

Little Deers Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	509539
Inspection date	13 November 2007
Inspector	Carole Gronow
Setting Address	Deer Hall, Campden Park, Ringwood Road, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 4BU
Telephone number	01425 404167
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Registered person	The Trustees of Little Deers Pre-School
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 Deers moved to its current premises in 2001. It is a committee run group and has sole use of a two-roomed hall in Burley. Children attend from the local area, including Ringwood and Bransgore. The group opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are from 09:00 to 12:15 Monday to Friday. An optional lunch club also runs until 13:30 on some days according to demand.

There are currently 19 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 14 children funded for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also those who speak English as an additional language. Children have access to two different secure outside play areas, one is grassed and the other has an all weather safety surface.

One full-time and three part-time staff work with the children. Three of them have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3 and the other staff member is working towards this.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is fully protected and the risk of illness through cross-infection is minimised because of comprehensive policies and procedures. Staff clean key areas daily and a cleaner is employed. All children are very familiar with well established routines, for instance, washing hands after using the toilet as well as before snacks. Most of them do this without being told, however, staff always ask children and send them back if they forget. Children use soap, they dry their hands with paper towels and put them in the pedal bin. Children are suitably cared for in the event of any accident or illness. This is because medication and accident records are appropriately completed, emergency medical consents are in place and most staff hold a current first aid certificate.

Children are provided with nutritious snacks and regular drinks; there is a café style snack system in operation. Children choose when to eat and enjoy sitting and talking with other children and a staff member. They adeptly pour their own drink of either milk or water unaided. Children are offered four different fruit and vegetables daily, for example, red pepper, carrot, banana and pear. They serve themselves using wooden tongs. Children have opportunities to experience different foods that are related to themes they study, such as, pita bread and curry dip at Diwali. Staff and children talk about how good fruit and vegetables are for you and this is re-enforced by posters that are on display. Children have daily opportunities to develop their levels of fitness and to get fresh air. They play outside on the all weather surface or in the garden and they go on regular 'wellie walks'. Children move with control and co-ordination as they travel around, under, over and through equipment and they move in different ways, such as hopping, skipping and jumping. They push prams and shopping trolleys, and ride scooters and cars negotiating clear pathways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises that are highly suitable for their purpose and of which the preschool has sole use. Bright attractive displays of work that the children have been involved in decorate the walls and equipment, and toys are laid out in a manner that is appealing to children before the start of the session. Toilets and wash basins are low level so children can access them independently. A designated member of staff greets each family and child as they arrive. She also ensures that no child is able to leave the setting unaccompanied. The security of the children is of paramount importance. Children are handed over to staff only after parents and carers have signed them in and have taken them through another room. This process is reversed at collection. External gates into the grounds are closed during the session and any visitors who arrive are monitored.

In order to safeguard children, Criminal Record Bureau checks have been undertaken on all staff. However, the committee is only just implementing a more rigorous system to thoroughly vet each member of staff's suitability and as yet does not have responses to all the checks that have been made. The premises are very safe for children and staff refer to a check list that is on display, undertaking visual checks of the premises daily. Staff are very observant about identifying what might potentially cause an accident and speak to children, telling them why they must not do something, such as run inside. Children are learning about how to respond in an emergency as they practise evacuating the premises. Children are well protected if there

