

Little People's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135319
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Gulnaz Hassan
Setting Address	Wilkinson Scout Hut, Tile Kiln Lane, London, N13 6BY
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Registered person	Georgina Jones & Karen Arden
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little People's Nursery has been registered since 1995. It is located in the hall of a Scout Hut in Palmers Green in the London Borough of Enfield. The Nursery serves a multi cultural community. The provision is registered to care for 26 children from two years to under five years.

There are currently 35 children on roll, including 23 children who receive funding for Nursery Education. The Nursery currently supports two children who have learning difficulties and 27 children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery operates every day of the week from 09:00 until 11:30 and 12:30 until 15:00 term time only.

The Nursery is owned and managed by two joint providers who also work with the children. There are two further members of staff who help to look after the children; three staff hold appropriate child care qualifications and one staff is working towards a qualification. The Nursery receives support from the Local Authority advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are offered snacks that are generally healthy, such as fruit with toast or crackers during each session. Occasionally children have biscuits when a carbohydrate snack is not available. Drinks of water are served at snack times. However, children do not have access to drinking water at other times. As a result, children do not have the opportunity to help themselves to water when they are thirsty.

Children's health and well being is adequately safeguarded. Although children are able to visit the bathroom to wash their hands before snack time they also use a communal bowl of water to wash their hands after messy play, such as painting. This practice does not promote children's independence and leaves children at risk of cross contamination by sharing the same water and by using the same towel to dry their hands. There are good systems in place to meet children's needs if they are unwell or if they have an accident, for instance there is a high number of first aid trained staff on duty each day.

Children learn to lead a healthy lifestyle and engage in activities which help develop their physical skills, for example they manipulate the parachute, learn to kick a ball, throw and catch balls and bean bags and they are learning to manipulate hoops with the support of staff. Older children are sufficiently challenged in their physical skills as they have access to appropriately sized climbing apparatus, for climbing and a range of other suitable equipment and outdoor play resources. Staff organise obstacle courses to help children to develop skills such as balancing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's welfare is not appropriately safeguarded because staff are uncertain about child protection procedures, for instance in the event of concerns about children or allegations about staff, they are not clear about what to do or who to contact. In addition the Local Safeguarding Children Procedures are not available. This is a breach of regulation.

Children's safety is not ensured because the records available do not accurately reflect the times of children's arrival. The systems for recording the attendance of staff, volunteers and students are not clear. In addition a lost children's procedure has not been developed so children are at risk, for instance if they become lost during a visit in the local community or if they are able to leave the premises unsupervised.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where resources are well organised and accessible. Children move freely and safely around the environment. Staff informally carry out safety checks and use a compiled risk assessment as a guideline. Emergency evacuations are practised frequently and children understand the purpose of this exercise. The setting has worked hard to ensure that children are evacuated in good time during practices in order to ensure children's safety in the event of a real emergency. Accidents are recorded and children's parents are asked to sign these records to ensure they know of them. However accidents are not being systematically reviewed, for instance on a monthly basis, to assess if the number of accidents occurring are preventable or are caused by hazardous conditions.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident and most are settled at the nursery and they enjoy the company of both staff and other children. Their self esteem is fostered very effectively by the obvious interest and enthusiasm of the staff working with them.

Children enjoy the opportunities they have to explore different media through creative play opportunities, for instance children make hand prints with paint, they cut these out in preparation to make Christmas trees for a display. Children have fun in the home corner enjoying imaginative and role play, for instance they dress up as fire men, take orders for tea from the staff and go shopping with baskets. Children build tall complicated swaying towers with giant Lego and play with favourite cars and garages. Children have free choice to help themselves to the easily accessible resources, this promotes their independence and encourages them to extend and initiate their own play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and they plan a programme of activities linked to all the areas of learning. A balance of adult planned and child initiated activities helps to provide children with generally satisfactory learning experiences across each area. However, plans do not include details of what children are expected to learn, which means that teaching is not always sufficiently effective. For instance, adult initiated and focus activities lack examples of vocabulary and intended questions so that often activities are conducted without effective questioning or extending of children's language. The system in place for observing and assessing children has enabled staff to identify the needs of children and profile books developed for each child help staff and parents to see what children know and what they enjoy. However, records are not used effectively to plan for the next step in children's learning across the stepping stones and the early learning goals. Children's learning is often not extended by staff or sufficiently differentiated, as at times staff fail to understand how they can promote and support learning in greater detail, for instance in the form of questioning or encouraging enquiry.

