

Fledglings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY255805
Inspection date	11 January 2008
Inspector	Anne Gunston
Setting Address	Little Heath Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 5TY
Telephone number	01189 451545
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Registered person	Fledglings Day Nursery Tilehurst Ltd
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?

Fledglings Day Nursery opened originally in 1992 and changed ownership in 2002; it is privately owned and managed. The nursery operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of Little Heath School in the village of Tilehurst, near Reading. The nursery has access to two rooms and a large fully enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves a wide geographical area and is open from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00.

There are currently 34 children on roll. This includes 10 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children may attend for a variety of sessions each week. The nursery currently supports children who have English as an additional language.

There are nine staff members employed to work with the children. Of these, six have relevant early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3 and two staff have an advanced qualification in childcare. The nursery receives regular support from the early years development worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well at the nursery, as staff implement effective hygiene practice throughout the daily routine. The owners take personal responsibility for laundering all bedding on a daily basis; they recognise that the flexible use of resources and space in the nursery necessitates this. Staff recognise the signs of tiredness in babies and children, they act on this knowledge and support children who wish to rest or be active. Children who do require a sleep can do so in a comfortable, secure setting. Staff remain in the sleep room with the youngest children, and check on them frequently to monitor their wellbeing. Older children settle quickly to rest, as staff identify their comforters and position them on the mattress in preparation for a nap after lunch. Children are comforted by the staff that sit among them, and stroke them to encourage them to relax into sleep. Children's emotional well being is fostered well by all staff who form caring relationships with the children. Children confidently snuggle in to staff for reassurance; staff speak to them in comforting tones at all times and quickly attend to distressed children. Staff follow correct procedures for changing nappies; they wear gloves and clean the changing mat using disposable towels after each use.

Children are beginning to recognise their own needs and follow good hygiene routines. Staff provide warm flannels and encourage the most able children to wipe their own faces and hands after meals. Children are always prompted to wash their hands at appropriate times, and encouraged to help themselves to a tissue for wiping their nose. A tissue dispenser is positioned within reach of most children. More than adequate members of the staff team have an up to date first aid qualification; a comprehensive first aid kit is accessible to all staff in the kitchen. This ensures children receive prompt, relevant treatment in the event of an accident. The staff keep good records to support children's health. They record any accidents or medication in a confidential manner and expect parents to countersign these at the earliest opportunity.

Children's dietary needs are catered for well at the nursery. Staff offer varied snacks of oat cakes, banana or cheese on toast mid-morning; parents are asked to provide a packed lunch and staff provide a cooked meal for children as a tea. The staff recognise that children who attend nursery for the full day are often too tired to enjoy an evening meal with parents at home. The youngest children receive meals and drinks according to their individual routine. Staff encourage them to become independent and use spoons or beakers for themselves. Mealtimes are sociable occasions where staff sit with children and encourage discussions about important events in the children's lives.

All children receive daily exercise and fresh air in the garden; staff maintain a stock of Wellington boots and outdoor clothing to ensure that every child can be involved, in all but the most extreme weather. Children use a good range of equipment to promote their physical skills, such as wheeled toys, bikes, slides and the seesaw. Staff always extend children's enjoyment of the outdoor environment, for example, they set up obstacle courses, which older children competently negotiate on bikes. Children enjoy imaginative play in the garden; they join hands and weave in and out of equipment as they pretend to 'go on a bear hunt'. Younger children gain in confidence as staff encourage and support them to use the full range of toys and equipment. Staff provide more static resources, such as chunky chinks for the youngest children to use whilst in the garden, so they continue to benefit from fresh air. The outdoor environment provides children with a wide range of experiences. Staff ensure that parasols and a gazebo are used in very hot weather to protect the health of the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a child-centred environment, which is well maintained and prepared for their care. The youngest children enjoy a quiet, cosy room where they sleep or play in safety. They also benefit from use of a separate area of the main playroom, which is divided by a colourful low fence. Babies are very used to interacting with older children every day, which ensures the transition from one group to another is smooth. Older children move confidently through the space available to them, and can access essential facilities such as toilets and washbasins in safety. These resources are low level, enabling children to become self-sufficient. Staff ensure that they respect the privacy of the children, but monitor their ability to care for themselves; they provide support whenever this is needed.

