



# Fledglings Nursery & Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 496336  
**Inspection date** 23 November 2005  
**Inspector** Jane Mount

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**Registered person** Fledglings Nursery & Preschool  
**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](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 satisfactory. 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?

Fledglings Nursery and Pre-School is one of two nurseries owned by B and M Care and opened in September 2001. It operates from eight rooms within a self-contained converted stable block and offices. It includes two fully enclosed outside play areas with easy access to thirteen acres of parkland. The nursery serves the local area of Berkhamsted and surrounding villages.

A maximum of 52 children under the age of 5 years may attend at any one time. The

nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 until 18:00, 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 120 children from 6 months to under 5 years on roll and of these, 12 receive funding for nursery education. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports no children with special needs and one child who has English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 staff of which 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications with another 3 staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from Qualified Teacher Involvement locally.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Effective support and guidance from staff helps children to gain a clear understanding of good hygiene practices. Children are beginning to understand why they must wash their hands and are praised by staff for doing so. Children's health is protected because staff are aware of good hygiene practices in order to prevent the spread of infection. Staff follow the health and hygiene policies and procedures effectively. For example, staff always wear gloves and aprons when changing nappies and children are reminded to flush toilets, wash their hands and to dry them properly.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy varied, well presented and nutritious meals and snacks with menus displayed for parents. Children's special dietary requirements are met well with good procedures in place regarding staff serving meals. Older children participate fully in mealtimes and snack times and are able to confidently pour their own drinks; good table manners are encouraged. Younger children have less opportunities to practise their independence skills but they enjoy their food and mealtimes are used as a time for social interaction.

Children have opportunities to exercise and develop their physical skills within the daily routine. They show enjoyment and enthusiasm when playing outside and benefit from the fresh air. Older children's physical health is promoted as they run, climb, kick balls and ride bikes. They regularly explore the local environment where they enjoy walks in the surrounding fields. A good range of physical play experiences are provided for younger children. These are appropriate for their age and stage of development and allow them to try out new skills such as beginning to crawl or walk. Children are able to rest and be more active according to their needs.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well maintained and secure environment. Any potential risks are identified and addressed through risk assessments and staff have a sound knowledge of health and safety procedures. Appropriate safety precautions are in

place such as safety gates, socket covers and regular fire practices. There are effective security systems in place and supervising entry to the nursery is well managed with a door buzzer, viewing panels and signing in. This ensures no unauthorised persons are on site and that children are not at risk.

Children use a satisfactory range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources to promote their learning and development. Rooms are organised with child height furniture and most children are able to independently access the resources. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe. Staff explain safe practices, such as why children should pick up dropped toys so that another child does not trip and hurt themselves. In Goslings room children are reminded not to run down the ramp but to walk as they might fall and hurt themselves. In the pre-school room most children know how to carry scissors safely.

Children are protected from possible abuse or neglect because staff have a sound knowledge of child protection and know what they should do if they suspect a child is being abused.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and feel at ease in the nursery environment. Babies progress is fostered as resources are organised according to their needs. For example, a walker is put out for a baby who is learning to walk. Children are keen to participate in activities on offer and these activities provide a balance of free play and more structured play opportunities. Babies and younger children are given regular opportunities to explore new experiences, such as drawing and painting which they do enthusiastically. They generally benefit from being in small groups as they receive individual attention from staff who know them well. Staff have recently begun to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and organise activities for young children. Although not all staff fully understand the system and what is planned is not always reflected in the practice, this framework is generally working well with children benefiting from a range of experiences that are planned and carried out.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff offer a range of activities which are generally balanced. However, curriculum planning is limited; it details themes and some activities but it does not detail learning intentions linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals. Staff have been working hard to develop planning systems but do not have a secure knowledge or understanding of the Foundation Stage. Assessment records are maintained however they are not systematic and are not used to inform future planning therefore children's next steps of learning are not catered for. Staff build trusting relationships with the children. They talk to children about safety, behaviour within routines and are at times involved in children's play to promote learning. Children benefit from varied and interesting resources and many of these are easily accessible and support children's independent learning and exploration, such as the home corner made into a pirate ship.

Children arrive happily, quickly settle and engage in activities with their friends. Children are aware of boundaries and behavioural expectations, for example, sitting properly on the chair and taking turns. Children show independence skills through helping to tidy away and enjoy using the dustpan and brush to sweep up some glitter after making a picture. Children are regularly praised by staff. They participate in activities eagerly and are excited to learn, for example, during the French session with a peripatetic teacher. Children have regular opportunities to experience music, imaginative play and explore varied materials and media on a daily basis. Children can access sticking, cutting and drawing independently and delight in making imaginary cakes in the cookery corner. Some children are able to count confidently to 20. Mathematical concepts are reinforced through books, singing and counting during the daily routine, for example, at circle time. They explore concepts such as quantity and volume through sand and water play.

