

# Major Minors

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY274195
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Maureen Croxford
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<b>Registered person</b>	Major Minors 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Major Minors Limited has been registered since 2001 and is part of a 'family' of seven nurseries. It operates from a renovated and refurbished primary school in Godalming, Surrey and serves the town and the surrounding villages.

The children have use of a baby unit and nursery department, a sleep room and toilets, a play room and various 'home rooms' in two buildings situated on the same site. The enclosed playground and grassed garden area offer a secure area for outside play.

The provision is registered for 140 children under 11 years. Older children can also attend before and after school hours. There are currently 230 children on roll and of these 56 are educationally funded.

The provision is open all year round from 07.00 to 19.00 Monday to Fridays excluding bank holidays. All staff are appropriately qualified or are working towards a child care qualification. There are procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities and for children for whom English is an additional language. The provision receives support from a mentor from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of the provision's hygiene routines and ensure that children are cared for in a well maintained and clean environment. For example, staff wear protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies and preparing food. Children's good health is promoted as staff remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack time and discuss with them why they must keep clean.

Thorough procedures are in place with regard to the administration of medication and the recording of accidents. The records are complete and are signed by parents or carers. Children are reassured and taken good care of if they have an accident as most staff hold current first aid certificates. Some written procedures are in place to ensure that children with allergies are protected.

Staff plan exciting and interesting topics with regard to healthy eating, which helps child to learn about the importance of following a healthy and varied diet. Nutritious and balanced meals are prepared on site by qualified staff, using organic and locally sourced foods wherever possible. Children are provided with snacks of water, milk, dried fruit and breadsticks as agreed with parents and carers. Bottles for babies are provided by parents, and are labelled and stored appropriately.

Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and benefit from the very well planned sessions in the hall and fully enclosed playground and garden. During the inspection, the children enjoy playing outside, including using large equipment, and quieter activities such as painting, role play and drawing with chalks on the large blackboard. All children are developing a good sense of spatial awareness, as they move around the setting with increasing confidence, for example, when peddling trikes.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children develop, which contributes to their good health and physical development. They plan suitable activities for younger children to gain control of their bodies and acquire greater physical skills. Staff use triple buggies to take babies on regular walks to ensure they are able to enjoy being in the fresh air.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel extremely welcome as staff greet them and ensure that they settle quickly into their activities. Children feel valued as their artwork is attractively displayed in all areas of the provision. The premises have good safety features such as close circuit television in all areas and the secure, fully enclosed play areas. This ensures that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised.

The premises are light and airy, and provide appropriate space to offer a wide range of activities, which promote the children's development. The playground and garden area offers children a very safe area for outdoor play. Children have access to rest areas, including a sleep room for the babies. The appropriate deployment of staff and the well laid out rooms ensure that children are safe at all times.

Children are able to access their own resources and toys with ease and in safety, as it is stored in low-level storage units in all areas of the nursery. The provision has many resources that aid the staff in their work, including appropriate sized furniture for children, mobile cots and designated nappy changing areas. Older children are encouraged to be independent and take themselves to the toilets, which are situated adjacent to their rooms.

Hazards to children are reduced as staff carry out regular risk assessments of the premises to minimise identified risks. All equipment is checked and cleaned regularly and staff ensure it conforms to safety standards to protect the children. Clearly defined procedures for the emergency evacuation of the building are understood by staff, who carry out regular fire drills.

Children are protected because all staff understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Appropriate procedures, which staff put into practice when necessary, are readily available to parents. The manager is the designated person and staff understand the importance of confidentiality.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy the extremely stimulating range of activities provided by well qualified staff who plan using the Birth to three matters framework for younger children and the Foundation Stage for the educationally funded children. The broad range of good quality resources enhance the quality of experiences offered to all children in their care, including the children attending the breakfast and after school clubs. Activities are evaluated to ensure the individual needs of all children are met and their welfare promoted.

All staff carefully observe and record what children are able to do, which helps them identify significant steps of achievement and shows the stage of development attained. These observations and assessments are used to identify the next steps in the children's learning.

Staff help children to develop positive relationships with their peers and encourage them to respect their opinions. They meet the children's needs through appropriate interactions which help to promote their self-esteem, including good eye contact, conversation and listening and valuing what they have to say. Staff provide a very warm and secure environment in which children are able to flourish and develop their independence. Children benefit from the exchange of verbal and written information between home and nursery, which helps to secure children's sense of belonging and emotional well-being. Staff also work closely with parents and outside agencies, including the teachers from the local primary schools, outside providers of services, therapists and a mentor from the local authority.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is outstanding. Children make very good progress and engage in a wide range of stimulating and exciting experiences covering all areas of learning. This is recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations, which link well into the stepping-stones. The nursery staff are extremely well qualified and experienced, and use their extensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage to plan a very stimulating curriculum. They demonstrate a keen enthusiasm for their work.

Staff complete an initial child profile which covers the early learning goals and monitor children's progress very effectively. Good procedures are in place for children with learning difficulties,

including individual learning plans, enabling them to make sound progress towards individual targets. Planning takes into account the starting point of each child, what more able children can do and how they will be sufficiently challenged.

Children are very comfortable in the provision and have a positive attitude to learning. They are becoming increasingly self-assured and are confident enough to try new activities for example, bubble painting. They play well together and develop very good relationships with staff and their peers. Staff actively encourage children to work together in groups to enable them to relate to their peers. They co-operate during play, taking turns and negotiating which equipment they will use.