Children use a good selection of resources for play, which staff check on a daily basis to ensure they are clean and safe for use. Toys are arranged at low level, and most, which are in daily use, are easily accessible to children. Rotation of other resources takes place; staff record which items to use each day to ensure children receive good variety. The staff team maintain a very secure environment, where visitors are challenged. They are particularly careful to keep the outer gate bolted, and complete risk assessments of the outdoor area before children's use. Children are well supervised at all times yet are learning to keep themselves safe as they play. Staff offer timely reminders to children about climbing onto furniture, and explain what may happen if they do.

Children are well protected from risk of harm or neglect, as staff have a very good understanding of child protection issues. There are clear systems in place to ensure that staff and parents become familiar with the nursery's responsibilities regarding child protection. However, the policy provides incorrect information as it does not make it clear that Local Safeguarding Board procedures are followed. Staff confidently describe the signs and symptoms, which may indicate that a child is at risk. They keep confidential, secure records of any concerns, which ensure potential patterns of harm are identified and action is taken to protect the child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well settled and very familiar with their environment and the nursery routine. Staff working with babies and young children are using the Birth to three matters framework to plan a broad range of activities for those in their care. They keep records of children's achievements, share these with parents regularly and adapt activities to ensure every child makes continual progress. Children can access a good range of toys and play imaginatively with items of their choosing. For example, young children enjoy exploring the texture of sand between their toes, encouraged by staff who sprinkle and scoop the sand to extend the experience. Toddlers pretend to strum the xylophone like a guitar and enjoy gaining the attention of adults present. Young children learn to be skilful communicators; they frequently select books during free play and listen attentively to stories read by staff. Children enjoy the attention and physical closeness of staff at this time. Staff maintain very good interaction with the children. They position themselves in close proximity to children at play, and encourage communication by echoing children's attempts at sounds and words.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff are involved in planning a broad curriculum for children in receipt of funded nursery education. They plan topics and activities together and adapt these at frequent intervals, using information gained from their daily observations of children at play. Individual learning plans are created for each child; the owners who monitor the quality of nursery education review these quarterly. The written plans which are then created are not detailed, however all staff have secure knowledge of what each child is expected to gain from the activities and experiences they provide. Most staff very ably pose challenging questions to children and have high expectations of what children can independently achieve.

Children have a positive attitude towards attendance at the nursery. They are keen to take part in all activities; staff give children clear explanations of the choices available to them to stimulate this interest. Children are showing a great deal of care and concern for each other and are forming good friendships. For example, children happily take turns and remember who is next on the seesaw; others ask if friends want to join them in listening to a story. Children confidently attempt tasks, such as managing the zip on their coats. Staff show good knowledge of children's ability and offer appropriate levels of support to enable children to develop these practical skills.

Children are learning to express themselves well; staff are constantly talking to them throughout the day, extending their vocabulary. They listen attentively to the staff, and enthusiastically follow instructions, for example as they jump up and down to Dingle Dangle Scarecrow. Children enjoy a warm welcome at circle time each day, where staff encourage each child to participate by use of the 'Say Hello' song. Children are gaining in confidence to speak out at this time. Children have good opportunities to develop their handwriting skills; older children take part in one-to-one time with staff where they write stories about important events in their lives. They are learning to write recognisable letters; many can identify their own name cards at the lunch table, however staff do not consistently expect children to label their own work. All children can access writing materials throughout the day, and practise writing for everyday purposes, such as writing invitations to a party. Children thoroughly enjoy reading; they show respect and care for the wide range of books. They frequently take books to favourite staff and ask for a story to be read.

Children are developing sound interest in numbers and counting and often use number language in their play. Staff effectively encourage children to recognise shapes, particularly during the daily routine. For example, children sitting on the floor are asked to join together to form a circle. However, some staff lack confidence to extend children's mathematical knowledge further, for example, by asking that children calculate the number of plates required for the children present. Children enjoy exploring and investigating a wide range of textures and materials, and experiment with moving sand between containers. On occasion, the needs of younger children in the group detract from the level of support given to funded children. Children do show curiosity and question what they see, particularly when in the garden. Staff quickly point out interesting events, such as the arrival of seagulls, and use these to develop children's knowledge of their local community and environment. Children learn about the traditions and cultures of the wider world when they use the nursery's excellent variety of resources reflecting diversity. A range of activities is planned into the educational programme to raise their awareness of different celebrations and cultural events.

