

Little Learners Day Care Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357086
Inspection date	29 May 2008
Inspector	Coral Hales
Setting Address	Park Lodge, Clarkes Road, Fratton, Portsmouth, PO1 5PR
Telephone number	02392 756104
E-mail	eburnett1978@tiscali.co.uk
Registered person	Little Learners Day Care Ltd
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 Learners Park Lodge is one of two private day nurseries run by Little Learners Daycare Ltd. It opened in 2007 and operates from a privately owned lodge in St. Mary's Park in Portsmouth. A maximum of 22 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens Monday to Friday 07.30 - 18:00 all year round. All children have access to an enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 20 children aged from three months to five years on roll. Of these, seven receive funding for early education. The nursery has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs five members of staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications and three continue to work towards further qualifications. The nursery has close links with the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted in all areas of the nursery as staff adhere to thorough hygiene routines such as wearing gloves and aprons when changing nappies and by regularly cleaning all areas used. Staff take positive steps to prevent infection and appropriate systems are in place to support children who are unwell. Children are protected well through the staffs' good understanding of what to do if accidents occur and all staff have current first aid certificates. Children are encouraged to learn about and adopt simple personal hygiene routines such as washing and drying their hands and cleaning their teeth after lunch.

Children enjoy packed lunches and teas provided by their parents. This ensures that their dietary needs are met and staff work closely with parents to ensure their wishes are followed. Staff receive training in food hygiene and handling to ensure children's health is protected when meals and snacks are served. For example, staff use a food probe for all hot meals. The older children can help themselves to drinking water as they wish throughout the day. Children are encouraged to try different snacks provided by the nursery and regularly eat fresh fruit and also different foods such as rice/pancakes in line with, for example, festivals and special occasions. This enables them to try new textures and tastes, therefore broadening their knowledge of different foods.

Children become confident in their own abilities as they actively participate in a range of physical activities when out in the well resourced and equipped garden. They have fun as they push and ride wheeled toys and climb and balance on the climbing frame. They develop their co-ordination as they play ball games and show increasing skill and control. The children also participate in music and movement sessions such as the Brain Gym. This encourages them to follow simple instructions given by staff and improves their concentration levels as they move different parts of their body.

Younger children become confident in what they can do as they crawl and start to walk in the safe and suitable environment. Regular opportunities to use the well equipped and safe garden helps them to become more confident in their abilities whilst developing their skills. An undercover area ensures that activities can continue in poor weather. Children can rest and sleep when they are tired in cots with individual bedding or on cushions. Babies and young children's feeding and sleeping routines are discussed with parents to ensure they are maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is generally promoted well. They play safely in tidy and well-organised premises and staff have a good awareness of health and safety issues and most reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risk of accidents. For example, there are secure entry procedures, evacuation policies are clearly displayed and fire drills are carried and recorded. Visual risk assessments take place, however, a formal written risk assessment to ensure all risks are identified and rectified is not yet in place.

Children have access to a wide range of good quality toys and equipment that meets their play and development needs well. These allow children to investigate and explore and develop their

play safely within a secure environment. Resources and equipment are well maintained and regularly cleaned. Suitable equipment is set out and monitored to ensure the safety of the younger children.

Children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded because staff are aware of their responsibilities to the children in their care and ensure their day to day practice protects them. Some documentation is in place, however staff are not secure in their knowledge of the guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Therefore parents are not fully informed of what to do if they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and toddlers keep their individual routines for as long as parents wish which helps them to settle quickly and feel secure. Planning is based on the Birth to three framework and key experiences linked to the High Scope approach. They have daily opportunities to use the garden and play with balls and small wheeled toys and to be creative in the messy play room and staff support this learning well. They play with a good range of quality toys and equipment. For example, they play happily with large coloured bricks, look at books, play with role play kitchen equipment and enjoying pressing buttons on interactive musical toys. Staff offer good support and interaction is good and the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly and the babies and toddlers happy and occupied.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the nursery. They are well supported and encouraged by the staff who help them to develop confidence in their own abilities. Children begin to develop their independence as they express their ideas. For example, they make sandwiches and cups of tea in the role play area and choose and return toys that they have selected to play with.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff make good use of their time to support, guide and help the children in their learning, simplifying and extending learning dependant on differing abilities. Staff engage well with the children and capture their interest and activities are enjoyed.

