



## The Little School at Pooh Corner

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY301520
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Pamela Woodhouse / Carole Argles
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Little School Day Nursery, Unit 5/6, Lockyer Court, Inmans Lane, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 2NA
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<b>Registered person</b>	Patricia Lynne Matthews
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Little School at Pooh Corner was established in 1990 and is registered to care for 40 children. The nursery operates from premises in the village of Sheet and is close to Petersfield and major road networks. It serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 73 children aged from 4 months to under 5 years on roll. This includes 23 funded 3 and 4-year-olds. The nursery opens 5 days per week all year

round from 08:00 until 18:00 and children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are eight full time and one part time member of staff working with the children, the owner and manager are supernumerary. In addition to the manager, five of the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level three and two are currently working towards a recognised qualification.

The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) and also receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health and wellbeing is a high priority. They are protected from infection and illness due to the practical measures in place and the very clear procedures which staff follow. All staff have a thorough understanding of the health and hygiene policy and implement good routines to promote a healthy environment. They take positive action to encourage children's understanding of good hygiene practices and there are many activities to help the children learn about good health. For example, they talk about the importance of cleaning their teeth and good hand hygiene to prevent the spread of germs. There are excellent procedures in place to ensure that babies' risk to cross-infection is reduced, such as sterilising feeding bottles and hygienic nappy change routines.

Children have a healthy diet and are helped to enjoy food by being involved with lunch preparation one day per week. Mealtimes are social occasions when adults and children sit together to eat their meals, however, the children sometimes become restless, waiting for their food. Babies eat separately from the other children and follow their home feeding routines. Parents provide their own food and formula feeds which are given according to their instruction. This means that there is consistency in their diet particularly when weaning. Children have regular access to drinks throughout the day and babies have complementary drinks in between bottle feeds. Cool boiled water is given to babies under 12 months.

There are daily opportunities for the children to take exercise in the nursery premises and when going for walks. All children, including the babies, are taken separately in their small groups for a walk around the village each afternoon. In the warmer months they visit the local park where the toddlers and pre-school children are able to play on the swings and balancing equipment. This contributes well towards their good health. Young babies use activity mats and support cushions to encourage them to learn to sit up unaided and as they progress are encouraged to pull themselves up and to crawl. The more mobile babies learn to walk both unaided and with the use of a baby walker, they also use push-a-long and ride-on toys which aids their balance and coordination. The toddlers and pre-school children move with control and coordination, and show awareness of space when they are playing together or taking part in parachute games. They use a range of equipment including balls, bats, hoops

and balancing apparatus and this helps them to develop new skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where risks are identified and effectively minimised. For example, the early morning duty manager takes responsibility for undertaking a risk assessment of the premises before the children arrive and for making sure that the premises are suitably warm. Staff are vigilant and follow good safety procedures, for example, regular emergency evacuation practices and when children have their daily walk.

The premises are well presented and there are many pictures and examples of children's art work on display which make the environment cheerful and welcoming for children and their parents. Space is used effectively to provide suitable accommodation to address children's developmental needs, for example, babies are cared for in a separate room to ensure that they can move about in safety. All children use a good range of safe, age-appropriate resources and equipment. These are stored within children's reach which means that they can select what they want to play with.

Children's welfare is safeguarded due to staff's secure understanding of their role in child protection and through the stringent procedures in place. Staff show awareness of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and undertake training to keep their knowledge up-to-date. They are very clear about reporting and recording procedures. The child protection statement is very clear and shared with parents.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are very secure and have good self esteem. They leave their parents happily and quickly settle down to participate in their activities. At times children show good levels of concentration. However, during transition periods, for example, moving to another activity or preparing for snack, the process is lengthy and they become restless. Children have a good rapport with their peers and with the adults. They confidently approach staff for support and comfort. In particular the babies have a very trusting relationship with the staff who care for them.

Children take part in a range of age-appropriate activities which are based on the Birth to Three Matters framework and the Foundation Stage of learning. These give children varied learning experiences and helps them to develop new skills. Children particularly enjoy stories and singing simple songs, they also enjoy many creative activities such as painting, collage and role play. Their progress is monitored, however, the information gathered is not used in a meaningful way. Consequently, observations and monitoring notes are not used to plan children's progress effectively.

## Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. The children are settled and relaxed. They form good relationships with others and most share fairly and take turns. They have a friendly relationship with the staff and readily talk with them about themselves and their families. The children receive praise and encouragement and this helps them develop a good self-esteem. Most children speak confidently to others, and talk about real and imaginary ideas. They understand that there are times to sit quietly and to listen to others, for example, at group times. However, the staff do not always organise the activities well and maintain the children's interest so some become restless. The children enjoy stories and singing, joining in enthusiastically with the words and actions. They enjoy using instruments to accompany their songs and many show a growing sense of rhythm. The children handle small objects and take part in mark making activities and this helps them to develop good hand-eye coordination. Many children are beginning to form recognisable letters and to write their names. They use their imaginations freely when drawing pictures and in their pretend play.