Children enjoy mark making and writing and children particularly like to draw what they have seen on visits and during walks through the local community, for instance children were intrigued by a walking stick and drew pictures of the old man and his walking stick. Children are encouraged to write their names and staff help children to sound out the letters of their names. Children's interest and enjoyment of books and reading is less well developed for instance, some children enjoy story time and listen to stories, whilst other children find it harder to listen and concentrate. Although staff will read to children in small groups this does not support the children who have more complex needs and who would benefit from individual time with staff looking at books. The books in the home corner are limited in range and variety although a selection of more interesting stories is available for staff to use during circle time. Books are not used to support children's learning sufficiently. For instance books are not used to support themes, looked at and read in other areas of the provision, such as the home corner or used for ideas, such as when constructing or used to extend children's interests. For instance, some more able children enjoy putting on plays and shows, they encourage other children to join in, they make their own props, make tickets and put on the play of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' for children and staff. This area of interest is not extended or reinforced by looking at books that relate to, for instance, theatre, puppet shows or even well known theatrical plays and performers.

Children are developing sufficiently well in their personal, social and emotional development. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, this is promoted well by the organisation of group games, such as lotto. However children's behaviour is variable, for instance during tidy up time some children do not wish to help and staff do not know how to encourage children to take responsibility for tidying up, for instance by incorporating this into a game. Children are developing their self help skills with regard to visiting the toilet and dressing up for home time and when going out to play.

Children are developing well in all aspects of maths. For instance, children are counting confidently up to 10, whilst a variety of different number games and number puzzles are helping them to recognise figures. During activities staff use words like 'bigger' and 'smaller' to promote children's understanding whilst maths games such as lotto help children to solve number problems with adult support. Children enjoy a variety of creative model making and art activities although some of the activities include pre -drawn pictures and shapes for children to cut around, this is sufficiently balanced by opportunities for children to independently create their own work.

Some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are promoted fairly well, for instance children are learning about other cultures and religions and they talk about their families, for instance about the recent number of new siblings. They explore life cycles and examine mini beasts using magnifying glasses and explore the content of compost. Children explore the local community, for instance they visit local areas of interest or for specific exercises such as to post a letter. Although children's access to Information Communication Technology (ICT) is not frequent children have access to a small range of battery operated toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff know children very well and staff are very committed in meeting the individual needs of children. Children learn about their own similarities and differences because they come from a range of different backgrounds. Children are becoming aware that there are different ways to communicate as they are helped to use sign language and staff ensure that they are familiar with and learn a range of words from children's languages, helping children to settle and enabling them to feel respected and valued within the setting. Staff seek advice and support for the celebration of cultural festivals. This promotes parental involvement and enhances children's learning. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There are appropriate systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children benefit from the prompt action taken to identify their needs and to ensure that they receive appropriate support within the setting by enabling outside agencies, such as speech therapy, to visit children.

Children's behaviour is satisfactory. Some children display moments of frustrated behaviour and occasionally challenge and test staff by throwing toys or not co-operating, for instance in helping to tidy up. However, management of behaviour is consistent and staff patiently explain to children why such behaviour is not acceptable and praise children for positive behaviour. Staff aim to promote good behaviour through example and demonstration, although they do not always know how to encourage children to improve some aspects of difficult behaviour.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Information about the Foundation Stage and the areas of learning are available for parents to look at in the form of the planning materials.

