

# Early Learners Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	310414
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Murphy
<b>Setting Address</b>	178 Hawthorne Road, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 3AR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 933 2022
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Kenneth Alan Cosgrove
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](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?

Early Learners Day Nursery is situated in the Borough of Sefton on a main road close to Bootle town centre. The nursery is a converted church and has been registered since 1994 for 50 children in total. The nursery has the children grouped into four separate rooms. It comprises of a large, fenced outside play area with three playing surfaces.

There are currently 75 children aged from six months to four years on roll, of these 17 children receive funding for nursery education. Staff are either suitably qualified or working towards further childcare qualifications. There is a member of staff in each room who holds a relevant first aid certificate. The nursery receives support from the local childcare partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted through regular exercise and healthy snacks and meals. The food is carefully prepared and fresh produce is used to give children a seasonal variety in vegetables. Food preferences and any food allergies are carefully attended to. Staff sit with children creating a social occasion at mealtimes and snack times where good table manners are promoted. Children are encouraged to make simple choices and enjoy the opportunities provided to be seated at a table and eat with others. Routines to maintain a healthy environment are effective and the majority of staff have appropriate first aid qualifications. There is a system for obtaining consent from parents in order for the nursery to seek emergency treatment for children if required. Good records are kept of all medication administered to the children and parents sign the record to endorse the nursery's actions.

Personal care and hygiene is well organised because everything is the right size and well supervised. Staff give plenty of reminders about washing hands and explain its importance. As a result as children get older they are increasingly confident and independent and will often remind each other to, for example, wash their hands before lunch.

Children's physical development is aided by using a good range of well chosen toys, small tools and mark making equipment which help develop their finer skills such as drawing. Children play out in the fresh air each day and this gives them opportunities for boisterous play and to access a good range of climbing equipment and wheeled toys. As a result their physical development is enhanced well. The babies have their own space to roll and crawl and to begin to pull themselves up. There is an abundance of toys and objects for them to touch and grasp.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and safe environment. The room for babies is self-contained where they have access to a range of safe and appropriate resources to aid and stimulate their development. Children are shown how to use resources carefully and safely. This helps children to come to a better understanding of the importance of looking after themselves and others. Written policies for health and safety are in place and implemented ensuring children's safety. However, on the day of inspection the car park and pedestrian gates were left open to a very busy main road posing a risk to children.

The children are supervised at all times whilst they move freely and choose from a good range of toys and equipment. This encourages their independence and decision making skills as they choose what they wish to play with. All resources are well maintained to ensure continued suitability. The accommodation provides sleeping areas for the children so that they are not disturbed and get the rest they need.

Children's welfare and safety is promoted appropriately, arrangements for child protection and safeguarding children meet requirements. A nominated person has overall responsibility but all staff are trained and know the procedures to follow. Fire evacuation is practised very regularly so that children have an increasing understanding of what to do in the event of fire. First aid boxes are readily available and well-stocked.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the nursery because of the all round excellent relationships. Staff go out of their way to ensure a smooth transition from home to nursery. They help children settle into their day at the nursery quickly because they know the children well and are aware of their likes and dislikes. Babies and toddlers settle happily into routines. They form good relationships with their key workers such as when they trustfully explore different textures or cuddle up with the adults before sleep time. Staff help children take delight and joy in all that they do. For example, children are taught to appreciate music and gladly clap hands and dance to show their satisfaction. Their smiles as they interact with adults are brilliant. All the children benefit from opportunities to play outdoors. Children enjoy their outside play and older ones show what budding artists they, for example

through their lively chalk drawings on the playground. Older children draw recognisable figures and add facial features in some detail. Children are really happy and eager to either join in with activities or choose independent tasks. For example, a small group of toddlers settled happily to explore a range of construction toys which developed their skills at linking shapes together. Activities, for groups and individuals, are planned to develop children's all round learning and provide children with new experiences so that they can explore and make simple discoveries in their own time. This promotes children's enjoyment and creativity in learning. Children take pleasure, for example, in playing with water, relishing splashing it on their skin to feel its warmth. The babies gurgle responses to the enjoyable songs and rhymes which stimulate their early language development.

Staff regularly observe children's progress and record how well children are doing. The planning of activities takes account of children's immediate needs but the long and medium-term planning is patchy and does not show how the full curriculum will be covered each year.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This means that children generally make good progress towards the early learning goals for children of their age. Children's independence is encouraged through a good choice of well chosen activities which captures their imagination and interest. As a result children's confidence increases and they make good gains in choosing activities and playmates independently. Staff know when to take a step back and when to provide direct help. They are patient and provide good role models for the children to follow. Children's behaviour is managed very well in a firm but very caring and friendly way that is reinforced very positively. As a result children behave very well indeed and no time is lost. Children are kind, for example they will help each other to put their coats on. They know what is expected of them because the routines are well organised and adults are always at hand to offer reminders and help. Humour is used well to engage children in learning.

