

Little K's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY363871
Inspection date	09 April 2008
Inspector	Jenny Scarlett
Setting Address	Thatcham Park C of E Primary School, Park Avenue, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 4NP
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little K's opened in 2007. It provides wrap around care for children aged three to fourteen years. Little K's operates in a designated playroom within the Thatcham Park C of E Primary School. A maximum of 24 children may attend Little K's at any one time. Little K's is open each weekday from 15:00 to 18:00 during school term times. The holiday club operates between 09:00 and 15:00 during inset days and school holidays. A Saturday Club operates between 09:30 to 15:00. In addition, a lunch club is provided for the Foundation Stage 1 children attending the school nursery. All children share access to secure, enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 28 children aged from three to under eight years on roll. Children come from a wide geographical area. The out of school club supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting employs four members of staff. All of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the well-established health and hygiene routines implemented by staff. They have use of a clean environment, toys, resources and equipment, and are clearly familiar with the importance of regular hand-washing. There are appropriate procedures in place for ensuring that parents are informed about any accidents and a high percentage of staff are trained to administer first aid, so helping to ensure any minor incidents can be quickly dealt with. In addition, a clear sick child policy is in place and a list of exclusion periods for communicable diseases is easily accessible, which helps to protect children from illness and infection.

Meal times in the holiday club are sociable occasions as children sit with their friends to enjoy food they have brought from home. Fresh drinking water is available to children at all times, so helping to ensure that they are never thirsty. Children enjoy healthy snacks. They are able to help themselves from the varied range of fresh and dried fruit, crackers and spreads available. Children confidently make informed choices and spread their own crackers with favourite spreads such as chocolate, cheese and marmite. Staff hold basic food hygiene certificates and food is stored, prepared and served hygienically.

Children are actively engaged in enjoyable outdoor activities. The more energetic children enjoy ball games and use the space available to play football. Others are happy to sit and draw or colour at the picnic benches. Off site outings are planned to the local shops to purchase cooking ingredients, walks to the nearby woods and the neighbouring parks, which children enjoy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

There is good space within the designated playroom to provide children with a wide range of activities. All areas are maintained well and offer a welcoming environment, which enables children to play comfortably with the toys and equipment. There is an outdoor play area available which provides good space for children to run around freely. There is a suitable range of resources available inside and children are able to make decisions about their play. They are encouraged to choose and therefore able to make informed choices about the types of activities they wish to participate in, for example, cooking or walk to the woods.

Children play in a safe environment. The premises are secure, which means that no unauthorised person is able to enter the setting and children are not able to leave the premises without supervision. A safe collection policy ensures that children are only collected by named persons. Daily risk assessment procedures are implemented conscientiously by staff. At each session the premises are checked to ensure they are safe, which reduces the risk of accidents. In addition, clear communication links are in place with the caretaker head of the school to ensure swift action is taken to minimise any hazards that are identified.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of their role to protect and safeguard children in their care. They demonstrate through attending training and subsequent discussion, suitable knowledge about the correct procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There is a wide range of activities available, which ensures children enjoy their time at the setting. Children are very confident to initiate their own play. The atmosphere is relaxed and activities are led by the children. Some children choose to play energetically, whilst others sit in small groups playing with electronic car tracks, painting and printing or colouring pictures. Children move freely between activities, following their natural curiosity whilst building upon their own play ideas. Consequently, they spend their time engaged in purposeful and meaningful play activities. They talk freely to staff and other children throughout all activities, for example, they discuss the football results from the previous evening and discuss which teams they support.

Staff continually maintain children's interest by providing alternative activities during each session and joining in with the games. Support for children is good as staff engage them in conversation about their life experiences and positive interaction takes place at all times. Children enjoy receiving the frequent praise from staff as they play, which helps to install confidence. Independence is very much encouraged as children go to the bathroom by themselves and help to tidy the toys away. Consequently, children are learning to become self-sufficient. Children are happy and obviously have a fun time at this holiday club.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy good relationships with the staff and each other. They are valued and respected as individuals because staff have a sound knowledge of each child's likes and dislikes. In addition, children talk openly to staff members about significant events and experiences, such as feeling poorly at home and the sessions they enjoy most at the after school club. This helps staff to build a generally clear picture of each child's needs and to begin to individualise the care they offer. Children behave very well and enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. There are clear rules displayed such as 'we treat people how we would like to be treated' and 'we help tidy up'. These are formed by the children and all who attend Little K's sign up to them.

There is a suitable range of activities to raise children's awareness of positive images of culture, gender and disability. Posters are displayed and various topics and displays, such as around the world, promote children's knowledge of diversity and cultures. Photographs show that children learn about the local community and wider world through the many local trips they undertake. Support for children attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Staff fully understand the importance of working in partnership with parents and promoting inclusion for everyone. This helps to ensure individual needs are met.

Positive relationships with parents are promoted. Many policies are displayed on the notice board and the policy file is always available for parents to view. There is a clear complaints policy and details of the regulator are displayed. This ensures parents are aware of the regulations and requirements for out of school care. Information packs are provided for all parents, although some information lacks clarity with regard to staff details and the registration requirements. Children's individual needs are fully discussed and recorded with parents at initial visits and the registration form ensures all details are in place. Staff keep parents informed of their child's well-being through discussion at the end of each session. This enables staff and parents to work together to meet the needs of the child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the welcoming environment where they receive good adult support to help them feel secure and confident. The staff use their time well and the flexible approach allows the children to pursue their own games and activities. Staff listen to the children's comments and suggestions to further ensure children are happy with the activities and experiences provided. Support for children is good and interaction between staff and children is positive. The wide range of activities ensures children have a fun time. Consequently, children are happy and enjoy their time in the setting. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Records that contribute to the children's care and development are effectively maintained, including clear registers for the children, staff and visitors. Documents are stored securely and are accessible, so children's details are kept up to date. There is a suitable level of qualified staff who work with the children and additional training is available through the Early Years Partnership. For example, 'Child Protection' and 'Food Hygiene'. There is a clear system for the induction of new staff and regular monitoring takes place in the form of appraisals. Recruitment procedures are in place, although these are not sufficiently robust with regard to ensuring all required paperwork and references are adequately tracked and recorded. All staff employed have the appropriate Criminal Records Bureau checks, which safeguards children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints 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

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.

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):

- ensure procedures for recruiting staff are robust and formalise staff personnel records.

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