



Little Crickets

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY305475
Inspection date	08 November 2005
Inspector	Joanne Wade Barnett
Setting Address	Poplar Meadow, Welland Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN10 3TD
Telephone number	
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Registered person	Little Crickets 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 satisfactory. 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 Crickets Nursery opened in 2005. It operates from one room in the cricket pavilion in Tonbridge, Kent. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08:00 to 16:00 during school term time only. There is a large enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 3 and 4-year-old funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. The setting

currently supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five full and part-time staff working with the children. All staff, including the managers, hold an appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted in premises that are generally maintained to a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness. Effective systems to reduce the risk of infection and prevent the transmission of communicable diseases are implemented. For example, paper towels are provided after hand washing and a sick child policy is in place. Children learn about the importance of keeping their bodies healthy through the daily routine. They enjoy balanced and nutritious snacks of fresh fruit and a biscuit at snack time. However children have no free access to fresh drinking water to allow independence. Regular hand washing after using the toilet and before eating helps children learn the importance of reducing the spread of germs and contributes to keeping their bodies healthy. However, systems for ensuring toys are kept clean are not rigorous, consequently some resources are grubby.

Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as they enjoy regular opportunities to play outdoors, participating in rigorous physical activities. For example, riding bikes, playing ball games and music and movement. Access to climbing apparatus outdoors and planned activities inside contribute to the development of gross motor skills and supports children as they develop their spatial awareness, whereby they climb up, over, through and around different equipment both inside and outdoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The bright and welcoming environment is generally well prepared and ready for use when children arrive at the group, contributing to keeping them safe. Toys and resources are checked for safety on a regular basis. A consistent routine and safety-conscious staff ensure children are able to move around freely and safely, making effective use of the space both inside and outdoors. However risk assessments are not carried out regularly enough to reduce potential risks and hazards, for example to ensure radiators remain cool to touch. Children are well supported in the planned activities available to them, however, staff are not always deployed effectively throughout the session. As a result, on occasions children are left unattended as they play. Children are beginning to learn the importance of keeping themselves safe as they move around floor activities.

Systems for monitoring access to the premises are good and contribute to children's

safety, whereby access to the premises is secure and all visitors sign in upon arrival and departure. The procedure to follow in the event of an emergency is displayed, however systems to ensure it is practised regularly are not in place. Consequently, children's safety may be compromised in the event of an emergency because they are not familiar with these procedures. Procedures relating to child protection are in place, however, the staff's knowledge and understanding of this issue continues to develop and evolve.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The environment is carefully prepared and well-organised, as a result, children settle quickly and are keen to embark on a broad range of exciting and interesting activities that encourage and promote most areas of development and stimulate their interests. Staff know the children well. They are caring, sensitive and nurturing in their approach, consequently, children are keen to try new ideas and make effective use of the toys and resources. Children's confidence and self-esteem is enhanced because the staff praise and encourage them and show delight in their achievements. Children show kindness and consideration to others, they talk and respond with animation and laughter to the staff and their peers. Staff use skilful questioning techniques to engage the children and encourage them to talk and explore language. Open questions help children to think about what they are doing and what will happen next.

Systems of planning are undertaken regularly, however this is currently being reviewed to incorporate fully the Birth to three matters framework, alongside the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Although careful consideration is given to ensuring children are able to access a broad and balanced range of activities suitable to their ages and stages of development, opportunities for children to access materials that stimulate their senses and develop their creativity are limited. For example, painting and water play are limited to either planned activities or outside play.

Nursery Education

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Children arrive confidently and settle quickly. They are keen to begin activities and become animated as they engage with the staff and their peers. Children speak openly and confidently and they receive regular opportunities to sing rhymes and engage fully in exciting and interesting stories. Children receive regular opportunities to attempt writing for different purposes, develop language for thinking and extend their imagination through story-telling. Children receive excellent opportunities to recognise their names as they self-register upon arrival. Many children count reliably up to 5 and beyond and receive good opportunities to develop all concepts of mathematics through purposeful planned activities and excellent questioning techniques used by staff. Opportunities for children to develop their skills in designing and making are not always actively promoted because staff miss opportunities to encourage children to make good use of the graphics area, where they can construct and build designs using different media. Opportunities for children to express and communicate ideas in

role play continue to evolve.

Most staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum, this ensures children receive a full programme of good quality education. Curriculum planning is prepared in advance, thus enabling staff to work with children as they guide spontaneous play and learning. However, it is not implemented rigidly. Staff plan purposeful activities that provide opportunities for teaching both inside and outdoors. Opportunities for children to engage in activities that they can initiate themselves, with appropriate intervention by staff, are good. Consequently, children are consistently engaged in the learning process, helping them to make progress along the stepping stones. Most staff are familiar with the learning intention of the activities provided resulting in good opportunities to move children on to their next stage of learning. Opportunities to arouse children's thinking are promoted as staff use excellent questioning techniques that stimulate the children's interests and enables them to build on what they already know. Staff have high expectations of children's abilities and ensure all children receive sufficient challenge in the activities provided.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Strong relationships continue to evolve between the children, their peers and the staff; consequently, children are beginning to demonstrate care and respect for others. Children's self esteem and confidence continues to evolve as staff regularly praise and encourage them in their achievements. As a result, children settle quickly and are keen to join in the activities provided. All children are respected and valued as individuals, differences are embraced and all children are treated with equal concern. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A consistent routine helps children to understand the boundaries in which they are cared for and they are beginning to learn right from wrong. However, on occasions the deployment of staff is ineffective and results in children displaying some unwanted behaviour. Staff implement consistent strategies for managing unwanted behaviour although there is no nominated person responsible for supporting staff in the management of unwanted behaviour.

The group is committed to providing an inclusive service, although there are no children with special needs attending. They have nominated a person to be trained to implement the code of practice for the identification and assessment of children with special educational needs. Support for children who speak English as an additional language is evolving and staff work closely with parents to ensure children settle quickly and are integrated fully into the group.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents receive detailed and written information about the nursery before children attend. Parents receive information about the setting through newsletters, however this has not developed further due to the length of time the group has been operating.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children receive a generally well balanced range of opportunities to meet their individual needs, however, opportunities for them to access a broad range of activities that stimulate their senses and support the development of their creativity are limited.

Although some of the staff hold relevant qualifications in childcare and education, the introduction of a training programme enables all staff to build on their skills and enhance their practice in the pre-school. The induction procedure for new staff is being developed and policies and procedures are being updated to ensure they reflect accurately the service offered. For example, some staff are insecure about procedures to follow in the event of a child protection concern. All mandatory documentation and parental consents are in place and most are completed correctly. The certificate of registration is displayed along with details of the group's public liability insurance, as a result parents are easily able to confirm details of the groups registration.

Leadership and management is good. The managers understand their responsibilities and ensure appropriate checks are made to confirm staff suitability. Staff work well as a team and clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme in most areas of learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since registration relating to standard 6; Safety. The provider has arranged for mobile fencing to be purchased to enable a safe enclosed outdoor area.

Ofsted has completed their investigation and decided no further action was required. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 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):

- develop rigorous systems to ensure toys and resources are maintained to a good standard of cleanliness
- continue to develop the system of planning and assessment for younger children, for example; by the use of Birth to three matters
- ensure risk assessments are used to monitor safety both indoors and outdoors on a regular basis

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):

- develop planning to include a broad range of practical activities and details of; what children are expected to learn, the intended area of learning and how staff will differentiate to develop individual children's progress

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