

# Little Nightingales

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY348672
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 August 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Kim Wailing
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<b>Registered person</b>	Little Nightingales Childrens Day Nursery Ltd
<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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Nightingales Nursery is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 2007 and operates from two refurbished rooms with associated facilities based on the ground floor of the registered provider's family home. It is situated in London Colney, St Albans, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery may at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed play area.

There are currently 18 children aged from eight months to under five years on roll. Of these, one child receives funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

Little Nightingales Nursery employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted because staff members follow satisfactory hygiene routines which prevent the spread of infection. For example, children's nappies are carefully changed throughout the day, in an area of the nursery that is clean and well-equipped. As part of the daily routine, children wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet. Younger children are helped to use disposable wipes to clean their hands before eating. Children's individual health and dietary needs are known. For example, staff are able to refer to a list noting children's food allergies to ensure that foods offered to children are appropriate. Generally, children's health, if they have an accident, is appropriately protected. Most staff members hold first aid qualifications and the nursery has several first aid kits. However, the contents of some of the first aid boxes have not been determined by first aid trainers and there is no procedure to check that the contents are replaced when necessary. This potentially limits their effectiveness.

Children are offered food that they enjoy. Children are offered breakfast, a mid-morning snack, a hot lunchtime meal and tea-time meal. All snacks and meals are freshly prepared mainly using organically sourced ingredients in the nursery kitchen. As a result, children are offered a wide range of tastes, develop good appetites and are well nourished. Drinking water is freely available for older children to be able to satisfy their immediate thirst. Infant meal and snack times are well-supervised. Drinks for infants are stored in a refrigerator and are offered throughout the day. All milk feeds are prepared in the nursery's milk kitchen which adjoins the designated baby room. There are systems in place to inform parents about the types and the quantity of foods that their children are being offered. This ensures that children's individual dietary needs are fully met.

Children's physical development is generally satisfactorily promoted. Children are timetabled to use the garden throughout the day and have access to a range of equipment, which includes wheeled toys. In addition, babies are occasionally taken for walks, to venues such as the nearby village pond, so that they can enjoy being in the fresh air. Planning shows that indoor activities such as music sessions, are offered so that children can build on their coordination skills. Children's need for rest is acknowledged and provision made. For example, older children have the opportunity to take an afternoon nap if they wish do so and wooden cots are available for infants so that they can sleep according to their individual needs.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. All areas of the nursery are clean and well-maintained. However, there is no procedure to monitor room temperature in the baby room which impacts on children's comfort, particularly when they are sleeping. All age groups use a range of good quality equipment which is stored appropriately. However, the range of toys and resources for younger children which are made of natural materials is limited.

Effective procedures such as regular risk assessments, ensure that accidental injury to children and staff is minimised. In addition, features such as a buzzer system which alerts staff to the arrival of parents and conducting fire drills on different days of the week further enhances children's safety. Older children learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff members sensitively

reinforce safety rules such as not running indoors, and check children's understanding. Children enthusiastically help staff to tidy away toys and sweep the floor after lunch so that others do not trip or slip. They are helped to use the outdoor equipment safely. For example, time is taken to help children ride and steer trikes confidently.

Children's welfare is well protected. There is a designated member of staff responsible for child protection. Staff members are fully aware of the nursery's child protection procedures and what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care. Current policy incorporates the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Consequently, children's welfare is safeguarded.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy in a supportive and caring environment. They quickly settle into the well-organised daily routine. Children enjoy their time at the nursery and take part in a range of adult-led activities. Infants under two play contentedly. They have use of a wide range of bright and colourful toy but the range of natural materials for them to use to enhance their learning is limited. However, overall younger children's abilities are fostered as staff implement many aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework into the daily routine. This is supported by relevant assessment and planning which is undertaken and followed by key worker staff.

Older children respond positively to activities such as circle times and story sessions, as they receive good adult guidance and extra support if it is needed. Children are encouraged to complete tasks such as jigsaws, and work as part of a group. Mostly children are offered a balance of experiences both indoor and out. This is facilitated by the organisation of the nursery and staff deployment. For example, indoor toys are stored in low-level units so that children can make choices and initiate their own play. In addition, sufficient staff are on duty to fully supervise outside play. Children's social skills are encouraged. For example, children are encouraged to use 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate and are involved in adult-led activities which helps them work as part of a group. As a result, form positive relationships with staff and other children and play well together.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards most of the early learning goals. Staff members working with children who receive funding for nursery education have a comprehensive understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Stage. For example, they have devised and follow a curriculum planning grid that covers the six areas of learning. This includes how activities are adapted to meet the individual learning needs of children. Throughout the day, there is a constant high level of interaction between children and staff. This is particularly evident during everyday events such as snack time, when staff use every opportunity to reinforce children's learning.

