

Little Orchard Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY347403
Inspection date	20 September 2007
Inspector	Anne Mitchell
Setting Address	31 Ramley Road, LYMINGTON, Hampshire, SO41 8HF
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Registered person	Solents Childrens Centre
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?

Little Orchard Day Nursery is run by an organisation called Solent Children's Centre. It has been registered since 2007 and operates six rooms in a converted building. It is situated on the outskirts of Lymington, in Hampshire.

A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time, from a year to under five years of age. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 76 children on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 14 members of staff including administration and catering support staff. All staff working directly with children hold, or are working towards appropriate Early Years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are independent in their personal care, and have a developing understanding of good hygiene habits. They wash their hands spontaneously after using the toilet, and staff ensure children understand the importance of good hygiene practice through discussion and reinforcement. There are good procedures for nappy changing. Staff use disposable gloves and ensure the mat is properly cleaned between changes. Staff engage children in eye contact and verbal interaction to ensure they are happy and settled. Consequently the physical needs of babies and toddlers are met. Children's emotional wellbeing is very well supported as they develop close and warm relationships with staff and each other. Staff are very tactile and reassure children with cuddles or by touching their shoulder affectionately. They do this naturally and demonstrate a strong warmth towards the children.

Children can be treated promptly and effectively in the event of an accident as most of the staff hold current first aid certificates. Children's health and wellbeing is effectively supported through the documentation relating to accident, sickness and medication.

Children's dietary health is very well promoted. The nursery employs a cook to prepare and serve freshly cooked, nourishing meals. A menu plan is displayed so parents are aware of what their children have eaten. Children enjoy roast chicken, roast potatoes, cauliflower and carrots. Vegetables are freshly prepared on the premises. For pudding children have banana and custard. Meals smell wonderful and are attractively presented and appealing, and children sit together with a staff member, making this an enjoyable, social time that is enjoyed by all. Another favourite meal is home cooked vegetable soup with bread. Children eat with clear enjoyment, many children having second and third helpings. The meals are well received in by all age groups in the setting, with equal enthusiasm. Children's understanding of healthy eating is further promoted by gardening projects where they grow and harvest a broad range of vegetables.

At snack time children enjoy a variety of fresh fruit, with either milk or water. Children sit together at the table chatting quietly and eating. Staff use this period to discuss healthy eating, and allow children to try unfamiliar foods. They enjoy a bowl of grapes, banana, kiwi, nectarine, apple and raisins. They talk about where raisins come from and how fruit helps you grow strong. Water is available throughout the session to ensure children are well hydrated at all times.

Children enjoy daily opportunities for physical play and fresh air in the attractive and well resourced garden area. They use bikes and scooters, climb and slide on equipment on the safety surface area. Children play football together and proudly show visitors their pet guinea pigs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children safety is very well promoted as they are cared for in a safe and secure environment. A password system ensures children are collected by designated adults. Daily visual risk assessments are completed, both inside and in the garden to ensure children are safe as they play. Children's knowledge of keeping themselves safe is promoted through daily discussion at lunch time, in the garden and during play. Adults remind them 'Watch where you are pedalling, I don't want you to hurt yourself'.

Children can play without risk as equipment is checked by staff on a regular basis and any broken toys are removed immediately. Resources are stored on low level shelves and can be accessed freely and safely by children of all ages. The setting maintains a high staff ratio in all areas and supervision both inside and out is very good, providing a safe environment for children to play. Older children enjoy projects about safety to further promote their understanding.

Many staff members have attended child protection or safeguarding children training. They demonstrate a secure and confident knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures. The setting's child protection policy reflects current procedures and is shared with parents from the outset. Consequently staff are able to protect children effectively from harm and neglect, and parents are aware of the staff duty to ensure children are safe at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages enjoy a variety of interesting and age appropriate activities that promote their all round development and keeps them occupied. Children are motivated and interested as staff interact with them and participate in their play with genuine enthusiasm. One member of staff cuddles a toddler and sings spontaneously to provide warmth and reassurance. Two toddlers spoon a glitter, dry rice and pasta mixture into a cup, laughing at the noise it makes. Another toddler searches through the mixture to find shiny stars and shows them proudly to an adult. Babies and toddlers enjoy using their hands, fingers and brushes with coloured paints to create pictures on large sheets of paper. A small group of toddlers are very well supported by staff as they play in the water tray. They laugh and shriek with delight as they squirt the water and splash with their hands.

In the garden children enjoy looking at the guinea pigs, or climbing or balancing on the large physical play equipment. There are good opportunities for children to use sand, water and other equipment in the garden, which has been recently re-designed and refurbished. Babies and toddlers are becoming skilful communicators through the close relationships they develop with key adults and the high level of interaction staff provide.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and clearly understand the learning outcomes for all planned activities. They use a variety of teaching methods to encourage children to learn. They give children time and space to explore new resources before demonstrating how they can be used, such as the sequencing elephants. Staff are skilled at asking open ended questioning to help children think such as 'What else can you see that is the same shape?' Planning is clear and covers all areas of learning, with provision made for extension activities to challenge more able children. Children's observations are completed on a regular basis, but do not fully inform planning to consider children's next steps for development. The key worker system is successful and staff know their key group well. The organisation of staff and resources is effective. There is a clear rota for staff to follow to ensure all are involved with preparation of activities and supporting children in different activities. Planned activities are assessed to ensure they work well and support children's learning effectively. Children for whom English is a second language are well supported.