Staff complete anecdotal notes on the children based on observations of the children at play. However, these are not always added to children's records therefore, these are not effectively maintained allowing correct information to be shared with parents. Planning is shared between all staff and High Scope experiences blend well with the areas of learning and children make good progress. Staff monitor the children's progress closely and this allows them to identify those who require more support in certain areas. They are well deployed to supervise children appropriately and there is a good ratio of staff to children. Good teaching methods such as open-ended questioning encourage children to think for themselves and to begin to make their own decisions and choices.

Children have a positive attitude to learning. They explore and investigate and develop their knowledge as they take part in their chosen tasks and are engaged and motivated. Daily regular routines that relate to the High Scope approach allows them to choose, do and then recall what they have been doing. They then begin to link this with their other experiences. Children work well with others and also independently showing good levels of concentration. They become

engrossed in what they are doing, for example, as they mix liquid soap and water together to make a bubble solution. They show a good understanding of language which they use well to express themselves. For example, they enjoy the group time when they review what they have been doing. They tell each other about their play and effective systems such as holding Larry the Lamb when talking help them to learn to understand when it is their turn to talk and when to listen. Children enjoy stories and songs and join in well with favourite ones for example, they are keen to wear the frog mask during the five speckled frogs song. Children show imagination as they play, however the role-play area is not fully utilised to encourage them to act out familiar scenarios. They enjoy experimenting with the musical instruments, learning how to play them quietly and loudly and accompany themselves as they sing familiar songs.

During small group activities they learn about volume and discuss more or less as they mix the soap and water. They look at shapes of the item they have chosen to see if they can blow bubbles with. Children use mathematical language well and are confident to count to 50 and above when out walking and recognise numbers on the domino cards. Children have opportunities to dig and plant seeds and flowers in their garden. They are interested in the spider who lives in the chimney pot and the butterfly on the ground when out for a walk. They begin to learn about the local and wider world through planned festivals when they look closely at books and taste different foods associated with celebrations. Children have few opportunities to use simple working technology to support their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident in their relationships with the staff because they are valued and respected. This promotes a sense of well-being and contentment and aids their emotional development. Staff liaise closely with parents and carers and information is shared both verbally and for the younger children in writing, to ensure children's individual needs are met. A complaints procedure is in place, however, this is not in line with new guidance.

Children begin to learn about the diversity of the world in which they live as they play with resources that positively reflect themselves and people from other cultures. For example, children play with dolls with different skin tones and they have opportunities to take part in celebrations and festivals. Staff have a good understanding of how to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to allow them to make good progress and to enable them to take a full part in nursery life. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with parents and outside agencies and has attended appropriate training.

Children throughout the nursery behave well, for example, they take turns and share resources and begin to understand set boundaries and simple rules. They receive regular praise and respond positively to the appropriate behaviour management strategies consistently used by staff. Older children are familiar with and begin to show understanding of rules while all children enjoy the security of well established routines. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff recognise parents as the people who know their children well and information is shared regularly to promote children's learning. They receive some information relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum, however this is limited. Plans are displayed to keep parents informed about what the children are doing. Local authority baseline assessment are kept to show progress, however, these are not always

effectively maintained. Staff are currently developing additional Learning Journey observations to further inform parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The staff work really well as a team sharing the planning, organisation and decision making and regular meetings keep them informed. There are formal reviews and appraisal systems in place and this effectively monitors the staff and identifies training needs. There are clear recruitment and induction procedures within the staff handbook. Children's individual needs are continuously assessed by their key member of staff and information shared with parents. Staff offer support and encourage children during activities while still allowing them the time and space to initiate their own learning. All staff are encouraged to attend relevant courses and take advice from other visiting professionals such as the advisory staff from the local authority.

Children are cared for in a well presented and welcoming environment where management and staff show a good understanding of children's developing abilities. Children are grouped appropriately and their daily routines meet their individual needs. Attractive displays of children's artwork and posters create a bright, attractive environment in which they can learn and play. Overall space is used effectively and this enables children to move around freely as they enthusiastically participate in a wide range of chosen activities. Creative use of the outdoor area allows them to explore and extends their play and learning experiences well.

Policies and procedures are established to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to maintain children's welfare and care, however some policies require updating. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- develop staffs knowledge relating to the guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and ensure information is shared with parents and carers
- ensure that the complaints policy contains relevant and up to date information in line with new guidance and share this information with parents and carers
- further develop the risk assessment document to ensure children's safety is maintained and that risks are identified and rectified

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 children's records are kept up to date and continue to monitor the planning to ensure all areas are covered with particular reference to simple working technology and extending the use of the role play area.

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