is cause for concern; there is a thorough child protection policy and information is on the notice board. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children and are knowledgeable about recognising signs of abuse and about recording and reporting it. Most staff have attended either advanced or initial child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good sense of belonging as they arrive. They find their name cards and place them on the board ready for snack time. They happily leave their carers and go off and join other children in their play. Younger children are appropriately cared for because staff are aware of the Birth to three matters framework and use this to support their learning and development. New children settle exceptionally well because the preschool policy of encouraging introductory visits means that by the time children are left they are familiar and comfortable with their surroundings, the staff and other children. Children enjoy a wealth of learning opportunities because the continuous provision means that there are always plenty of activities available for children to make choices from.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff team are highly motivated and work well together. They have good relationships with the children and are good role models frequently praising, encouraging and thanking children. Throughout the session all staff skilfully deploy themselves in order to support children. Staff are all involved in planning and children's interests are identified to use as topics. Some of the provision is enhanced in order to support this and plans which staff routinely refer to identify how it is done. All staff undertake spontaneous observations on children, however, one person each session is allocated that responsibility so that frequent observations are made and can be used to inform planning. Individual children's folders contain dated observations and photographs, these are used to document some activities that they have been involved in. Although not all children's records of achievement forms are regularly updated, staff do know children very well and use their good knowledge to plan appropriate targets for individual children. The preschool has strategies in place in order to ensure that they can support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities appropriately.

Children are confident and happy. They readily initiate discussions with both the staff and other children. They make relationships and they show care and concern for each other. For instance, older children show a younger child what to do at tidying up time. Children know about taking turns and sharing fairly, and use timers to help resolve differences. Children manage their personal independence exceptionally well. They go to the toilet on their own, wash their hands and put the paper towel in the pedal bin, using their foot on the pedal to open it. At snack time they serve themselves and many of them successfully put on their own wellies and coats at outside play time. Children are good talkers, having interesting conversations with staff and other children alike and they invite each other and the staff to join in their games, for example, in a game of I-spy when they spot everything of a certain colour in the room. Children happily speak in a group at show and tell time, and listen to the others. However, they do not have regular opportunities to develop their listening skills by listening to and distinguishing sounds.

Children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning and some of them recognise their names. There is a good variety of books on display but children do not freely access the

book area. Children have many opportunities for mark making and there is a permanent writing station which they can freely access. Children paint with small brushes and big ones, on paper inside and on the walls out of doors. They say and use numbers throughout the daily routine as well as in their play. For example, when playing in a shop a member of staff is told she owes £5. Children count themselves to see how many of them are going into an other room. They count to see how many others there are around certain activities to see if there is a space for them to join in. Children are aware of different shapes and use terms, such as square, circle and triangle. They use language, such as big and little, more and less and they compare length to see whether the pipe cleaner or the empty kitchen roll is the longest. They enjoy measuring things, such as the length of their strides outdoors and then reading off the numbers.

Children find out about and identify features of living things; they look at spiders and they study frogspawn as it changes into tadpoles. They watch the fruit grow and ripen on the trees in the garden, they collect cones and grow plants. Children routinely use information and communication technology, and are confident and competent with the computer. They show control over clothing and fastenings, doing up poppers on the waistband of trousers and then the zip. Children use a selection of equipment, they use scissors to cut and spread glue out onto their craft work. They use chopsticks and carefully lift up individual grains of rice with tweezers. They play with dough, cutting and rolling it. They make candle pots with clay to celebrate Diwali, poking, squeezing, pinching and manipulating it into shape. Children enjoy playing in the role play area where they use the available resources to support their play. They use body language, words and facial expressions appropriately for example, when playing doctors a child had her hands on her hips and then went and sat down giving a large sigh saying that she had hurt her arm and had to sit for ages to wait for it to get better!

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They absorb a wide range of positive images whilst they play which helps them to learn about diversity. They study festivals, such as Diwali, when they make candle holders, paint hands, use chopsticks and eat pita breads and curry dip at snack time. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively supported. There is a Special Educational Needs Coordinator [SENCO] at the preschool who has undertaken a wide range of relevant training in order to be able to ensure this. Children's behaviour is exceptionally good. Staff have equipped children with strategies for managing their own behaviour. They negotiate between themselves about taking turns, for example, wearing the doctors outfit and when to use the computer. If they cannot reach an agreement they either go off and find a timer to use or enlist a member of staff to help resolve the issue. Many children are fully aware and comply with the rules at the preschool and staff gently remind them if needed.