Children are interested in their activities and show good levels of perseverance and concentration, for example, when building an ark from the large construction toys, they work together to achieve the task. Activities and resources are easily accessible to children, which enables them to make choices about their play. Children are learning to dress and undress independently as they put on outside clothing before going into the playground. Staff act as positive role models and actively encourage children to talk about their home and community life.

Staff encourage children to mark-make in all areas of the provision and provide suitable resources for children to do so. Some children use recognisable letters when writing their own name, for example, when using water and large paintbrushes to write their names on the blackboard in the playground and then watching it evaporate in the sun. Children interact very well with their peers and staff and take turns in conversation.

Children practise early reading skills and are beginning to link sounds to letters. Staff encourage them to explain what they are trying to achieve and to reflect on past events. Excellent visual aids are available to children, including posters and labels, for example, children have access to photographs on the computer to help them recall past events and activities. Children have very good access to a wide range of books including reference and fiction, and concentrate well when listening to stories. Staff extend their vocabulary which results in children exploring the meaning of new words.

Good use of number lines and posters ensures that children see numbers as labels. They say and use number in order and in familiar contexts, and count independently during activities. They are able to select the correct numeral to represent a number of objects. Staff support children and encourage them to compare and calculate during everyday activities, such as sorting the small bricks from the large. Children use appropriate language such as 'under', 'over' and 'biggest'. They are able to recognise simple shapes easily, such as circle, triangle, square and rectangle.

Children receive many well-planned opportunities for activities to investigate materials and objects by using all of their senses. They find out about some features of living things, for example, growing and caring for plants and examining and listening to mini beasts. They are beginning to describe and draw their own observations. Children have access to appropriate materials and opportunity to explore different methods of designing and building using a range of materials and techniques.

Opportunities are offered to children to develop their understanding of the local community and people who help us, including the fire brigade, and visits to the local shops and library.

They have good access to computers and programmable toys. They are developing their keyboard and mouse skills very effectively.

They enjoy a wide range of planned, challenging physical play opportunities both inside and outside, including travelling over and through climbing and balancing equipment. They are able to adjust speed and change direction to avoid obstacles and are developing increasing control when using equipment for throwing, catching and peddling.

Children enjoy worthwhile opportunities, which allow them to use their imagination in role-play, art and music. They enjoy singing simple songs and nursery rhymes. Children receive many opportunities to explore texture, colour and shape. During the inspection, children freely use glue, paintbrushes, scissors, chalks and pencils, which helps to develop their manipulative skills.

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

The provision is outstanding.

All children in the nursery are valued and respected as individuals by staff, who take great care to ensure that all children are included. Children benefit from the very well planned activities and an extensive range of resources. Staff provide an extensive range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world, for example, through topics such as Divali, Harvest Festival, Christmas and Chinese New Year. Good displays, planning and photographs show that children are offered many opportunities to find out about other cultures and religions. Staff use resources including books, role-play and dolls, which reflect diversity to help children appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences.

The provision has very good procedures in place to offer support to children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff are extremely proactive in supporting children with individual needs, which develops their sense of belonging and their self-esteem. They work closely with parents and carers to ensure those children's needs are met.

Children show care and concern for each other and play together cooperatively, sharing, taking turns and assisting one another. Staff praise and reaffirm their achievements, guiding their social and moral values. Children's behaviour is very good and they recognise the difference between right and wrong. Staff help children to be polite, considerate and understand why some behaviour is not appropriate. Children are involved in compiling the rules which are displayed around the provision. As a result, children know what is expected of them and show high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are able to actively contribute towards their children's learning and development because they are fully informed of the daily activities and the learning outcomes. The provision implements a highly effective induction session and offers parents and carers well-written information, which includes the policies and procedures. Further information offered includes guidelines for parents, a prospectus and a parents group.

Parent sessions are offered on the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and Birth to three matters framework. They regularly discuss with staff the progress of children using the children's assessment records. They also share information informally on a daily basis as staff make time to talk to parents. Effective systems are in place to ensure that all parents' comments and concerns are noted. This shows the steps to be taken if a parent has a concern or complaint.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

All staff hold appropriate, or are working towards, a childcare qualification, and all have experience of caring for children. Staff deployment and their knowledge of child development is excellent. Staff work well as a team and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them on a daily basis, which helps to promote positive outcomes for children.

Children make good progress in their learning due to the experience of the staff who extend activities naturally. Staff organise the daily routines and layout of the rooms appropriately to ensure that children are well occupied and engaged with many worthwhile play opportunities.

All legally required documentation is in place and shared with parents, where appropriate, including records, register, accident and medication records. Policies and procedures are readily available to staff and parents.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the nursery and is extensively supported by the management team, who have ensured that all those working with children in receipt of funding for nursery education have excellent knowledge of the curriculum guidance.

The management closely monitors the quality of teaching, which helps to ensure consistency and identify development requirements. Staff are encouraged to attend training to meet the needs of the children and the nursery. The management is committed to the ongoing improvement of the care and teaching provided for the children and strongly supports the staff. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the provision has had a new Director and the recommendations made by the inspector have been addressed. Procedures have been reviewed and new policies put in place. Children are protected as staff understand that sensitive information about children is to be kept confidential.

## **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.

## **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 outstanding.

## 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):

- develop further the procedures to ensure that children with food allergies are protected.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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)