

# Munchkins Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY358868
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Elisabeth Wright
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Peters Lodge, Priory Road, Spalding, PE11 2XA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01775 718708
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Munchkins Kindergarten Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Munchkins is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 2007 and operates from a former listed lodge in the centre of Spalding town in Lincolnshire. A maximum of 33 children may attend the nursery at any one time. Presently there are 52 children on roll, of whom 13 receive early education funding. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:00 to 19:00 all year round. Children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted by the setting because staff follow well-thought out routines which ensure that the premises are kept clean and the spread of infection minimised. For example, there are good systems in place for the changing and disposal of nappies to prevent cross-infection. Children are beginning to understand the importance of washing their hands to keep clean because they do so regularly, for example, when coming in from the garden,

or before eating, and staff explain to them why they do so; children sing a hand-washing song and know they must wash the germs away. However, younger children sometimes sit on the floor for snack time which does not promote good hygiene as food is dropped.

Children are protected well in the case of illness or accident because sufficient staff have appropriate first aid qualifications and first aid boxes are accessible and well-stocked. Help can be sort quickly in the case of a medical emergency because parental permission for emergency medical treatment and advice is obtained at registration. All records for accidents and the administration of medication are kept correctly and with due regard to confidentiality, therefore children's well-being is promoted.

A well-balanced menu across the day ensures that children are provided with healthy and nutritious food, freshly cooked on the premises. Children passing through next to the kitchen area can see food being prepared and discuss with staff what they are going to have for lunch, they are therefore enthusiastic when lunch arrives and generally all children eat well. Babies eat together socially, sitting in high chairs or at a small table, they are encouraged to feed themselves and obviously enjoy doing this independently. Younger babies are held when being bottle fed for comfort and interaction. Older children are involved in cutting up fruit to prepare for snack and serve themselves at lunch time, which develops their independence and encourages them to try new tastes. However, although babies are encouraged to choose when they would like to eat their snack, set snack times for older children limits their opportunities to make independent choices about when they need to eat. Drinks are available throughout the day from water dispensers and cups are filled regularly for younger children, therefore they do not become thirsty or dehydrated during the day.

The recent improvements made to the garden area provide children with a rich and stimulating environment in which they can develop a wide range of physical skills. They spend long periods outdoors playing in fresh air in most weathers, promoting their health. Staff interact with children in the garden, joining in with their games to encourage them to try new ideas. Consequently children are confident in practicing skills, for example they climb and balance, jump on the trampoline and steer their bikes. Opportunities for mark making with chinks and a covered craft area enable them to develop good coordination.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a safe, warm and welcoming environment which is organised with their needs in mind. Rooms have a cosy, homely atmosphere which gives children a sense of belonging in their small group. Sufficient space is available to allow a range of toys and equipment, displayed in low-level storage so that children can access them independently and make free choices. During the day children are able to visit other rooms to extend the variety of toys and resources available to them and they spend long periods in the garden, where they have ample space and resources to engage in all the activities they also enjoy indoors. Staff check toys and equipment regularly to ensure that they are clean and suitable for the children to use safely.

Risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly to identify hazards and action is taken to ensure that these are minimised to provide a safe environment for the children. Fire escape plans are practiced and a place of safety has been identified so that children are protected in the event of an emergency. There are robust measures in place to ensure that the building is

secure and consequently the children are kept safe. For example, no-one can enter without the knowledge of a member of staff and children are unable to leave unsupervised.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a clear understanding and knowledge of the policies and procedures to be followed with regard to the recording and reporting of child protection concerns. The setting has a comprehensive policy which is regularly reviewed to ensure that all information is up to date and that staff have access to current contact numbers.

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

The provision is good.

The youngest children in the setting enjoy a cosy and warm environment which is comfortably furnished with cushions and soft areas to suit their needs. Babies enjoy a range of activities relevant to their development, for example, they sit in high chairs playing excitedly with paint and glitter. Good planning methods ensure that children's needs and interests are observed and that opportunities given are therefore pertinent to their needs. Children engage excitedly with activities because they are given free choices about what they want to play with and these are supported by the staff. For example, when a child wants to play with the train set a member of staff goes to another room to borrow additional pieces to extend the activity. She engages with the child, asking questions and making suggestion about where the track could go. Staff interaction with children is positive and meaningful, therefore children are confident to approach them for help or to have a cuddle when they need reassurance.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well towards the early learning goals because good planning systems enable staff to provide activities that are relevant to the children's individual needs and interests. Staff are able to use a range of methods to promote children's learning through adult-led and child-initiated activities. They demonstrate a secure knowledge of how children learn and make good use of statutory guidance when making assessments and planning for future activities. However, sometimes staff are over-anxious for children to achieve, and therefore they do not always receive sufficient challenge in problem solving or thinking things out for themselves.