Children benefit from the very good partnership that the setting has with parents and carers. At arrival and collection they talk to staff in a relaxed, happy manner about their children which builds good relationships. An effective induction process for new children ensures that when they leave their parents or carers and stay on their own, they are happy and already familiar with the setting. Relevant information is placed on a notice board along with copies of the preschool policies and procedures and regular newsletters all help to inform parents and carers about the care their child is receiving. Parents and carers are involved on the management committee and through this have some influence in the running of the group and what is provided for their children. Children see the positive relationships that their parents and carers have with staff at fund raising activities, such as an Easter egg hunt and bonnet competition

and a sponsored fir cone search. These help to strengthen links between the setting and home which contributes towards continuity of care.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive funding for nursery education is good. Initially, and then at the start of each school year parents and carers are given written information about the six areas of learning. They are also given details about things they can do to help their child along, with suggestions of what they can do at home. This is re-enforced with information that is included in the half termly newsletter advising parents and carers about what the forthcoming topics are going to be and with again, suggestions about how they can be followed up at home. At the start of each term parents and carers receive an aims record for their child and this identifies specific areas which staff plan to work on in greater detail. Parents are sent a revised one at the end of term with comments about what has been achieved. Parents and carers are aware that the preschool has an 'open door' policy, however, there are no planned formal opportunities for them to discuss their child and to contribute what they know about their child to the records.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. High staff ratios help to ensure that children are well supported. Space is organised so that children can move around freely and safely. They easily access all the activities that are available, making independent choices about what they want to play with. Staff are keen and motivated and have attended a lot of training. All of them are either suitably qualified or are studying to obtain a relevant qualification. The new committee which has recently taken over is committed to providing a high quality service for children and their families. All the required policies and procedures are in place. Policies having been reviewed within the last year and records of children's, staff and visitors attendances are maintained. The committee are just implementing a system to thoroughly vet the suitability of staff working at the group.

Leadership and management is good. Staff are enthusiastic and well motivated and their development needs are identified as part of the annual appraisal system which has been introduced. The committee is currently updating some of the preschool documentation including registration forms and the prospectus. The supervisor is also employed for some additional hours to work on planning and other vital matters concerning the day to day running of the preschool. Necessary amendments have been made to policies and these have been brought to parents attention and are located on the notice board. Staff hold half termly meetings to discuss their work in detail. They also meet together weekly after preschool to discuss any current issues and to finalise the plans for the next weeks work and to update children's records. However, not all of these records are regularly updated and have gaps in them so they are not an accurate record of children's abilities, neither do they show where children are on the stepping stones.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the preschool received the following recommendation with regards to care. To ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. There are now numerous resources in the preschool that children access on a daily basis which provide them with positive images of diversity. They were also asked to update staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and now all staff are encouraged to undertake training in this area. Three

quarters of staff have already done so, with half of them having completed an advanced child protection course.

With regards to nursery education the preschool was given three recommendations. These were to develop the system of recording children's progress, so that the next steps of learning are identified and parents are able to be more involved in the process. Additionally they were asked to develop opportunities for simple calculation and problem solving as well as the provision for imaginative role play and small world toys. Opportunities for children to gain experience of both simple calculation and problem solving are now included in the daily routine, also there is a wide range of resources to be used for imaginative role play and small world toys. These are included within the continuous provision and are available to children daily. Recording individual children's progress is the responsibility of the key workers. They know their key children very well and do identify the next steps of learning through regular observations. However, not all children's records accurately track their progress as they are not up to date. Although parents are informed about the aims set for their child termly and are told of the progress made, they are still not formally involved in or contribute towards the record keeping process. This is again the subject of a recommendation.

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.

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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 sufficient appropriate documentation that evidences the suitability of staff is always readily available for inspection.

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):

- provide parents with regular opportunities to see and discuss their children's records and to share what they know about their child
- develop a system to evaluate provision in relation to nursery education with particular reference to the use of the book corner and by providing opportunities to develop

children's listening skills. Ensure that all children's records are regularly updated in order to help further inform planning for their next steps.

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