

Little Deers Morley Centre Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117196
Inspection date	13 March 2008
Inspector	Kay Roberts
Setting Address	Morley Centre, Broadland Gardens, Stentaway Drive, Plymouth, Devon, PL9 8TE
Telephone number	01752 404370
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Registered person	The Trustees of Little Deers Morley Centre Pre-School
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?

Little Deers Pre-School operates from a community youth centre situated on the outskirts of Plymstock. The accommodation consists of a large play room with an enclosed outdoor play area. There is also access to a kitchen and toilet facilities. The pre-school is open during school term times only and sessions run Monday to Friday, from 09.00 to 12.00, with a lunch club operating from 12.00 to 13.00 daily. Registration is for a maximum of 22 children between the age of two and five years. At present there are 27 children on roll, and of these there are six funded three year olds and nine funded four year olds. The pre-school is managed by a parent committee who employ six members of staff, five of whom hold a relevant early years qualification. Guidance on the education programme is provided by a teacher advisor from Devon County Council.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where their health is suitably promoted. The risk of infection is reduced as parents are aware of the policy for excluding children who are sick, together with details of infectious diseases within the setting. Staff follow hygienic procedures, for example, using anti-bacterial spray to regularly clean tables. Children learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine. They understand that they must wash their hands prior to touching food because of germs, but do not yet know the implications of germs. A dentist with a large set of dentures shows children how they should brush their teeth and helps them to understand the importance of dental hygiene. Children are well protected in the event of an accident or medication being required, as there are safe procedures in place.

Snack time is a spiritual occasion as children recite a brief prayer before eating their healthy, varied food, which takes into consideration special dietary requirements. Children are independent in pouring their own drinks. Both snack and lunch times are a social occasion as children chat about what they are eating and sometimes they try to invite themselves to the home of a member of staff. They are beginning to understand those foods which are healthy and those which are less healthy. Healthy eating is reinforced at lunch time as staff join children and eat a healthy lunch. If a packed lunch is forgotten children do not get upset or go hungry, as staff quickly contact parents and find an alternative for them to eat. When thirsty, children ask for a drink from the lidded jug, but the jug is not always placed within the view of younger children.

Children balance as they move from one stepping stone to another. They develop large muscle skills as they drag one another around in a large cardboard box and carry heavy boxes of toys from one area of the room to another. In the summer months children benefit from access to outdoor play and remain interested in what is available as the range of activities duplicates the indoor learning environment, but in the bad weather opportunities for outdoor play are limited. In the summer children develop large muscle skills as they mount the climbing frame and crawl through tunnels. They use co-ordination as they move around on bikes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children relax as they receive a warm welcome from staff. The suitably decorated and maintained premises are bright and colourful with well presented displays of children's art work and photographs, as well as educational posters. Activities are organised in clearly defined areas with space between each so that children move around freely, and those engaged in play are not disturbed by their peers. The space is organised into thirds which are partially separated by walls, so that the overall size is not overwhelming to young children who are new to the provision. The pre-school has space for play, physical activity and relaxation in the book corner, which is inviting with a display of books, bean bags and child sized easy chair. In summer, children also benefit by being able to choose whether they play in or outside as the doors are left open.

Children play in a secure environment and do not leave unnoticed as there is a safe procedure in place for arrival and collection. There are good systems in place so that children are only released to authorised adults and are protected from people who have not been vetted. Children

