



The Lodge Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY297450
Inspection date 22 November 2005
Inspector June Fielden

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Registered person Christine Anne Smith
Type of inspection Integrated
Type of care Sessional 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?

The Lodge Nursery School was registered in 1991 in its current premises and re-registered from joint to sole ownership in 2004. It operates from a church hall in Sevenoaks, Kent. A maximum of thirty children may attend the nursery school at any one time. The nursery school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:15 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 09:15 to 13:00 on Thursday during school term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children from 2 to 5 years on roll, but children are normally 2 and a half years of age when they start. Of these, 28 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery school currently supports children with special educational needs.

The nursery school employs 8 staff. The manager and 4 of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and 1 member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children flourish because of the highly effective procedures and practices in place to safeguard their health. They follow regular hand washing routines, using paper towels, in order to prevent the risk of cross contamination. The kitchen is kept in a meticulous manner and tables are cleaned before children eat.

Snack times are sociable occasions for children. They all sit down together to eat and talk to each other and members of staff. Children are offered nutritious, healthy snacks of fruit and vegetables which are regularly delivered to the nursery school. The food is prepared at the table with the children's assistance, allowing them to develop independence and learn new skills. Children show good manners as they wait patiently for the plate of food to be passed politely around the table. They help themselves to water or milk. Drinks are available on request throughout the session to ensure children are not thirsty.

Children develop physical control while enthusiastically participating in a range of stimulating experiences. The safe outdoor area allows children to run around freely on the grass and exercise their muscles on the wide range of nursery school equipment. While inside, children are given the opportunity to develop control over their large muscles during music and movement sessions, expressing themselves freely, learning how to move to the rhythm of a piece of music. Climbing frames and benches, closely monitored by staff, provide children with the challenge of climbing, balancing, crawling and sliding. Children participate earnestly in these activities allowing them to exercise their whole bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Equipment and apparatus is arranged creatively by staff to allow children maximum space to move around freely and safely from one area to another. The environment is warm and welcoming to both children and parents, with bright, colourful displays of children's work, showing their achievements on the walls around the main room. The premises are exceptionally well maintained and offer ample space for storing resources. Children have access to a range of interesting, high quality toys and equipment, suitable to the age and stage of development of all children.

There is a secure system in place to ensure the safe arrival and departure of children and details of all visitors are recorded. Fire drills are practiced regularly to heighten children's awareness of the procedure to follow in the event of a fire and measures such as a fire blanket and extinguisher are in place in case of an emergency. Parental involvement on outings is welcomed, and contributes to children's safety by increasing the ratio of adults to children.

Children are well protected from harm and there are 2 members of staff share responsibility for child protection. All staff have received training in this area and will follow the nursery schools written procedures to ensure children's welfare.

Children learn some sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe at the nursery school. For example, they understand that the register is important in emergencies, in order to check that everyone is safe. Staff make Children aware that it is dangerous to talk to strangers and inform them why some of their actions, such as crawling under tables, may cause injury to themselves.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily at the nursery school and settle well, eager to participate in the days activities. Various opportunities are available for children to socialise with each other and members of staff, who are normally close by to provide support. As a result, children relate well to staff and each other. Staff are receiving training in the Birth to three matters framework and have started using this to support their planning. If younger children do not wish to participate in their groups activities then a member of staff will find them an alternative task. Children develop their independence as they spend some time each day choosing what they wish to do. A range of worthwhile activities that appeal to all, including books, toys, construction and role play resources are freely available to them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have an effective understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and have high expectations for all children. They know children well and confidently convey information to them, effectively demonstrating how tasks should be completed. As a result, children are able to follow instructions and complete activities with little staff intervention. Long term plans are discussed at staff meetings, providing an opportunity for all staff to contribute. All areas of learning are covered either through the structured sessions or the informal activities chosen by the children. They are separated into two groups by age for the formal activities and the planning is differentiated accordingly. Staff understand how children learn and provide additional support, where necessary, to ensure all children can access the curriculum. Assessment takes place on a daily basis, as staff make notes on the children they are responsible for. These notes are later added to children's individual records. More formal assessments are made where concerns are raised about children's progress. Their individual learning plans are updated each term and information provided by parents is used to inform this process.