Children speak clearly and are able to concentrate well until the end of a book. They enjoy stories and understand that print carries meaning. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters, for example, at circle time children are able to confidently recognise the letter 'J' and then name objects beginning with this letter. Children are able to freely access writing materials but there are limited opportunities for children to recognise and write their own names within the daily routine. Children's physical skills are fostered. Outside they show control as they run, climb and jump. They are able to skilfully negotiate other children as they run and ride their bikes. They use the climbing frame with great confidence. Children have regular access to resources that develop their knowledge of technology. They are able to independently access a CD player and cassette player to listen to story tapes which they greatly enjoy and have access to a computer. Children learn about past and present through talking about their families and develop a sense of place through going for regular walks.

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

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is promoted through the range of resources and activities they take part in. Children develop positive attitudes towards others as they select from the available resources reflecting diversity. Displays and posters throughout the nursery reflect positive images and help children to become aware of the wider society. The setting has effective systems in place to care for children with special educational needs.

Children understand responsible behaviour and are beginning to learn right from wrong. They behave considerately and are encouraged to show care and concern, for example, if a child is upset or has fallen and hurt themselves. Staff give explanations, encourage children to apologise and set clear boundaries. Children play together well and behaviour is dealt with in ways appropriate to the child's level of understanding. Children are taught to be polite to others and the staff are good role models. Children can be regularly heard saying 'please' and 'thank you'. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the close relationships that

staff have developed with parents and carers. Parents receive good quality information about the nursery, 'Birth to three matters framework' and the Foundation Stage. Children's needs are met as staff obtain information about their background and interests from their initial child profiles that parents complete. Children's achievements are discussed with parents each day and more formally at parent evenings. Children's learning is promoted as staff encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning through newsletters and requests for items from home, such as photos, to support their learning. Parents praised the nursery and felt the environment was welcoming and stimulating. They spoke positively of staff who they reported were caring and approachable and they felt fully informed of the progress their child was making.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Systems are in place to ensure staff working with children are suitable to do so. All staff working with children have had appropriate checks completed and any persons who have not yet been vetted would not have unsupervised access to children and all staff are aware of this. However, recording procedures are not sufficiently robust to ensure that information relating to staff clearances has been recorded accurately. Recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience, qualifications, knowledge and skills. Clear induction and appraisal systems ensure staff are well informed of the policies and procedures within the setting and they are able to implement them effectively. Staff have recently accessed training on 'Birth to three matters' and are in the early stages of implementing it into their planning and practice.

Children are cared for by staff who are supportive of each other and who can work well together. Ratios are always maintained and staff are generally well deployed with a keyworker system in operation. However, there are times when younger children are not always supported appropriately and are waiting for long periods of times and become bored or restless. For example, when waiting to wash their hands for lunch or during nappy changes before going outside.

The leadership and management of the nursery are satisfactory. The team has a good ratio of qualified staff and information from staff meetings is used to monitor and improve the quality of care and education. Most issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed and an action plan details ongoing improvements. Management acknowledges the need for pre-school staff to attend training on the Foundation Stage to ensure they can deliver an effective nursery education curriculum.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure fire doors are free of potential trip hazards, ensure there is a named member of staff for special needs with

appropriate training and to ensure there is a written child protection statement written in line with the Area Child Protection guidelines. Children's safety and welfare are now safeguarded as the nursery has addressed all of the mentioned recommendations and this has improved the outcomes for children.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to make effective use of staff, time and resources to inspire children and initiate their own learning and also to expand staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Pre-school children now have their own base room and children are now encouraged to be more independent. Resources can be freely accessed in the pre-school room and children take an active part in making choices including at lunchtime and snack time. However, although steps have been taken to increase staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage they have not yet attended a course and planning and assessment reflect this as an area that requires further development to show how children are learning and progressing.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints.

A concern was raised regarding staffing ratios relating to Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted investigated this concern by conducting an unannounced visit on 06/01/2005. Although the staffing ratios were satisfactory on the day of the visit, inspectors were unable to establish whether ratios were met on previous dates as registers had not been completed satisfactorily. An action was therefore raised requiring the provider to improve the accuracy of the system for registering children and all staff on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance and to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities to consistently maintain registers and that systems are regularly monitored. Actions have been met.

A complaint was received about staff/child ratios, a high turnover of staff, the organisation of the children and the procedures for reporting accidents and ensuring confidentiality. These concerns relate to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play, Standard 6: Safety, Standard 7: Health and Standard 12: Partnership with Parents. Ofsted investigated these concerns by conducting an unannounced visit on 20/04/2005. Actions were agreed relating to Standard 2: Organisation, to review the deployment of staff and organisation of the premises. Recommendations were agreed to improve childcare practice relating to Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play including settling in procedures, anti-discriminatory practice and lunchtime organisation and Standard 4: Premises, referring to suitable ventilation. Actions and recommendations have all been met.

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 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):

- further develop vetting procedures to ensure there are procedures in place to ensure accurate records are maintained of all vetted staff and visitors
- review staff deployment, groupings of younger children and the organisation of the nursery routine to take into consideration children's individual needs.

### 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 staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- develop short term planning to include learning intentions linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals and also ensure children's assessments are used to inform future planning
- develop children's literacy skills by providing more opportunities for them to write informally and to recognise and write their own names and simple words.

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