The children are interested in numbers and often use them spontaneously in their conversations, for example when pretending to count crocodiles in the river. Some children are beginning to count correctly linking numbers to objects. However, the staff rarely take advantage of situations to extend their thinking by asking them to count or to solve simple problems. The children find out about nature, the world around them and about how things work. They look at the lifecycle of butterflies, and comment on the changing seasons. The staff take meaningful opportunities to talk with the children about sinking and floating as they throw leaves and stones in the river, and take time to answer their questions about things they see on their walks to ensure they understand. The children begin to develop an accepting attitude towards others by finding out about their culture and traditions through stories, discussions and other activities, for example, cooking dishes from around the world.

There is a suitable range of toys and equipment to support the children's learning. Many items are stored where they are readily accessible to the children who often select activities independently and follow their own interests. The staff are skilled at using positive strategies to manage the children's behaviour and help them understand the consequences of their actions and most children behave well. There is a familiar daily routine which helps the children feel secure and ensures they take part in a range of activities. The staff plan some of the activities but they do not always ensure that these are properly prepared or give sufficient consideration to how the activity will be organised. Often the children are not grouped appropriately so that all are able to take part, or they have to sit and wait, for example while resources are found or all children are ready. As a result, the activities do not always support their learning effectively. The staff keep records of the children's progress but these are updated infrequently and are not used to help plan the next steps in children's learning. Consequently, the staff do not consistently provide suitable levels of challenge for the children to ensure they make good progress towards the early learning goals.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are confident, settled and developing good relationships with their peers and the adults who care for them. Small groups and good staffing ratio's, means that children benefit from individual support where appropriate to meet their individual needs. Babies home sleeping and feeding routines are followed as closely as possible. This means that there is a consistency and familiarity to their daily pattern. Children with specific needs are supported by the Special Needs Coordinator. She ensures that there is liaison with parents and other professionals about any particular care, development and educational needs the child has and that these are implemented. Activities and resources are adapted to enable children to play a full part in the nursery day.

Children are well behaved and play cooperatively. Staff are good role models, speaking calmly and showing respect for the children and each other. They freely offer the children praise and encouragement for their achievements. Age-appropriate explanations are given to the younger children so that they can learn in a non-threatening environment how to share and take turns with each other. The pre-school children are very adept at sharing and taking turns and are learning about right from wrong. They enjoy carrying out small tasks and helping other children, for example, fastening coat buttons.

Children learn about the wider community through activities and the use of resources such as role play which introduce them to different cultures. They celebrate festivals and learn about different parts of the world, for example, through discussion and when preparing lunches based on traditional dishes of other countries.

The partnership between the staff and parents is satisfactory. They often talk about the children's care and development informally. Babies' parents are given a written breakdown of their child's individual feeding and sleeping patterns each day in addition to the informal discussions. This keeps them well informed about their child's daily routine. Parents can discuss their child's progress at an annual meeting and know that they can see their developmental records. The children benefit because the staff encourage parents to become involved in their learning by helping them find resources, or by sharing any special skills with all the nursery children. However, there is little written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum or the activities, readily available for parents, so they understand what their children will be doing and to help them become further involved in their learning.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the range of children for whom it provides.

Effective recruitment and selection procedures means that all staff are suitable to

work with children. Most staff are qualified and others are currently training to gain an appropriate early years qualification.

Children are cared for in age-appropriate groups and staff are sensitive about when a child is ready to progress to the next age group. This means that they move when they are ready emotionally and developmentally rather than exclusively by age. Space is used well to provide areas for a suitable range of activities and children are able to move about with ease. One of the rooms doubles as a physical play area which means that children are able to exercise indoors when they are unable to use the park.

All required records and documentation are maintained, however, children's records are not updated on a regular basis nor are they used to identify and plan for their developmental and future learning needs. This sometimes results in a lack of appropriate challenges.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The management and staff regularly review procedures and attend training and there is a positive attitude towards the continued development of the nursery education. At times, the manager works with the staff to share good practice with them and this benefits the children. There are procedures in place to monitor and review the quality of the teaching and how well the activities support the children's progress towards the early learning goals but these are not fully effective.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **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.

## **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 satisfactory.

## 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 that children's development records are used to effectively identify and plan for their future learning needs (Also applies to nursery education)
- consider reviewing the organisation of the transition between activities to make more effective use of time in relation to children aged 18 months to 5 years. (Also applies to nursery education).

### **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 staff plan and prepare activities fully to maximise the children's learning opportunities
- ensure that the procedures for monitoring children's progress and the quality of the teaching and children's learning are implemented effectively.

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