

Fledgelings Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY277842
Inspection date 26 March 2008
Inspector Susan Jennifer Scott

Setting Address Grove Green Community Hall, Penhurst Close, Grove Green, Maidstone,
Kent, ME14 5TQ

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Registered person Alison Christine Truss

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?

Fledgelings Nursery is an independently owned nursery. It opened under new ownership in 2004. The nursery operates from two rooms in a community centre in Grove Green, Maidstone, Kent.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:30 - 14:30, school term times only. There are currently 39 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery owner employs seven staff. There are four staff, including the owner and supervisor, who hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and tidy environment where there are secure routines to ensure toys, resources and equipment are clean and hygienic. Children benefit from clear routines and activities that enable them to learn the importance of good hygiene and healthy living. For example, staff encourage children to wear protective aprons when painting through conversations and reminders. As a result children's understanding of hygiene is good, although they do use a shared bowl of water after painting. Staff ensure they obtain written permission before they administer any medicine to ensure children are not given anything that is unsuitable. The dose required and the time it is given are recorded and parents sign the entry keeping them well informed. Several staff hold current first aid certificates and are able to administer first aid in the event of an accident. This ensures children's welfare in the event of an accident when parents and emergency contacts are not available.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks that they help staff to prepare. They undertake projects where they learn about how to eat healthily. Children sit at the table and each has a bowl and mug and serve themselves to a good variety of fruit and vegetables. They enjoy the social opportunities offered to them at snack times when they can eat their chosen foods and pour a drink at the small tables with a member of the staff. This encourages good conversations about their favourite food. Children use individual laminated mats for their snacks to reinforce their understanding of healthy eating habits. Many children are able to help themselves to water whenever they feel thirsty which encourages them to develop their independence.

Children explore the interesting play and learning opportunities in the locality. They have access to fresh air and the outdoor environment is used to promote children's physical development and interest in nature successfully. Children also enjoy vigorous physical play on a regular basis and enthusiastically use the climbing equipment, stilts, 'gogo' bus and seesaw inside, when a large part of the hall is cleared. They are keen to use the large equipment inside during frequent physical play sessions and develop a good sense of space and coordination, steering bikes and cars as well as using equipment like the tunnel proficiently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive very happily and settle well at this secure and welcoming setting. They feel a sense of belonging from the pegs provided for their coats and benefit from using the clean and spacious environment. There are some pictures, posters and displays of their work which show that staff value and encourage children's contributions but the group are restricted in their display space in the hall. Children have easy and safe access to a good range of toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. Resources are used well by staff to meet the needs of the children, for example there is a clear planning system to ensure resources are varied each session. Toys and resources are carefully selected and regularly checked to ensure they are safe and suitable for children to use.

Children enjoy their play in a safe, secure environment and regular risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, promote children's safety. For example, the adjoining supermarket car park is used safely as staff take a rope for children to hold as well as giving clear instructions about safety while using the recycling bins. Outings are planned carefully to ensure staff ratios are

sufficient and emergencies are covered; for example, by taking a mobile phone and basic first aid supplies. Good staff interaction helps develop children's awareness of safety within the setting. Children benefit from staff who are vigilant at all times and build upon their understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire as emergency evacuations are regularly practised. There is good security of the premises which ensures they are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult. Children are protected from hazards by the precautions used by staff; for example, there are door stops to prevent their fingers from being caught. Although they are not permitted to enter the kitchen, there are occasions when other groups leave unsuitable items in unlocked cupboards there and these have not been checked by the group. Staff have a good understanding of the procedures to be followed if they have concerns about child protection issues. This, coupled with clear procedures, safeguards children's welfare in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The organisation of the sessions is good; it provides a good balance of individual choices, small group and whole group activities. The routines provide appropriate quiet, active and outside play times for all the children. Staff awareness and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework supports children's achievements and enables a smooth transition into the curriculum for those over three although the record keeping for the youngest children is not consistent amongst all the staff.

Children take part in varied activities throughout the session. Children under three are confident in the setting and in their relationships with the staff. They play happily with each other, learning to take turns and respond to others as they use role play, games, and books. Staff are very successful in encouraging children to share information and speak to adults or each other or in small and large groups. This indicates that children are enthusiastic and interested. Children's independence is promoted well during many routines, like snack times, and they look after many of their personal needs such as pouring themselves a drink of water and use the toilet independently. There are some opportunities to experience activities and visits outside the setting in the local community for the children who attend.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are encouraged to progress as they are supported by experienced staff who have secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. There are clear and well organised written plans which are sufficiently detailed to cover all areas of learning and effectively build children's individual skills within the programme of activities. However, there is not a methodical system to note and share all children's next steps. This occasionally results in less effective promotion of the learning opportunities that may arise during child initiated play as staff are not always fully aware of these. Most staff are experienced practitioners though and children receive good stimulation and are fully engaged in the activities that they deliver. For example, when they are read a story by experienced staff good questions and flexible responses are encouraged and the activity is broken off to capitalise on spontaneous learning opportunities.