Because staff interact well with the children they are confident in the setting and build good relationships. They come in enthusiastically in the morning, eager to share news and greet friends. They develop good social skills, taking turns and sharing resources because staff are patient and explain situations to them. Because they develop a good sense of belonging they take care of their environment, tidying away toys when they have finished with them. They concentrate well on their tasks and take obvious pride in their achievements because staff show appreciation and delight in their efforts, giving praise and encouragement.

Children recognise their own names because they are given opportunities to do so, choosing them to stick on the door when they arrive. Consequently some children attempt to write their names on pictures, drawing some recognisable letters in the well-resourced mark-making area. When children are ready they learn about linking letters and sounds through Jolly Jellyfish activities. Comfortably arranged book areas indoors and in the garden encourage children to make use of them and foster a love of books. Children use mathematical language spontaneously in play to describe size, colour, weight or volume. They learn about weight and measure through cooking activities and by playing with sand and water. Through fixing puzzles together and building three-dimensional models with construction materials they learn about space and shape.

Children are developing technological skills as they play on the computer, moving the mouse around and following the games. They use the Beebot to learn how to translate planned movements into a programme by pressing buttons in sequence. Growing activities promote their understanding of change and growth, so that they are beginning to understand about how the passage of time brings about change. Children are developing good knowledge of colour, texture and shape whilst constructing, painting, drawing and sticking with various materials. They demonstrate good imaginations through art and craft activities, role play and drama activities, for example, acting out favourite stories.

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

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed because staff value their individuality and are proactive in gathering information on their home context, culture and language to support their individual needs. Children benefit from a setting that values diversity and welcomes all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children enjoy a variety of activities that help them develop a positive view of the wider community and find out about different cultures and beliefs. For example, they listen to music in a variety of styles and languages. Good levels of staff training and experience ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate support to support their individual needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Generally children's behaviour in the setting is good because staff provide them with clear guidelines and explanations. Staff treat children and each other with respect, speaking politely and listening to what is said, therefore children develop respect for others. Opportunities are made for children to relax and reflect during the day.

Children benefit from the good relationships which staff build with parents, which encourages an exchange of information and thereby promotes consistency of care. Parents receive written and verbal information daily and regular newsletters ensure that they are kept up to date with planned activities and developments in the setting.

The partnership with parents of children in receipt of nursery education funding is good. Information is displayed on noticed boards and around the room which inform parents of the educational programme. Information given by parents on their own child's progress and development is valued, being used to establish starting points initially and to inform the planning of next steps in children's development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is promoted because the setting applies robust procedures for recruitment to ensure that adults looking after children are suitable to do so. Children are cared for in small rooms, which provide them with a cosy, homely atmosphere where they can get to know staff and other children well and develop a good sense of belonging. Ratios are met and are generally exceeded, which ensures that children receive good levels of supervision, thereby supporting their safety and welfare needs well. However, deployment of staff across the whole provision is not always well-organised. On occasions some rooms become crowded with too many staff, whereas other rooms, although maintaining correct ratios, are in need of additional support. Consequently children's development and learning needs are not always fully supported.

Children's welfare is promoted because all required documentation is kept securely and with due regard to confidentiality.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager implements robust systems of monitoring to create an effective and improving setting which enables children to progress well towards the early learning goals. For example, staff carry out observations of the individual zones in the Pre-School room to identify where they are working well, what can be improved and how children's interests can be incorporated to maximise the learning opportunities provided. The setting has a high regard for training. The manager actively seeks opportunities for staff to attend courses which will enhance the overall quality of the provision. Staff receive good levels of support through one to one supervision sessions and formal appraisals. This ensures that they maintain a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the setting, resulting in consistency of care. Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

On 5 September concerns were raised about safety, supervision and food provided. These concerns relate to National Standards 2: Organisation, 6: Safety and 8: Food and drink. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the premises on 5 September 2007. An action was set under National Standard 8 to ensure children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities suitable for their needs. A satisfactory response to the action was received on 2 October 2007. The provider remained qualified for registration.

## **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):

- review arrangements for snack times to ensure that good hygiene practices are followed and children's independence is promoted
- review the deployment of staff across the setting to ensure that individual children's needs are fully supported throughout the day (also applies to nursery education).

#### **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):

- extend the challenges offered to increase children's opportunities for problem solving and thinking for themselves.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)