



Little Dragons

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY263914
Inspection date	31 January 2006
Inspector	Claudia Padfield
Setting Address	57-59 Bath Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2BA
Telephone number	01189 585316
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Registered person	Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust
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 Dragons opened in 2002. It operates from a purpose built modular building in the grounds of The Berkshire Healthcare N.H.S Trust premises. Places are available to the public but priority is given to N.H.S workers.

The nursery is situated near good bus and road links. Parking is available but green transport is supported.

The provision is registered for 58 children. This includes thirteen funded four year olds and ten funded three year old. The setting supports children with special needs and children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery is open week days and closes for a period at Christmas. The nursery opens 07:00 - 18:30 pm Monday to Friday.

17 members of staff work with the children. 14 staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One member of staff is working towards a recognised early years qualification. All staff have first aid, food hygiene, manual handling and fire safety training. They also employ an administrator, cleaning staff and a full time cook.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to understand simple health and hygiene practises. The older children take an increasing responsibility for such tasks as they independently go to the lavatory and understand the importance of washing their own hands. They are also able to help themselves to drinks from the water cooler and enjoy the independence. There are good arrangements in place to care for children who become ill. Most staff are trained in administering first aid and updating this knowledge is planned for to ensure the children's health is protected.

Children enjoyed a suitable variety of healthy snacks and meals, which include fresh fruit and vegetables. Staff actively seek information regarding the children's health and dietary needs, they ensure individual requirements are respected. Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through well-managed meal times. Older children serve their own food and discuss their choices with the staff. This encourages a positive attitude to mealtimes and encourages an appreciation and enjoyment of food.

Children rest and play according to their needs and their individual routines which are respected by staff. The younger children lack regular planned opportunities for outdoor play. The older children enjoy a range of physical play outside which helps them to make satisfactory progress and this area of development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure environment, where they settle quickly and enjoy high levels of adult interaction. Children have space to move and staff complete regular risk assessments to ensure risks are minimised and children's safety promoted. Children are learning to keep themselves safe through discussion with the

staff and activities which encourage them to think about the consequences of actions. This was demonstrated during a discussion about fire safety. They regulate themselves when playing on the computer and in the sand pit. Knowing how many children are able to play safely.

Toys and equipment are appropriate to the children's age and stage of development. These are rotated to ensure the children have access to a varied range. Staff plan activities for the older children to promote an awareness of safety. They have regular fire drills and through topics are aware of the emergency services.

Staff promote the children's welfare appropriately, they have current first aid qualifications and a sound knowledge of child protection procedures. These measures contribute to keeping the children safe and mean that staff act in the children's best interest.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and well settled because of the friendly staff team. Who care for them and help them feel at ease in the setting. Children know the routine and older children enjoy spending time mixing with the younger age groups. Staff implement the necessary facilities to allow children to rest and play according to their needs. The children move freely in their group rooms selecting activities of choice. Good ratios enable the children to have adult interaction as they require and staff play with the children, singing and action songs a particular favourite with the younger children. The lack of formal planning for the younger children leads to missed opportunities during daily routines to enhance their learning outcomes. Some staff have received training in Birth to Three matters to improve experiences for the younger children and a system is being devised but are not fully in place.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation stage and use skilled questioning to encourage the children to think and extend their knowledge. For example during a discussion about Chinese new year the children think about the dragon. They discuss why he might not like red because it is like fire and why he does not like the noise because it is loud. Activities are well planned and have identified learning objectives. However, evaluation of these does not show how successful they have been in meeting the objectives or how they could be improved to further enhance the children's enjoyment and development.

Children enter the setting confidently and quickly settle into the familiar routine, they show high levels of involvement in activities of their choosing and independently make choices about what they wish to do and with whom they wish to play with. Children enjoy discussing their actions during play using positional and size language to negotiate the use of the weighting scales. With support from the staff children experiment and discover that the quantity of an items does not reflect the weight as they have more feathers but the sea shells are heavier.

Children are given many opportunities to write for a purpose. The children write their names on stickers which are put onto the front of the children's work before they are displayed on the wall. Children show a high regard for others and understand that their actions have consequences. Staff support the children to resolve disagreements and children are able to follow these through during free play, discussing them with increasing skill.

Assessment systems are good they record the children's achievements well. Planning gives the children of differing ages and stages an opportunity to explore an activity at their own pace and level of interest. Staff are skilled in questioning the children to extend their thoughts. They are also interested in the children and develop good levels of self esteem and confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff provide an inclusive provision treating children with equal concern and valuing their diversity. They actively seek information regarding a child's individual needs. Children enjoy discussing their personal experiences sharing news about Chinese new year. An appropriate range of toys and resources promotes a positive view of the wider world. Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered. Children show good levels of confidence and self esteem.

Staff use positive strategies to promote good behaviour and offer regular praise and encouragement. Children are well behaved and polite, they are developing manners and an awareness of right and wrong. They are learning to co operate and show an increasing care and concern for others within their group room.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive information when they start and notice boards inform them about the weekly learning intentions and activities that their children will be covering. Staff are approachable and welcome parents into their rooms. Warm relationships are evident and regular updates ensure children settle and good links are formed. Information regarding each child's progress towards the stepping stones is available and key workers happily discuss each child's achievements. The record keeping is easy to understand and dated so parents can track a child's progression.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is organised appropriately to ensure that the children feel settled and secure. The suitable presentation of activities and resources enable the children to confidently initiate their own play and learning. However children's records and assessments have not been consistently completed in the younger group rooms. The lack of planning and knowledge about each child's level of development leads to missed learning opportunities and the provision of suitable challenges.

All of the legally required documentation is in place. These contain clear information about the setting and are available to the parents. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and ensure that staff are suitable to work with the children. An induction process is in place to ensure that staff develop a range of required skills and knowledge before they start work.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. All staff are actively involved in the planning, which ensures that they are aware of the learning intentions of the focus activities. The team work well to promote the children's self confidence and self esteem. A good commitment to training has a positive impact on the care, learning and play provided. However staff assessments lack evaluation of the learning intention for each child. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery were asked to formalise procedures for staff supervision, training and appraisals to meet the needs of the children effectively. There are now systems in place to monitor the training and development of the staff. They have to complete a National Health Service knowledge and skills pay award scheme that tracks the level of understanding and competence of each staff member. The impact on the children is that staff are receiving regular training and monitoring of their practice. This enables them to develop a better understanding of the children's needs.

The Nursery were given an action to develop and implement an action plan of how they were to cover staff ratios. This has been successfully done by the employment of floating staff who cover sick leave, breaks and staff training. The Nursery have also employed an administrator who frees the senior staff to spend time working in the group rooms observing the staff and child interaction. Children now receive lots of adult interaction which enhances the time they spend at nursery.

The Nursery have made limited progress with the use of the outdoor space. The younger children do not have regular planned activities outside and lack opportunities to have daily fresh air. However some progress has been made with the older children now use the outside play area regularly for free play, and have some opportunities to take part in planned outside activities. Younger children still do not have regular access to fresh air and exercise outside. This will be brought forward as a recommendation.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- ensure younger children have access to regular planned outdoor physical play.
- enhance the younger children's experience through use of the Birth to Three Matters Framework.

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 activities are evaluated to monitor children's learning intentions and plot the individual progress of each child.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk