

Littleleaps

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY367483 |
| Inspection date | 01 July 2008 |
| Inspector | Elisabeth Wright |
| Setting Address | The Bungalow, Gonerby Road, Gonerby Hill Foot, GRANTHAM, Lincolnshire, NG31 8HQ |
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| Registered person | Littleleaps Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School 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?

Littleleaps was registered in 2007 and operates from a converted bungalow with an enclosed adjoining outdoor play area along with parking for several vehicles. It is sited at Gonerby Hill Foot, on the outskirts of Grantham, within easy reach of the A1. It is open each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00 all year round, closing only for Bank Holidays. It is within walking distance of all local amenities and caters for children of families in both the local and surrounding areas. The provision cares for a maximum of 28 children from two to eight years at any one time.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy through good routines and explanations, for example, they know that they must wash their hands before they eat and after using the toilet and often do so without having to be reminded. The thoughtful provision of a sink next to the snack table serves as a reminder by visibly including hand-washing as an integral part

of eating snack. Children are well protected in the case of illness or accident because there are sufficient staff available who have had appropriate first aid training. Procedures for the recording of medication and accidents are robust and rigorously followed, which promotes children's well-being.

Children's welfare is promoted because they are provided with a healthy and balanced diet throughout the day. Lunch is cooked freshly each day, on the premises, for those children who have hot meals or parents can provide packed lunches which are stored safely in the fridge to ensure that they are kept fresh. Meals and snacks include a range of fruit and vegetables. Children are able to help themselves to snack during the morning, which promotes their independence skills and self-care as they are able to make their own decisions about when they need to eat or drink. They sit together at snack time and lunch time, chatting to staff and each other which promotes the social aspect of eating together.

Children's health is promoted by daily opportunities to play outside and exercise in fresh air. The outside area of the setting is undergoing development at the moment and therefore children are restricted to a small area which limits their opportunities to run, especially when there are a lot of children in the garden. However, staff also take them on outings to the park on occasions, where they can have more room to run and play on equipment. Therefore they are developing good physical skills and coordination. They climb on the slide and kick balls accurately, passing them to one another in turn. Good use is made of the outside space to provide a range of activities that support all areas of learning through role play, sand, 'magic' painting with water, chalking and playing with dough. Generally the children have free access to this area during some periods in the day. However, when established staff are absent this is limited to set times and therefore all children are outside together, which limits the space they have.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting is made welcoming as it is organised with the needs of the children in mind. Therefore, they develop a sense of belonging which enhances their self-esteem. The building is shared by the nursery and after school club and although the premises are laid out with an emphasis on the younger children, consideration has been made for the needs of the older children, for example, separate toilets for boys and girls and allowing free access and choice between indoors and outdoors. Older children are at home and relaxed in the setting, moving around confidently and helping themselves to toys and resources as needed. The setting has plans to improve the premises and garden to better provide for the older children. There is a wide range of equipment available for all children, which is freely accessible, prompting independence and freedom of choice. Toys and equipment are checked regularly and therefore are kept clean and in a good state of repair so that children are able to play safely.

The environment is made safe for children because staff identify hazards and take action to minimise them. For example, areas of the garden undergoing development are fenced off and plug sockets are covered. The setting has an identified escape plan which is practised by the children, therefore they are protected in the case of emergencies. Procedures for outings are comprehensive and include taking a first aid kit and contact numbers.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the procedures they need to follow should there be any child protection concerns. The manager is actively seeking training to ensure that policies, procedures and knowledge are kept up to

date. The current policy is in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines and includes all relevant contact numbers. The setting has a policy in place to ensure that children are safeguarded if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The majority of children in the nursery are in receipt of early education funding and are therefore included in the nursery education section of the report. The setting provides a wide range of activities and resources which provide a rich and stimulating environment for children. Older children attending the after school club have access to a range of toys which are age-appropriate and make especially good use of the outdoor area. Activities include art and crafts, construction, role play, cooking and games both indoors and outside. Consequently, children are relaxed and occupy themselves well, being supported by the staff to ensure that activities are purposeful. Staff take into consideration the whole day of the children they care for and therefore ensure that they have opportunities to relax and unwind after school and have time and space to be with friends.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The setting has recently revised its planning methods and these are now firmly based on the observation and consequent assessment of children's progress. Next steps are identified and supported by the weekly planning. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals because they are provided with a rich and stimulating environment and well-planned activities. However, staff do not always have high expectations of more able children and therefore do not extend activities to provide them with specific challenge. Children are allowed space and freedom to initiate and develop their own ideas, which staff then engage with and support, using skilful questioning and suggestions to encourage them to think and develop their ideas further. For example, children playing in the travel agents role play area decide that they want to go to Disneyland. The member of staff supporting them helps them to organise a train with the chairs to take them there, children extend this themselves by selling tickets, choosing their hotel rooms in the brochure and planning to go swimming.