However the systems in place, such as interpreting and translating services, to enable good communication and to meet the needs of all parents and carers are not fully developed. This means that some parents and carers are not fully supported in understanding the curriculum for Nursery Education or the value of certain activities, such as water play. Annual meetings are held with all parents and each child has a profile book recording their achievements and interests which parents enjoy looking at. Most parents contribute to the initial assessment of their children when they start in order that staff get to know children's care and routine at home. A quarterly newsletter enables parents to remain informed about the setting. Verbal exchange of information is frequent and staff use daily feedback sessions to discuss aspects of children's learning and development with parents and carers. Parents have access to a range of policies and procedures including a complaints procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children. Children are happy and confident because the nursery has a very committed stable staff team who communicate their enjoyment and care for the children. However the providers have not acted to address a number of regulations that have a significant impact on the safety and welfare of children. For instance, the attendance register does not record the times of arrivals and departures for children, staff and volunteers. The records of attendance do not clearly identify which adults, such as students, are helping to look after the children. The providers are not certain of the significant changes and incidents, that Ofsted as the regulator, must receive notification about. Although the providers either ask to see evidence of Criminal Records Bureau checks or obtain these for staff and adults who help to look after the children, these systems are not secure in ensuring that staff are suitable, for instance identification is not verified and there are no systems in place to ensure that staff continue to be suitable to work with children. There is no lost children procedure. The providers lack sufficient understanding and knowledge of child protection procedures. These are breaches of regulation. The setting has not acted to address recommendations raised at the last inspection.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The setting has attended some training with regard to supporting children with learning difficulties, such as speech and language development and Makaton. However staff have not attended training in areas in the Foundation Stage with which they struggle, such as the stepping stones and the early learning goals which would help children to progress appropriately. The management is aware of the weaknesses of the setting, for instance with regard to the planning, observations and assessments of children and the lack of detailed learning and teaching objectives to promote outcomes for children. Through observation of staff and satisfactory levels of evaluation the providers are aware of instances of weak practice that lead to missed learning opportunities for children, these are discussed and recommendations are made for improvement. In some respects the setting is at a loss in seeking direction or obtaining support in order to improve identified weaknesses. The staff meet frequently to discuss practice and to look at ways of developing the curriculum. The setting have demonstrated that they are committed to improvement and at the time of the inspection some systems, for instance with regard to working in partnership with parents are in the process of being developed and implemented.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision was asked to develop a lost children procedure and to maintain up to date written documentation of the daily attendance register with all the required

details including hours of attendance. These recommendations have not been addressed and as a result children's safety and welfare is not ensured. The group were also asked to improve the opportunities for children who have English as an additional language by planning for their needs, using more resources, especially those represented by children in the group. The group have made satisfactory progress in this area for instance they have obtained resources that are relevant to each child represented in the group and individual planning for children has improved opportunities for learning at the setting.

At the last nursery education inspection it was recommended that: - the provision developed systems to link assessments and the next steps in children's learning to the planning of activities; they provided opportunities for children to develop their maths ideas and solve practical maths problems; children were enabled to develop their understanding of ICT and to express their own ideas creatively and to improve opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and to use equipment to develop their climbing and balancing skills. Although children's access to ICT remains infrequent recommendations have been met to a satisfactory degree in improving outcomes for children's learning.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters
- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children
- maintain the attendance register to include details of all adults (including students and volunteers) and the times of arrival and departure for all adults and children
- develop and implement a lost children procedure.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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 staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and ensure that observations and assessments of children show clear links to the Stepping Stones and progress towards the Early Learning Goals
- develop the planning for the curriculum to ensure that learning and teaching intentions are detailed and that the adult initiated activities and the focus activities are well planned to include intentions, open ended questions and vocabulary (this also applies to care)
- improve children's opportunities to access Information Communication Technology and improve and support children's access to reading and books throughout the session and encourage the use of books in all areas of the provision (this also applies to care).

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