Children begin to recognise familiar words as they search for their name card on arrival or read the date from the easel during group time. Staff share books with children and encourage them to take an interest in the illustrations, using questions to develop their understanding of the characters and the story. Children are confident speakers, as they are given opportunities to share information about objects they have brought from home. They develop a sense of belonging to their group and feel that their opinions are valued, because staff and children listen carefully to what others have to say. Children use pencils during structured activities, however they lack opportunities to practice mark making regularly in everyday activities, such as writing their name on their paintings.

Plenty of opportunities exist to enable children to make friends with others and socialise when choosing their own activities. Children work alongside others to develop their imaginative skills through role play, dressing up or using the puppet theatre, allowing them freedom of expression. They explore colours through their paintings and collage work and develop their small muscle skills as they experiment at moulding malleable materials such as play dough. Staff extend children's ability to learn their letters and count through singing songs and rhymes, from memory. They take turns to share the musical instruments and express themselves through the different sounds they make. Children with special needs respond enthusiastically, confidently performing before the whole nursery school.

Opportunities for children to develop their mathematical abilities are incorporated into everyday activities, such as the songs they sing, looking at the numbers written in the date and counting the number of children present in the register. Maths is made into a fun activity, as children play matching games with numbers to find the correct mat to sit on. Activities involving shape are combined with construction skills. For example, the younger funded children used tools and equipment to construct a bear with moveable legs, selecting the different shapes needed for his body.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel valued because staff treat all with equal respect and aim to meet their individual needs. The nursery school offers a broad selection of toys and resources to promote children's knowledge of diversity. They actively support their understanding of the wider world by involving children in celebrating festivals from other countries and religions, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children with special needs are exceedingly well assisted by dedicated staff, who consult with other professionals to ensure they offer them quality care. Consequently, they are well integrated and thrive well at the nursery school.

Staff are consistent in their approach to behaviour management. They effectively handle the occasional incident of misconduct that occurs and use praise to encourage the positive. Consequently, children are exceedingly well behaved and polite to each other. They understand the need to take turns to speak in group situations and show respect for others by listening quietly to what they have to say. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Partnership with parents and staff is outstanding. They value the extremely high standards the nursery school maintains and the individual attention given to their children. Children benefit greatly from regular parental assistance during nursery school sessions and support provided at fund raising events. Parents are kept exceedingly well informed about the provision through the information displayed on the two notice boards and in the newsletters they receive. If they have any concerns about their child's progress parents know they can make an appointment to discuss their worries with a member of staff. Staff regularly request information from parents to support their planning. Parents of funded children receive a fortnightly newsletter detailing future activities their children will be experiencing, and details of the areas of learning from the Foundation stage curriculum are displayed on the notice board. Staff keep parents well informed, to enable them to work together to help children make progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is well organised, and space is laid out to provide effective play opportunities for children. All documentation which contributes to children's wellbeing is in place. Accidents are always recorded by staff. However, they do not always ensure the accident book, which contributes towards maintaining children's good health is signed by parents.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Children's care is enhanced by the effective manner in which the setting is led and organised. The nursery school has rigorous selection and induction procedures for staff to ensure children's wellbeing is safeguarded. Children benefit from well qualified staff, as regular appraisals provide opportunities for them to take on new roles and decide on training needed to update their knowledge. Staff are committed to improving the provision and are currently piloting a new method for recording children's progression through the stepping stones of the Foundation stage curriculum. An operational plan is in place, which includes the appropriate policies, procedures and details of staff deployment. Staff work as a team and are kept well informed of changes that affect the daily routine. They have an effective understanding of their role in the organisation, which contributes towards the smooth running of the nursery school. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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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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 the accident record is always signed by parents.

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to practice mark making independently on a daily basis.

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