the kitchen wears protective overalls to limit cross contamination as much as possible to ensure the well-being of the children.

Children explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. For example, using the climbing frame, hoops, balls and push along toys, paint brushes and treasure baskets. Older children are clearly confident as they try new experiences and are starting to learn some independence as they undress and dress themselves when doing music and movement activities.

Older children help themselves to easily accessible drinks throughout the day and enjoy fresh fruit at snack time. Staff encourage children to learn about the fruit and where it might come from, as well as whether they have these at home, which extends their learning through discussion. Younger children also have fresh fruit and drinks which are provided in their individually named cups. All meals are freshly prepared each day in the nursery kitchen by a qualified cook. This ensures a well balanced healthy and nutritious diet is available to the children. Parents are encouraged to share their children's dietary requirements with the cook and staff, enabling children's individual needs to be met.

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

The provision is good.

Children's risks of accidental injury is minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, safety signs are put out when there is a spillage on the floor. The security of the premises is well maintained through an intercom system and all visitors signing in.

The nursery has different rooms for the various ages of children that attend. These are spacious, bright and airy and well-organised making it a happy and relaxed environment for the children. All the rooms open on to garden areas enabling children to have good access to physical activities throughout their daily routines. Children can access suitable child height and age appropriate play materials and equipment which help them to develop their independence and choice. Staff have a good checking system that ensures all equipment and play areas are safe for the children. Some pieces of equipment were not in a good state of repair. The nursery is awaiting replacements and make these as safe as possible for the children. Children share the main hall cum corridor area, which they use for messy activities and meal times. This enables children to mix with their peers and have access to extended play areas. This develops their social skills, learning and play experiences. For example, younger children play with corn flour and toddlers and pre-school children enjoy playing with play dough.

Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to children's welfare. However, the required Department of Health booklet is not in place.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. They achieve well because staff are competent and use their skills, knowledge and understanding of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and education.

All children are happy and eager to participate in the activities available throughout the nursery. Staff are sensitive toward children's individual needs, and through reassurance help settle those who are new or feel unsure of their surroundings. Babies receive lots of cuddles and have a strong bond with staff which increases their sense of well-being. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their experiences at home. They enjoy the textures of natural materials and colours and sounds of manufactured toys which they explore with interest. They are actively encouraged to be involved in various messy play type activities, such as painting. Babies develop early communication skills as they attract the attention of staff who respond to their sounds during play.

All children within the nursery are confident in their relationships with staff. They begin to play happily together and with adults enjoying using resources such as puzzles, train tracks, water play, painting, treasure baskets, books, crayons and outdoor equipment, suitable to their age and stage of development. Staff are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework in their planning and organisation which is improving children's achievements. They have a good

understanding of the range of experiences which enables babies and children to make greater use of their senses and creative abilities. Children's early communication skills are developed well through extremely well supported and very good quality adult-child interactions. For example, talking about the activities they are involved in, looking at books and pictures and encouraging children to make sounds in relation to the animal pictures.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Children are interested and inspired by a good range of stimulating, relevant activities related to their age and development. They easily access resources which support them across all areas of their learning. A flexible approach to planning and a good balance between adult and child-lead activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff are perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and use questions very successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills. They use sufficient systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements, but individual assessments are not always completed to clearly show the next steps in children's learning. Planning does not clearly show how resources are to be used in activities and linked to the stepping stones to develop children's learning.

All children are keen to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. They speak confidently to share their experiences and listen intently to stories. They join in enthusiastically when asked questions in relation to the story. All children use marks readily to represent their ideas, some children are able to write their names.

Children work well together. For example, helping each other do a large puzzle, taking turns on the computer, helping another child make a snowflake by cutting out bits of a paper shape, and saying "wow" when it was opened up. Children extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and daily routines. For example, they gain confidence with numbers through everyday situations such as singing rhymes and planned activities.

Children have plenty of opportunities to use their imagination and respond well to music and movement. They clearly enjoy being different fishes and staff engage well with the children, asking how a fish might move in the water. This helps to develop their thought process and communication levels and physical skills.

## Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are effectively beginning to learn right from wrong through positive interaction from staff. They are very familiar with the routines and have a clear understanding of the rules and boundaries. They are well behaved. Children receive praise and encouragement as they complete their tasks. They enjoy helping the staff to tidy away the equipment at the end of the session.

Children from different backgrounds and those with special educational needs are warmly welcomed into the nursery and well supported. Children's individual needs are identified and good liaison between parents, staff and external workers enables support to be maintained. Staff endeavour to ensure resources positively reflect the wide society and community in which they live. However, resources do not fully support or extend children's learning in this area. Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves and the world around them through planned activities, having visitors to the nursery, going on outings within the local community. Parents and staff are actively encouraged to share their cultural experiences with the children, which extends their learning. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is extremely good for care and Nursery Education. Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery. They are encouraged to play an active role by supporting the nursery through parents' evenings and arranged social events. Parents receive good information about the educational programme. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing through informative daily information sheets and developmental records and good information on the notice board. The younger children's observation and assessments are put together using the 'Birth to three matters' framework; older children are assessed within the early learning goals. This ensures parents are fully informed about their child's care and progress within the nursery.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good and support the quality of care and education provided. The management has established an appropriate recruitment procedure which makes sure staff are suitably vetted and qualified to work with children. Annual appraisals help to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision. The manager ensures all staff read relevant documentation, policies and procedures. These are currently being reviewed, as there has been a change of ownership and management. Staff show a commitment to on-going training and work well together as a team. This shows staff are committed to developing their own practices as well as meeting children's individual needs.

The premises are well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is set out to ensure children obtain the maximum play opportunities that will enhance all areas of their development and learning.

All required documentation is in place to support the management of the setting. There is concise and clear information throughout the nursery for parents, visitors and staff. Overall the provision meets the needs of all the children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

This is the first inspection under a new registration.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

The nursery was visited in September 2004 where an investigation was carried out in relation to a complaint that was made in connection to the allocation of staffing within the nursery and the safety issues this raised. The outcome of the investigation was that two actions were raised under the National Standards 2 and 14. The nursery had to "develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level 2 qualification in childcare and how the required adult child ratios will be met". The nursery also had to "ensure all documents relating to the safe management of the nursery are kept up to date and recorded accurately". The nursery now has in operation a clear rota system that shows when staff are on duty as well as recording in the room registers which staff are present. Most of the staff within the nursery hold relevant child care qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3, where possible any replacement staff are qualified. This ensures all rooms have the correct qualified staff on duty and that adult to child ratios are maintained at all times. The nursery has clear and concise risk assessments in place that ensure the safety and well-being of the children and staff within the nursery.

## **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):

- obtain the Department of Health leaflet "what to do if you are worried a child is being abused - summary"
- further develop resources to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice throughout the whole nursery

### **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):

- further develop planning to clearly show areas of learning that will be available to the children
- further develop system to record children's achievements and where there are

areas for development.

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