

# Littlegates for Little People

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253665
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<b>Setting Address</b>	Littlegate Farm, Clensey Lane, Dry Doddington, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG23 5HT
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](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?

Littlegates for Little People Nursery and Out of School Club opened in 1994 and is a family run business. It is situated on the outskirts of Dry Doddington village in rural surroundings. The town of Newark is five miles away. The nursery premises comprise of an entrance, office, two kitchen facilities, utility/laundry room, pre-school room, toddler room, baby room, classroom and toilet facilities. The out of school club runs from purpose built premises separate from the nursery. Facilities for outside play are available including a separate multi-purpose court. It serves the local community and surrounding areas.

The setting is registered to care for 93 children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 157 children on roll including 43 over eight. This includes 29 funded children. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

The setting opens five days a week, 51 weeks a year. Opening times are from 07:45 to 17:45 hours for the nursery and out of school provision is available before and after school times and during the holidays. Staff collect children from two different schools.

Twenty staff work with the children. Fourteen hold a recognised childcare qualification appropriate to their role and one working towards a higher qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are well nourished and eagerly eat the freshly prepared meals and snacks provided. When the cooks enter the nursery rooms the children are keen to show their appreciation saying 'We love it, I love samosas' or 'Yippee its pizza'. Equally in the after school club session children thoroughly enjoy their freshly cooked meals and very quickly there are empty plates as children say that it is delicious. Babies have their food in accordance with their individual needs and routines. The cooks work with staff to plan meals which offer very good variety, include healthy options with a wide range of fresh vegetables and salads. Clear systems ensure children's individual dietary needs are met, for example, staff are very aware which children have egg allergies. Meal times are relaxed, social occasions where children enjoy helping to set the tables and sit together with staff to enjoy their food and each other's company.

Children's good health is supported very well as practitioners consistently implement effective health and hygiene procedures. For example, they wear gloves and aprons when nappy changing and remove these before entering the play areas. These positive procedures reduce the risk of cross-infection. Children are generally well cared for if they are sick or have an accident. A high number of staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications. Accidents are recorded and children's individual medication is clearly labelled. Staff access training to ensure any specific medical needs or particular medication requirements are fully understood and followed, ensuring children receive appropriate attention. On occasion accident records do not contain exact details and children arriving with injuries are not consistently recorded to fully ensure their on-going health needs. However, information and records are shared with parents to keep them informed. Children are encouraged to develop good hygiene practices by washing their hands after visiting the toilet or before snack time, this is further promoted by pictorial routines displayed in the bathrooms. Older children talk with understanding about the importance of keeping clean and why they need to put their hands over their mouths when coughing. They say that they need to stop the germs.

All children benefit from the very good opportunities provided to develop their physical skills. For example, children under the age of three enjoy energetic games indoors such as music and movement sessions where they climb in and out of hoops and move around the room in a variety of ways. Babies and toddlers are helped by staff to master skills such as balance and walking. Ample resources are provided to support this. Older children demonstrate good spatial awareness, taking care not to bump into others as they run around the large indoor area. Daily use of resources such as construction toys, threading toys and puzzles is helping to improve children's small muscle movements and hand-eye coordination. All children have very good opportunities to develop their balancing skills as they use climbing and balancing apparatus in the well-equipped outdoor area. As children arrive from school they are very keen to get outside to play and ask for their favourite games and resources. They show delight as they play on the all weather pitch and continue even as it becomes darker, coming to collect a coat so they are not cold. Older children enjoy regular bike rides and outings during holiday sessions and relish these, talking excitedly about where they went.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being cared for in a wonderfully warm and welcoming environment where their art work is displayed at their level, alongside photographs of them taking part in activities. Children choose from a very broad range of carefully selected age-appropriate play materials. These are stored in easily accessible units and low-level shelving so children can select them independently. Much thought and consideration has been given to the furniture provided to ensure that they meet the needs of the varying ages of the children who attend. For example, height adjustable tables and low-level chairs have been provided to allow young children to sit together at mealtimes. Challenging resources in the pre-school and after school club provide children with stimulating opportunities to learn new skills. Children have their favourites including mats to build dens with or using a range of buckets and sieves in the sand pit. All of which they do safely under the close supervision of staff.