As children are welcomed warmly into the group, their confidence grows. They leave their parents and carers happily, and staff help them to wave through the window, or distract them to ensure they settle quickly. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement and are genuinely interested in children's news and views. Children are developing close and caring relationships with each other. Sitting together at a hammering activity two children work together. One child says 'My friend is very kind. He banged my nail in for me'. Children select resources independently from low level storage, or choose where they want to play. They pour their own drinks at snack time and visit the toilet facilities on their own, with adult support if required. Consequently, children's independence is growing and developing well.

Children are beginning to listen and respond well in groups. They listen to the member of staff and participate in group discussions with growing confidence. Due to the excellent level of interaction between staff and children, they are developing good vocabulary and language skills. One child tells the adult 'I'm making a crocodile.' The adult replies 'Oh dear, I'm scared of crocodiles'. The child reassures the adult by adding 'Don't worry, it's only a little one'. Children enjoy visiting the comfortable book corner where they choose books independently or in small groups, and look through them with real interest. At circle time, children recognise their names. However, there is very little labelling around the room to help children understand that words carry meaning, and limited opportunities for children to write and make marks freely.

Children are being introduced to simple mathematical concepts. They count from one to five during favourite songs and rhymes, and consider how many are left. Children enjoy using different sized and coloured elephants to practise sequencing. Older, more able children follow sequence charts to copy, and the less able children simply enjoy making a line of elephants. Staff encourage them to use mathematical language such as big, little, long, and short as part of their everyday play. Children recognise and name shapes as they hammer shapes into a cork board. One child points to one of the shapes and says 'Look, it's a circle!' The member of staff asks the child if they can find other circles.

Children have very good opportunities to enjoy the natural world through gardening projects. They have grown and harvested potatoes, runner beans, tomatoes, courgettes and herbs which are used in food preparation for the nursery. They also grow sweet peas and sunflowers and make displays of the flowers they have grown. Children explore and investigate using magnetic rods and balls. They experiment by turning the rods around to discover that the magnets attract and repel. Children can explore information and communication technology through using the computer, and using binoculars, torches and bug boxes to examine their environment. Children's sense of time and place is supported through themes and projects such as 'Myself' as they discuss their families and important events in their lives such as the birth of a brother or sister, or their own birthdays.

Children enjoy being creative in the designated craft area, where they can access a range of resources. They use large sheets of paper to paint bold self portraits. Children explore a broad range of media and discover how substances change and react. They use their fingers and spoons to scoop up the stiff, almost solid corn flour paste, then watch with fascination as it becomes liquid and drips back into the bowl. Children's imaginative skills are well fostered in the role play area. They become absorbed in a make believe game. One boy takes the basket and 'goes to the shops'. He brings back the basket and shows his friends. 'Look what I've bought you. Who's making tea?' Every week children enjoy music and movement with a visiting teacher. Children sing and dance spontaneously and enjoy rhymes and action songs daily.

Children move with confidence around the setting. They are developing a good sense of space through the planned music and movement sessions, and in the outdoor area where they use bikes and trikes and manoeuvre carefully to avoid collisions. Children are becoming adept in their small muscle control, threading beads with care and using tools to roll and cut the dough. They learn about a healthy lifestyle through projects such as gardening, and during daily activities such as snack and lunch time where staff reinforce the importance of healthy eating.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and their parents or carers are welcomed warmly by staff as they arrive for the day engaging them in discussion about what they have been doing at home. The environment is relaxed and inviting with bright displays and children's art work decorating the walls. Staff know the children well and this promotes a good sense of belonging. Children settle quickly to their chosen activity and find their friends to play with.

The setting has clear and comprehensive policies and procedures regarding equal opportunities policies and inclusion. Staff plan projects that explore cultural festivals and foods including Chinese New Year, a project about the book *Handa's Surprise*, St. Georges Day and a project about Africa. However, resources that positively reflect diversity and disability are limited.

Children's behaviour is very good. Children know the clear boundaries and remind each other about the rules. One boy counts how many children in the role play area and says 'There's three people so I can go in too'. A member of staff praises him for remembering that only four children can play there together. Children are polite and well mannered saying 'please' and 'thank you' at snack time. Staff are excellent role models and speak to the children and to each other with respect. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are provided with clear and comprehensive written information about the setting and there is a parents' notice board displaying relevant childcare information. Parents evenings are planned in October to look at children's progress and the plans for the future development of the nursery. Parents state that they are very happy with the level of care and education provided. Comments from parents include that there is 'good communication' between staff and parents and that the nursery has '...a lovely atmosphere'. Parents recognise the nursery provides a 'nurturing environment' for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and education. All staff either hold, or are working towards a relevant qualification in child care. The staff work very well together as a strong team. All staff members, including catering and administrative staff, demonstrate a real commitment to promoting positive outcomes for children. Consequently, children are effectively supported and are happy and well cared for.

Children throughout the nursery are very well supported as the staff ratios are high and supervision is very good. There is a good balance of adult led and free play, and children are provided with choices in their play. However, resources that promote diversity are limited. Space inside and out is organised effectively to meet the needs of all age groups. Effective deployment of staff ensures that children have opportunities to play independently or with adult participation.

Leadership and management is good. The owner has already made many changes and improvements to the running of the nursery and upgrading the garden. The nursery is a happy place and the staff are a happy team. Annual staff appraisals highlight training needs, and staff demonstrate commitment to continued training to develop their skills. The owner works in partnership with her manager and staff to monitor the nursery education and regular staff meetings and planning meetings help the setting develop their practice.

All required documentation is maintained, regularly reviewed and kept confidentially on the premises. Parents are provided with the settings policies and procedures from the outset as part of the information of setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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):

- increase resources that provide positive images of cultural diversity and disability

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):

- ensure that written observations inform planning for children's next steps of development
- increase children's opportunities in communication, language and literacy to write and make marks freely and to recognise that words carry meaning

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