are further protected as staff have a good knowledge and understanding of local safeguarding procedures. The risk of an accident is greatly reduced as there is a risk assessment in place and staff undertake daily checks of the environment to ensure children are not exposed to potential hazards. There is a high adult to child ratio and vigilant staff are appropriately deployed. In the event of a fire, children know how to evacuate the premises safely as they practise the drill on a regular basis and full details are recorded. The danger of fire is reinforced when children are visited by the local fire brigade and they have an opportunity to experience sitting in the fire engine and help to hold a hose spraying water.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children new to the provision are helped to settle as they remain with their parents until they are happy. They have their comforter from home and are supported by an effective key person system. Children confidently enter the premises and immediately find something to interest them. Those under three years participate in most of the activities available to those in receipt of nursery education. Activities are adapted according to individual need and where appropriate children are supported by staff. For example, staff gently hold children's hands to encourage them to participate in imaginative play. They become aware of the sequence of numbers as staff count as they place each toy cookie in a jar and they copy staff who count to ten on their fingers. Children make good progress as staff plan for their next steps in learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning are good as staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and know how to promote learning. Each child's progress is monitored against the stepping stones through learning stories, which include well presented photographs and samples of children's art work. Children's next steps in learning are effectively incorporated into the two year rolling programme of topics, which ensure that children are able to access all areas and aspects of the Foundation Stage at least once a term. Although planning is flexible, it is not based on children's interests. However, on a daily basis staff follow through on children's curiosity so they are motivated to learn, for example, when one child shows interest in the toy cash register and money, staff ask if later they would like to sing the rhyme 'Six Iced Buns in the Bakers Shop'. As they play out the rhyme, one child being the shop keeper and others coming to purchase the toy cakes, the song is brought to life for the children. The number of cakes remaining after each verse are counted so children become familiar with subtraction. Although activities are evaluated, they are not sufficiently detailed to inform future planning. Time is well managed so that children do not get bored, whilst at the same time are given the opportunity to explore toys and materials fully.

Open ended resources, such as, a cardboard box motivate children to learn and stimulates the imagination as many children play alongside each other engaged in the same theme. The box becomes a pirate ship which they pretend to steer and use the kaleidoscopes as telescopes. As they look out, they inform everyone that there are sharks, which later become dinosaurs. Their peers rush to stand on the stepping stones which act as an island of safety and learning is more fun as staff actively participate. By following through on children's interest staff encourage further learning and suggest they make treasure maps. As the maps are drawn staff encourage children to consider what they want on their maps and once drawn children are able to describe in details all the items on the map. On the following day telescopes are created from recycled waste tubes and coloured cellophane placed on the end. When children add more than one colour of a paper they point out that blue and yellow make green.

Children form strong friendships. When they arrive they look for their friends and sometimes move around the premises holding hands. Children chat to their peers as they roll out play dough to make cakes and doughnuts which they offer to their friends. When children find a piece of ribbon which was used to tie up the treasure maps, they place it around the strap of their shoe and say it is a shoe lace. For a considerable length of time they use fine muscle skills to try and form a bow, but when unsuccessful they ask their friend to try, and they also persist for a long period of time.

The constant interaction between staff and children promotes language well. One child pretends to injure a finger so staff cover it with tissue and sticky tape, saying it is a finger fairy. Children learn from each other, and mark their hand with a felt tip pen before asking for a finger fairy. The use of open ended questions to ask how the injury occurred encourages children to use their imagination as they explain in detail how they got a burn or cut. Children relax and show good concentration as they listen to stories, and although some stories are quite lengthy they ask that staff read the book again. Afterwards one child pretends to read the book to their friend using descriptive language to interpret the pictures.

Children use pencil control to neatly colour in babies and young children, then show good scissor control as they cut out the pictures by keeping to the straight lines. Having placed them in the correct sequence of the stages of development they stick them into a small book entitled 'growing up' and staff point out what the words say so that children begin to understand that print has meaning. There is also much print around the room. Activities are adapted to children's individual level of ability. Staff make dots for young children to write over to form their name. Many children are able to confidently sound and write letters in their name, and more able children are beginning to write the names of members of staff. When children decide to add kisses to the writing, staff extend their learning by asking how many they will write. Pencil control is also used as children draw a recognisable face using chalk. Children paint pictures of a person and indicate that they have finished by daubing over the top of it. Others show good pencil control and an eye for detail as they draw a good pirate ship, the sail includes a skull and cross bones and it is tied down with an anchor.