Children quickly settle and engage in activities. They receive individual adult support as well as opportunities to work as part of a group. Children are regularly praised by staff. As a result, they eagerly participate in activities. For example, using interactive alphabet keyboards, and are excited to learn. Children enjoy using the nursery's outdoor area which is being developed to enable children to gain full advantage of learning opportunities. For example, a children's gardening plot has been recently established so that children can gain first hand experience of planting and growing herbs and vegetables.

Children respond with enjoyment when listening to stories and singing nursery rhymes. The weekly theme is based on children's story books such as 'Little Red Riding Hood' and these are effective use to introduce other topics such as 'People Who Help Us'. These weekly themes involve children in other areas of learning. For example, following the story session children working together to produce a painting of a policeman. Children have free access to pencils and crayons which are attractively displayed in a designated writing area.

Children's knowledge and understanding of numbers and shapes is fostered through everyday activities. For example, counting the numbers of plates needed at snack time, and planned topics. There are sufficient resources such as jigsaws and interactive toys, to offer challenge to older children. However, equipment and activities to support older children's physical development and offer a level of challenge is limited. This impacts on the nursery's ability to fully promote this area of learning. Children are offered a range of creative art activities and produce pictures which are used to form attractive classroom displays. Activities are linked so that children's knowledge and understanding of the world is widened. For example, the celebration of different religious festivals is incorporated into long term planning.

Overall, older children are being offered a well-planned curriculum which helps them to make links in their learning. Comprehensive assessment procedures appropriately support children's learning which enhances their involvement and enjoyment.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children at the start of the day receive a warm welcome and time is spent helping children settle into routine. The nursery operates a 'key worker' system so that children, especially those who attend a few sessions a week, are cared for by familiar staff which helps them develop a sense of belonging. Information about children's individual needs is sought from parents before children start attending the nursery. This means that staff are informed about children's preferences, likes and dislikes and appropriate support can be offered.

The nursery has established good links with outside agencies such as the local authority advisory service, from which guidance can be sought. In addition, the nursery has a designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in this area. This means that individual education plans are developed and followed to help children gain full benefit from their attendance at the nursery. Consequently, children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given a good level support to aid their development and well-being.

Children are being helped to manage their behaviour. Staff members deal with behaviour issues consistently, proportionate to children's level of understanding and maturity. Children are helped to gain an understanding of the wider community. For example, the nursery has a sufficient range of equipment and toys such as role play artefacts and books, which present positive images of diversity. In addition, the nursery celebrates world festivals as well as personal celebrations. For example, such as children's birthdays. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is satisfactory. Children benefit as the nursery is taking steps to work in partnership with parents. For example, the nursery's prospectus informs parents about the services that it has to offer which is supplemented by a newsletter. There are sufficient staff members available at the start and end of the daily session so that relevant information can be shared. Parents are made aware

of the nursery's complaints procedure. However, it does not contain information about how written complaints made against National Standards and their outcomes are recorded and that this record is available on request to parents who have children on the nursery's roll. In addition, information about nursery education, particularly how parents can be actively involved in their children's learning is limited. Consequently, at the time of the inspection visit, parents are not fully informed about some areas that impact on their children's learning and well-being.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the nursery ensures that children are appropriately cared for by staff that are suitable and qualified to do so. The good relationship between the registered provider, the manager, the deputy manager and the staff team contributes positively towards children's safety and enjoyment. For example, adaptations to ways of working to meet the changing needs of children are considered and can be quickly implemented as the staff team are supportive of each other. Clear inductions and appraisal systems are in place which means that staff roles and responsibilities are known.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The nursery has appointed staff members who are well-qualified and enjoy working with nursery aged children. This means that older children are receiving appropriate teaching and are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Very good use is made of training opportunities and local authority early years advisors to build on staff expertise. This helps the nursery to monitor the quality of teaching and learning offered to children.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there has been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

## 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 the contents of the first aid kit are determined by the first aid trainer and there is a procedure to frequently check contents and replace as necessary
- develop a procedure to ensure that rooms are maintained at an adequate temperature
- provide stimulating play opportunities for children including natural materials as well as manufactured items
- improve systems to share information with parents, with reference to how the outcomes of concerns against National Standards are made in writing and their outcomes are recorded and the availability of the complaints record to parents.

### **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):

- increase the range of resources and activities that offer older children appropriate physical challenges
- develop systems to share information with parents, with reference to nursery education and ways that parents can be involvement in their children's learning.

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)