Children stay safe within the setting because positive steps are taken to promote their welfare. Staff carry out regular risk assessments and take effective steps to reduce hazards. For example, minibuses and cars used to take and collect children to and from school have all required documentation in place and there are comprehensive systems to ensure the vehicles are always maintained to a high standard. Good procedures are in place to ensure that sleeping children are regularly checked. This promotes their safety at the setting.

Children are developing an increasing understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff consistently reinforce the rules and boundaries and explain to them why some of their actions may not be appropriate. For example, when young children place sieves from the sand tray on the floor, staff explain to them the potential dangers of other children tripping over them. Older children show a good awareness of how they can keep themselves safe. They understand that they wear helmets on their bikes so that they 'don't hurt their heads' and they confidently explain to staff why they have to stay together on their bike rides.

Children are safeguarded from harm and neglect because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of the different signs of abuse and understand the setting's policy for reporting concerns. However, not all practitioners are aware of the procedures to follow if their concerns are not taken seriously by a senior member of staff. All staff have attended appropriate training and systems are in place to record any concerns which may arise. Parents are made aware of the setting's duty to report concerns through the child protection policy which is displayed prominently in the entrance area.

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

The provision is good.

All children throughout the nursery have built strong bonds with their key worker, which increases their sense of well-being. They make good progress and enjoy the activities on offer because the staff use their understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, child development and playwork training to plan a varied range of worthwhile activities. Practitioners keep written observations of younger children's progress and are beginning to use this to plan for their individual learning.

Babies benefit from lots of cuddles and attention particularly as they are being fed or settled down for a sleep. Staff working with children of this age continue to follow the children's home routines for sleeps and feeds so that they benefit from consistency of care. Children's senses

are stimulated as they play with treasure baskets or look at their reflection in wall mounted mirrors. Children of this age also take part in messy play activities and sensory play. These activities help to ensure that children continue to be stimulated.

Children between the ages of one and three enjoy a good range of exploratory and imaginative play experiences. For example, children enjoy cause and effect toys pressing the buttons and delighting as it plays music to them. Children have regular opportunities to experiment with a range of creative materials, such as printing, making collage pictures with natural materials and playing with dough. Staff encourage communication skills by talking to children about what they are doing and showing an interest in their responses. Children in the after-school club enjoy a varied range of stimulating activities, whilst there is a computer available for children, they choose to be active outdoors or sit chatting with their friends. They take part in a wide range of imaginary play and enjoy races up and down the clubroom with their friends.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's play and learning is well supported by staff who have an in depth understanding of how they learn and how they can encourage them to be independent learners. Staff consistently interact with children at a high level asking pertinent questions such as 'Why do you need to be careful when you take your cakes out of the oven', as children make these out of play dough and pretend to cook them in the play oven or 'Tell me how you are going to make your train track'. These questions successfully extend children's learning as they encourage them to think and explore their ideas. Children play a full part in the setting, making decisions about how they will spend their time. Staff skilfully use children's interests to plan a wide range of activities which capture these interests and extend their learning. All children are keen and eager to learn. Assessment records and observations show that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Regular observations are undertaken to identify children's learning and these are beginning to be used to inform planning for each child's next steps. This is at an early stage and has yet to fully inform all aspects of planning. In addition, whilst children make good progress, initial profiles of children are not carried out to identify their starting point in order to maximise their progress. Staff have given much attention to the layout of the room to ensure that it promotes children's independence.

Children have very good opportunities to explore and select materials to develop skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes. For example, to extend their play with the play dough, the children independently find cake trays from the junk modelling material. Children show high levels of imagination in role play activities. For example, packing suitcases with a variety of dressing up clothes and toys and they say 'I'm going on holiday and it's going to be hot and I need a hat'.

Children are actively involved in many activities which help them to gain a greater understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. For example, they learn to grow plants. Children say that 'the plants needed water' and are able to recall this for earlier on in the year showing they are also gaining a sense of time. Staff enable children to recognise and practise writing numbers up to 10. For example, through the use of worksheets and also through more effective practical opportunities. Most children confidently count and particularly enjoy doing this through number rhymes. A wide range of activities are provided to help children recognise and recreate patterns, and compare the shape and size of objects. For example, children talk about what they had seen in the garden linked to circles including the wheels on the bikes and one child remembers playing with hoops and 'these are circles'.