Resources are plentiful and used well. As a result children make good gains in all the areas of learning. For example, older children learn to recognise their name and make good attempts at recognising letter sounds which will help in their reading. They learn to count carefully to 10 and to use their numeracy in simple games. Staff encourage children to apply their developing skills, for example, by counting objects found in the sand tray or counting how many children are present in a group. Songs and nursery rhymes extend children's understanding of language and number and improves children's confidence in speaking.

Plentiful space is given to developing in children a love of stories and books. As a result many very young children are able to concentrate for good lengths of time as they look at books and turn pages. They very much enjoy sharing the well-chosen books with adults. Adults read aloud to children with much intonation and this thoroughly enthralled the listeners and children join in often reciting well known stories. Children's independence develops well because staff have high expectations of what the children can do and activities are chosen to encourage small steps in learning so that children achieve success. Learning is not only fun but topical. For example, celebrations such as bonfire night are linked into children's learning. However, it is not always clear precisely what it is that staff want children to learn from the continuous activities because written planning is inconsistent in quality.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The quality of partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. It is open and honest and summed up by parental comments such as 'My child loves every day at nursery' and 'The nursery gives my child a good start to life'. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the nursery. They are very pleased with the induction arrangements which they say works very well and helps their children 'get off to a flying start'. Interactions between staff and parents are very professional and friendly and give confidence to parents and children alike. Parents and carers receive a very warm welcome each day. They take plenty of time to settle the children and chat to the key workers. This benefits the children because they see the friendly approaches and hear the shared laughter and happily become engrossed in activities and enjoy the company of other children. Parents are given plenty of information about matters relating to their children and the nursery. Records of their children's progress are very clear and easy to follow and this informs parents how they can help their children at home. It creates vital links in children's learning. The nursery canvasses parents for their views and takes appropriate action on parental views. For example, improving the lunch menu. Excellent arrangements are in place to help children with special educational needs. The trained key worker for special educational needs is very well informed about her role and keeps up to date with what is required. A clear policy underpins the arrangements.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children enjoy the challenges set for them and increasingly persevere to finish tasks taking much pleasure, for example, in completing a jigsaw or in using coloured pens to express their feelings on paper. Creativity is greatly nurtured and a strong element of the activities which often brings about uninhibited work and much laughter. Staff give great encouragement and praise which helps build children's self-esteem means that learning alongside others becomes intrinsic. Children behave extremely well and this aids their learning and development. Good manners and care for each other are promoted very well and children respond with enthusiasm needing few reminders to be good members of their community. If gentle reminders are necessary they are always followed by praise so that although children are clearer about the rules they also feel good about themselves and happy to continue to their tasks. There are plentiful opportunities for social development and much encouragement to take turns and share so that this becomes a way of life.

Children are encouraged to play in roles beyond the usual gender stereotypes and this promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well and helps children to be fully accepting of others. Books are carefully chosen to reflect the diversity of modern British culture and this provides good role models. Children's understanding of cultural diversity is further nurtured through a range of celebrations such as Diwali.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an experienced and appropriately qualified staff group. Good systems for recruiting and induction ensure staff are aware of what is expected of them. Senior staff provide effective support to all members of staff. The nursery policies and procedures are available to parents and parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and their daily lives at the nursery. Record keeping is up-to-date, confidential and thorough ensuring children's needs are met at all times. The planning for teaching does not always take into account the children's longer and medium-term learning to ensure an overview. Although the main activities planned for children each week are clear the learning expected to arise from the continuous provision is not always so clear.

The space and resources are arranged effectively to enable children to initiate their own play and learning to promote their levels of independence. Displays and artefacts engage children's interests and nurture their imagination. Children have access to bathrooms which provides privacy and are clean and airy. Systems are in place to ensure the safety of children inside the nursery and within the well-supervised outside play area. However, on the day of the inspection it was identified that the front gates used by parents and children were left open which could have been a potential hazard for children.

Leadership and management are good. Senior staff encourage a collaborative approach which works well. Best use is made of training to keep up to date and to introduce well considered ideas to benefit the children. Because change is well planned and thoroughly discussed it is taken on board to benefit the children. The manager is insightful as to what steps need to be taken next to continue to improve and the operational plan highlights appropriate priorities.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The recommendation raised at the last inspection was to ensure that the new planning systems were improved by linking the planning to the assessment of the children's progress. As requested, this has been addressed. Assessment is used regularly to identify what the children need to learn next. Written observations are kept in the children's individual records and used for planning focussed activities to meet children's differing needs.

The nursery was asked to consider taking children out on outings and visits. The nursery has thought about this very carefully and taking into consideration the roundabout and the very busy road they have decided not to take this forward because of the safety implications for children.

The nursery was asked to provide more resources which provide positive images of different cultures, religion, gender and disability for all ages of children. This they have done ensuring children experience a wide variety of opportunities. The nursery was also asked to revise the child protection statement so that it includes the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff. This is now in place to ensure that children are well protected.

## **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 complainants 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 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):

- make sure that the main entrance used by children is safely separated from the car park and that the pedestrian gate to the road is kept closed.

#### **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 planning encompasses a long, medium and short term outline of what children are to learn and makes clear what learning is expected from the continuous provision.

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