Children name a range of musical instruments as they listen to the sound each produces. When the toy mice appear they play the instruments quietly and when the lion glove puppet appears, play loudly. Afterwards they play the instruments as they march around and sing 'the Grand Old Duke of York'. In the water children learn how whisks and pumps work. Children show an awareness of information and communication technology as they participate in interactive games on a console, matching pieces of puzzle. As they do so young children begin to recognise written numerals, shapes and size. More able children confidently name and match varying size two dimensional shapes. Children are keen to continue staff praise their achievements and children proud of their success say 'hooray'. Children say they enjoy attending pre-school because they have friends and it is peaceful.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have a sense of belonging as their well presented art work and photographs are displayed and each child has a book bag. Children are confident as staff praise their achievements and listen to what children say. For example, when one child asks to take home three, rather than one library book, and a small 'Miffy' toy figure, they were permitted to do so. Children's individual needs are met well through effective planning and key person system. All children are valued and included, and

staff follow the Code of Practice in order to meet children's additional needs. Children are polite and well behaved as they are aware of the rules. They take turns and are sensitive to the needs of their peers. Unwanted behaviour is sensitively managed by distraction and staff having an excellent understanding of each child as an individual.

Children have opportunities to learn about people within the local community as they are visited by a health visitor, post lady and dentist. They have free access to resources reflecting positive images of our diverse society. Children begin to understand that there are different cultures as they acknowledge festivals over a period of a week, such as, Chinese New Year. Children explain that on 'Chinese Day' they ate noodles and prawn crackers with sticks, unsure of what they were called, they ask a member of staff. They look at Chinese writing, make hats, fans and lanterns. A respect for nature is fostered as children plant sunflowers and beans, and watch them grow. They create a wormery and go on bug hunts. In Spring they watch tadpoles change into frogs.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are aware of the education programme as a precise under the six areas of learning is included in the prospectus. Within the setting there are well presented photographs showing children engaged in activities and how these promote learning. The weekly themes are incorporated into newsletters and displayed at the entrance to the pre-school. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children and have free access to children's learning diaries. As children take home library books parents have an opportunity to be involved in their child's learning. Children's education is enhanced as parents share their skills and knowledge, for example, one parent helps children to learn nursery rhymes in French. Parents are also well informed about practices within the setting and their views about the provision sought via a questionnaire. Comments from parents are very positive, the friendly staff and one parent wrote 'Little Deers was great they set the highest standard of care'. The friendly, relaxed relationship between parents and staff provides children with emotional security.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. There are rigorous recruitment procedures in place to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. Ongoing suitability is checked via appraisal. The effective key person system and low turnover of staff provides children with consistency of care. However as no new staff have been recruited for a number of years, the committee have not yet formalised an induction programme for new staff. Current staff work well as a team and are clear about their remit. Keen to extend practice they have undertaken much training during the last year on subjects, such as, the education programme, child protection, health and safety and equal opportunities. Documentation is confidentially maintained and complies with both the National Standards and regulatory requirements so that children's health, safety, welfare and education are promoted. Staff provide a clean, welcoming environment for children where they have space for play, relaxation and physical activity. Staff have an effective planning cycle based on children's next steps and know how to encourage learning. Although planning is not consistently based on children's interests, staff do follow up on children's ideas, so that they are motivated to learn.

Leadership and management are good. Both the leader and manager are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage. They set a good example and know how to motivate staff. They identify the main strengths of the education programme as facilitating every child's access to resources and materials, planning balanced across all aspects of the curriculum, high

adult to child ratios and openness to new ideas. Plans for the future include more involvement in the community and of parents in the education, as well as developing the outside area.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection in December 2004 the provider agreed to meet two recommendations. There is now a procedure in place of the steps to be followed in the event of a child being lost, and this document is shared with parents. Good progress has also been made against the second recommendation as children now eat healthy varied snacks which include fresh fruit, rather than biscuits.

The last education inspection was also in December 2004. The first key issue related to planning and assessment. Since this time children's educational has been enhanced as there have been many changes and as a result there is an effective planning cycle, which takes into consideration each child's next steps in learning. Activity plans also include differentiation, so that activities can be adapted to children's individual needs. The second key issue, relating to whole group activities, has also been met. Children are now grouped according to age and the length of activities takes into consideration children's level of concentration. More adult support is provided to support younger children during whole group activities.

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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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):

- continue to develop use of the outside area during the winter months
- improve the organisation by devising an induction procedure for new members of staff

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):

- further develop planning so that there are more opportunities to focus on children's interests and ensure that evaluation of activities is sufficiently detailed to inform future planning.

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