Children are confident and independent, serving themselves lunch and pouring themselves drinks. They are beginning to take the initiative and to be self-sufficient within their learning by choosing activities and accessing resources for themselves. Children are developing their competencies very well across the four aspects of communication; speaking listening, reading and writing. They are keen to talk in small groups about their recent holidays, talking in detail about their trips on boats and aeroplanes, whilst their peers listen. Children explore and develop their vocabulary through discussions with staff. They enjoy story sessions and are very keen for staff to read their favourite stories to all their friends. Children continue to learn through the story session as staff explain to them about the 'title' and that the book has 'corners'.

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

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Older children work well together in small and large groups. For instance, as they build together with large wooden bricks or take turns during games with a large parachute. Other children work well in pairs listening to each others ideas as they draw and colour in the afterschool club. Children's self-esteem and confidence is promoted well by practitioners who respect their efforts and promote their independence. This is supported through clear ground rules in the after-school club and older children ably manage their own behaviour influenced through the positive role models set by staff.

Children have good opportunities to take part in activities which allow them to experience different cultures, and learn about the world around them. For example, they are involved in activities to learn about festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Hanukah. Staff work hard to ensure that all children are valued and supported. For example, practitioners learn key signs and symbols to support children with communication skills. Good systems are in place to include children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education funding is good. They are warmly welcomed into the nursery by the manager and staff who are always available for an informal chat at the beginning and end of day. Parents are kept well informed about their is as is attainments and progress through the open system of sharing assessments of children's learning. However, details of what parents know about their children's learning are not consistently added to assessments. As a result, assessment records do not give a full overview of each child's achievements. However, parents regularly attend open evenings to learn more about their child's progress and through this they are gradually contributing to their child's assessment files. Planning is prominently displayed in the pre-school and informs parents of the daily activities and the learning intentions. Parents and carers of all children are invited to become involved in nursery life through joining in activities. Anyone with specific skills is welcomed to share these with staff and children. For example, parents are actively encouraged to share information about the festivals or special events which they celebrate at home with their children. Regular newsletters and the nursery's notice boards give parents appropriate updated information on topics, policies and staffing.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit because staff make very good use of space and resources to create an environment which is bright, welcoming and accessible to all of the children who attend.

Comprehensive and effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place. This ensures that children are well cared for by staff that are appropriately vetted, experienced and qualified to meet their needs. Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent staff team who work well together to implement the setting's policies and procedures consistently. Staff are deployed well both indoors and out allowing children to be appropriately supported in their play. As a result, they build effective relationships with staff and are confident to initiate and direct their own play. All of the legally required documentation and records are in place and are stored securely to ensure that confidentiality is respected. Overall, children's needs are met.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The management team have a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. They demonstrate commitment to continuously developing the practice to ensure that all children have high quality learning experiences. For example, they work with external agencies to improve particular aspects. As a result, they have created a stimulating environment where children are excited to learn. This is supported by a motivated staff team. Good systems are in place to identify strengths and areas for improvement further enhancing children's learning and development.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to develop equal opportunities resources and to develop staff knowledge of child protection issues. Staff have attended relevant training in child protection ensuring children are suitably protected and the setting have extended the resources in all areas of the nursery to support children learning about all aspects of diversity.

At the previous nursery education inspection the setting agreed to three recommendations; to develop staffs' awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum; extend children's assessment files; to ensure a balanced curriculum. These have all been suitably addressed to further enhance children's learning and progress along the stepping stones.

### **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 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):

- take positive steps to promote children's good health through recording more exact details of accidents and also recording details of children arriving with an injury

### **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):

- evaluate evidence gained from observations and assessments to more clearly identify children's progress and ensure that the information is used to plan for children's next steps (also applies to care).
- develop children's initial profiles to identify children's starting points linking this to the child's assessment files
- develop the ways in which parents can contribute to their child's assessment files and continue their learning at home.

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)