Children are becoming confident users of the computer and are drawn towards this. Staff encourage them to make decisions about the programme they wish to use, and assist children who wish to control the mouse for themselves. Children creatively use the wide range of role-play materials, and frequently engage in role-play based on their own experiences. Staff give good

support to this aspect of play by regularly exchanging the resources to provide interest for the children. Children also express themselves creatively during singing and dance, or arts and crafts activities. They are developing hand-eye co-ordination using equipment such as scissors or sewing needles, and express their preference for favourite colours and design.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff show clear awareness of each child's individual needs; daily discussion takes place between parents and staff. These friendly exchanges support the written information concerning children's characteristics, provided by parents when their child first attends the nursery. Staff keep detailed records for parents of the youngest children; staff note in a daily diary if children have been 'smiley' that day, when naps were taken and which activities were enjoyed. Children's artwork is displayed throughout the building, each child has its own coat peg with a photograph which means that even the youngest children are made to feel welcome. Children play an ongoing role in the daily routines; staff expect and encourage children to take on a 'tidy up job'. Children learn that each individual has an important contribution to make to the operation of the nursery. Staff consistently praise and thank children for being willing helpers; these positive strategies are also very effective in managing any unwanted behaviour. Staff use their knowledge of the children and remain calm as they deal with any challenging incidents. They firmly explain to children that what they have done is wrong, and how this will affect others; children are asked to apologise. Good or helpful behaviour is always rewarded, children show pride when they receive a sticker or extra attention from the staff team. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have English as an additional language are given appropriate support by the staff team. They communicate with parents to ensure that the preferred language is used, enabling children to be fully involved in all nursery activities. The owners and staff have a positive attitude towards the care of children who have specific requirements and/or learning difficulties. Staff monitor children's developmental progress; they have formed working relationships with other agencies enabling them to call on relevant support and advice if necessary.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive a full set of the nursery policies; this pack includes a Parents in Partnership Agreement, which is signed by both parties. This sets out the expectations of parents and nursery staff, and provides clear guidance for parents on most aspects of the nursery operation. However, the complaints procedure contains incorrect information concerning the address of the regulator (Ofsted).

Children benefit from the flexible settling in arrangements, which allows parents to stay for a time with their child if they wish, following the two introductory visits to the nursery. Parents are reassured that an open door policy exists, and that they can contact the staff whenever they are concerned about their child. Staff provide information for parents on the Foundation Stage curriculum, and offer two parents' evenings each year. Parents of babies and those children in receipt of funding for nursery education are offered a booked appointment to discuss their child's progress. A monthly newsletter and displays on the noticeboard, keep parents informed of any changes to policies, future events and says 'hello' or 'goodbye' to children joining or leaving the nursery.

Parents are given good opportunities to be involved in their child's nursery education. Staff ask that they send in items relevant to the planned topic, and encourage them or members of the extended family to visit the nursery to share their knowledge and experiences with the

children. They offer suggestions as to how parents can support their child's learning at home, for example, by using templates with older children to promote handwriting skills and correct letter formation.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The effective recruitment and vetting procedures operated by the nursery owners mean that a committed, consistent team of staff cares for children. There is a good mix of both highly qualified personnel, and very experienced assistants, all of whom show willingness to complete further training relevant to their role. The owners and staff work in a co-operative manner and share all tasks, although there are systems in place to identify clearly each person's area of responsibility. More than adequate numbers of staff are employed to work each day with the children; children benefit from high levels of supervision and are able to move confidently around the nursery. All essential policies and procedures, required for the safe operation of a nursery, are in place. The owners have established systems to review and amend the policies to ensure they are relevant to the operation of the nursery, although they have not identified that some policies contain incorrect information and guidance for parents. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. The owners of the nursery constantly monitor the quality of care and education provided for children. They have correctly identified the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Although staff currently use the available space to good effect, plans are under way to improve the space available to children, re-organise the grouping of children and provide additional qualified staff to work with children in receipt of funded nursery education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of both care and education, one recommendation relating to care was made. The provider was asked to ensure that staff training and development needs are identified, recorded and met by formalising the appraisal system. The owners of the nursery now provide each member of staff with the appraisal form several weeks prior to the formal meeting. This enables staff to have time to consider their training needs, and bring these to the owners for discussion. Training is planned for the subsequent year to meet these needs, which ensures staff have up to date knowledge of childcare issues.

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 policies relating to child protection and complaints contain up to date information and guidance

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):

- continue to review the grouping of children and further develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning to ensure children receive consistent challenge.

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