Staff encourage and praise children so that they are eager to try tasks for themselves and continue to practise and develop their skills. Children are used to making independent choices, freely selecting equipment for themselves during the sessions as well as enjoying the responsibility of helping to tidy away after activities or put away plates and cups at snack times.

Children are learning to write their names on work which some can do skilfully, recognising letters from the sounds that staff help them identify. They enjoy stories and share books with other children and staff, selecting these independently during their play.

Children practise their use of number and confidently count how many children are present during the register routine and older children are able to discuss how much one more or less is. They show a good understanding of size, colour and pattern. Children are able to freely explore practical resources and learn through experimenting with items such as compost which they access to support the woodland theme. They acquire practical knowledge of their environment through topics such as the recycling, and enjoy good opportunities to become aware of their community by visits to the neighbouring recycling bins.

Children concentrate on activities that require dexterity such as using pencils and scissors without fear of failure. They carefully measure out seeds to grow cress on cotton wool which they squeeze water from and use to make 'eggheads'. Children confidently participate in pretend play, extending their communication skills by discussing ideas and roles with other children and adults. For instance, they act out a pretend scenario using animal puppets in the jungle, explaining what they are doing with good imaginative skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude to others through playing with a range of resources that reflect positive images. This practice successfully builds on their understanding and helps them develop a balanced view of the world. Children flourish and are made to feel good about themselves, gaining confidence by being acknowledged as important individuals. All the staff have a secure understanding of equality of opportunity and a very positive attitude towards diversity. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities are welcome to attend the setting and staff provide individual support to enable children to feel secure and well settled here. Good support and planning enable inclusion for all children in the group. There is good liaison between parents and agencies. There is access to the building for those with disabilities.

Children have good relationships with staff who encourage them through modelling polite behaviour and treating children with respect. For example, children are addressed by their names and are given gentle reminders to sit so that others can contribute at circle time. Children are confident because staff build their self esteem, for example, by organising a leader for each day who helps with snack preparation and other tasks. Children respond positively to staff when they are reminded about basic rules and are praised for helping put the toys away together. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents are good. Parents exchange information verbally and complete initial profiles when they register their child; this ensures staff have a knowledge of individual needs and enables staff to build on what children already know. Children benefit from the observations, assessments and records of their progress which are shared with parents on a regular basis. Parents have regular consultations with staff when they look at records and exchange information about their children's progress. Parents are provided with good information about the curriculum and each child regularly takes examples of their work home. This supports children's learning and provides an opportunity for parents to comment on their children. Regular newsletters inform parents of events and topics so that they can contribute items to support the group. Good relationships with parents ensure children's individual needs are met and continually discussed with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from an organisation which has secure systems in place to support and value their contributions. Systems for induction, training and regular staff meetings are in place. As a result, there are policies and procedures in place to meet the National Standards. Consequently, children benefit from a staff team that have been checked and have a secure understanding of the procedures and policies. The required documentation required is all in place.

The staff have investigated and are developing the use of the outdoor playspace in conjunction with the hall committee. Staff are able to update their knowledge and skills through regular training courses. They are implementing the Birth to three framework to ensure methods of working with children under three are successful. As a result, children outcomes to promote children's welfare, care and learning are constantly developing.

Leadership and management of the setting is good. Children benefit from a strong staff team who share common aims. Staff work closely together to ensure the effective delivery of the programme and experience good support and guidance from the manager, enabling them to be clear about their roles and responsibilities. The staff use the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to plan and provide a balanced curriculum. Children benefit from assessments of how well their needs are met because staff monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education. Effective measures are in place to develop and improve the provision. For example, the registered person and staff have plans to develop a secure outdoor play area. They carefully monitor and evaluate to identify improvements which ensure ongoing quality of the provision and have recently improved the snack bar to increase learning opportunities for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Previously the group were set three recommendations at the care inspection, these were to: ensure the registration system records children and staff arrival and departure times; continue to develop the opportunities that promote children's independence and consider keeping children's accident information in an appropriate record book.

These have all been successfully addressed since the last inspection. For example, first aid records are provided as copies to parents after being recorded clearly and all the required records are in place.

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):

- continue developing the outdoor playspace
- develop consistent record keeping for children under three using the Birth to Three framework

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):

- design a system that identifies the next steps for all children in order to enhance their progress (also applies to care)

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