Children in the setting are motivated and eager to learn. Because they are able to make their own choices about play. They eagerly engage with activities and sustain concentration well. They build good friendships, seeking out their particular friends to join up for activities and share ideas. Children recognise their own names because they are given opportunities to do so and some more able children are beginning to try to write their own names. Although children are able to hold a conversation with adults, who are patient and give them time to think, they are not always articulate when communicating with one another, which can lead to frustrations. The setting has identified this and are focussing on improving children's communication skills. They show value for their thoughts and ideas by displaying their comments next to artwork, which provides encouragement and a positive environment for communication. Fun activities, such as puppets, also encourage communication skills.

Children are able to count accurately and some children are able to add groups together to make one number. Staff use routine and naturally occurring events to introduce children to simple calculation, for example, in counting how many cups are needed for lunch. Because staff use mathematical language frequently when talking to children, they are able to use terms

accurately themselves to describe shape, size, position and amount. They learn about weight and volume through cooking activities and by playing with sand and water.

Children learn about technology through the use of remote control toys; the setting also has a computer where they can learn and practise skills. They learn about the wider world through activities around cultural festivals, for example, Chinese New Year and by learning about the cultures of children who attend the setting. They develop good imaginations and engage enthusiastically in role play and particularly enjoy puppets. Children invent situations with whatever they are playing with. During music time they join in with singing and use their bodies to express themselves through actions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The individual care needs of the children are met because the setting is proactive in gathering detailed information at registration. Staff know the children well and are therefore able to adapt activities and situations to meet their specific needs. Children with English as an additional language receive good support because staff value and respect their home language and culture and understand the importance of using home language to enhance their successful acquisition of English. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported because the setting has experience of this aspect of child care. Good links are made and sustained with local support and parents are fully included in ongoing plans, assessments and decisions.

Children's behaviour in the setting is generally good. They make good social relationships and are therefore cooperative in play. However, some instances of challenging behaviour occur throughout the day because more able children do not always receive sufficient challenge and therefore become frustrated, especially when they do not have free access to the outside area. Staff have positive strategies and methods for dealing with challenging behaviour and incidents are soon resolved. The setting is also focussing on improving children's communication skills so that they are able to articulate their feelings more easily and so avoid frustration. Older children arriving for after school care show respect for staff, asking politely if they want to do something and responding positively to direction, for example, when they are asked to move their bags out of the way.

Children benefit from the emphasis that the setting puts on building and maintaining good relationships with parents. They are kept up to date through newsletters and notices and by verbal feedback and discussions. The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Parents are respected as the primary educators of their children and are included in assessments and the establishing of next steps. The manager takes time to speak to parents individually concerning their child's progress at one to one meetings each term. Therefore they are able to provide consistent support at home.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing an understanding of what is right and what is wrong and why, because staff take time to explain to them and give praise for positive behaviour and actions. Staff provide them with good role models, being calm and consistent and showing respect to the children, consequently they are beginning to learn to show respect to one another.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting applies robust recruitment procedures which ensure that adults employed to care for the children are suitable to do so. As well as external checks being made staff are given an induction period to familiarise them with the setting's policies and a probationary period to establish good practice. Consequently children's well-being and care are enhanced. Staff ratios are met and maintained which ensures that children receive good levels of supervision and attention. However, staff are not always deployed effectively across the setting, particularly when established staff are absent. This limits the choices that children have for play, as they cannot freely access the garden area at this time. All legally required documentation is well organised, being kept with due regard to confidentiality and available for inspection.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The setting carries out ongoing self-evaluation through staff meetings and discussions and has a system whereby staff can write down ideas as they occur for future consideration. The manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to improvement, which enhances the children's learning and care. The setting makes good use of advice and support made available by the local authority and are proactive in seeking out and maximising training opportunities to the benefit of the children. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable. This is the first inspection since registration.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 to develop the outside area and increase children's opportunities to access physical play throughout the day

- review contingency arrangements to ensure that staff are deployed effectively to maintain supervision of children whilst increasing opportunities for them to make independent choices.

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 that activities provide suitable levels of challenge for all children
- continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to provide appropriate challenges for children.

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