



Little Gems Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511337
Inspection date	17 May 2006
Inspector	Amanda Shedden
Setting Address	West End Youth Facility, Moorgreen Recreation Ground, Moorgreen Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO30 3EG
Telephone number	02380 472939 or 02380 43783
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Registered person	Gemma Louise Akins
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 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?

Little Gems Preschool opened in 1995. It is registered to care for no more than 26 children under five years of age.

It operates from West End Youth Facility, in Moorgreen Road. The preschool serves the local area.

There are currently 49 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 36 funded

three year olds and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are supported.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15 until 15.00, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 9.15 until 12.00 on Tuesdays.

There are six part time staff that work with the children, four have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYCDP), and the Area SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-Coordinator).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. Children explore, test and develop control through a range of activities to help them develop their physical skills. They especially enjoy their time outside in the playground which tests their large motor skills in a safe and secure environment. Children develop good manipulative skills and eye-hand co-ordination through the wide range of construction play, and when handling small tools and equipment, for example, during art and craft play.

Children are developing a good understanding of personal hygiene as they independently take themselves to the toilet. They recognise the need to follow good personal routines, such as washing their hands after messy play, after using the toilet and before snack.

Children enjoy a good range of healthy snacks and drinks, which contribute to their good health. Their choices of snack often include toast, fresh fruit and raisins. They can also access drinking water independently to prevent dehydration. Some children stay for lunch, they bring their own packed lunches and staff sit with them making it a social occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and parents are greeted warmly by the staff. Children settle quickly and are keen to see what there is to play with today. All the resources are suitable for the children who move easily and safely around the environment. Children freely select from the range of safe and appropriate resources suitable for their abilities.

Practitioners are vigilant about children's safety and ensure hazards and risks are minimised. When leaving the building and walking to the park the children are closely supervised. Daily risk assessments are implemented and all staff monitor the provision, inside and out, ensuring that children's safety is promoted.

All staff are qualified in first aid, and are able to treat children appropriately if they were to be involved in an accident. All visitors have to sign in and out, and do not have unsupervised access to the children. All required documentation is in place and understood by staff to ensure the children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff have a sound understanding of the procedures to be followed if they had a concern over a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well into the session and are familiar with the daily routine. They self register themselves by finding their name as they enter the playroom. Children settle quickly into the friendly atmosphere, and feel secure and confident with the structured routine. This enables them to make choices about play by accessing the good range of resources that are linked to a particular theme.

Children play well individually and socially with their peers, for example, during imaginative role play such as the dolls and in the playground. Younger children are well supported as they acquire new skills such as marble painting.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children thrive in the calm and stimulating atmosphere and they have a positive attitude to learning. Children are motivated and confident to ask questions.

The children play well together and have positive relationships with each other and the staff. They are confident to talk in large group situations such as circle time, and to converse with each other whilst playing. They persevere and take turns whilst playing games such as picture dominoes and sorting the animals. Children practise their early reading and writing skills. They self register themselves, share books with each other and make their mark in planned and incidental activities; such as making lists to go shopping with, or practise letter shapes using the equipment on the writing table.

Children learn about numbers and gain confidence when using numbers as labels for counting; and practise mathematical language about size and quantity during routine and planned activities.

Children develop increasing interest and knowledge of the wider world and most can confidently name animals that live in Africa. Some children can explain where Britain and Africa are on a globe. They learn to appreciate other cultures through planned activities such as exploring the Chinese New Year and other festivals from around the world.

Children develop a good sense of time as they respond well to the structured routine and many know that they will be going to "big school" after the summer. They do not, however, have many opportunities to become familiar with modern technology regularly, for instance access to the computer is limited.

Children relate well to one another and enjoy using their imagination whilst playing. They take part in many role play situations such as the shop, they create their own world whilst playing with small world resources. They explore different colours, materials and textures from making sandcastles to making elephant masks.

Children enjoy singing familiar songs, the actions that go with them and keeping time with the musical instruments.

All staff have an input to the planning ensuring that they are clear to each activities aims and objectives. Children are offered a range of interesting and stimulating activities and experiences to enhance their learning. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and plans are made linked to the six areas of learning. Evaluations are made on the activities, and observations on the children are made, however, this information is not used to inform planning sufficiently to ensure that there are challenges for the more able children. Staff ask open ended questions and help children build upon their own knowledge or experiences.

Staff make good use of time and resources both planned and incidental to ensure that children's learning is effectively promoted.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a caring environment where they are valued and treated with respect and equal concern. They are frequently praised and therefore gain in confidence and self- esteem. Children are interested, involved, and well occupied in their play and learning.

Children respond well to the clear boundaries for behaviour, they play socially and harmoniously with their peers by sharing and taking turns. Any behaviour issues are easily dealt with by the skilled staff who intervene quickly before any issues arise. Children develop positive understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures during planned activities such as looking at the animals of Africa or exploring the Chinese New Year. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents feel welcome to help settle their child and discuss any issues regarding their care with the key worker. Parents are positive about the care their child receives. They are not however, fully aware of the policies and procedures of the pre-school.

The partnership with parents for children who receive nursery education funding is good. Parents are aware of the educational progress their child is making through the sharing of the children's records. They are aware of the topics and themes of the activities and some parents contribute to these.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation and leadership of the pre-school. Children feel at ease with the environment and staff, enabling them to feel confident, which is conducive to their play and learning.

Leadership and management is good. There is good deployment of staff, space and resources for working with children and communicating with parents. The stable staff team are suitably qualified and experienced to work with children.

New staff are vetted and inducted effectively, and work to a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to ensure children's welfare and education. All required documentation is in place, and is stored in a secure yet accessible manner. However parents are not aware of them. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection they were required to ensure that all policies, procedures, and children's records are fully shared with parents. Records of the children's achievements are now shared with the parents on a regular basis. Parents are able to contribute to them if they wish. This enables parents to track their child's progress.

Not all parents are aware of the policies and procedures of the pre-school and this has been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

They were also to ensure that confidentiality was maintained whilst recording information. Adjustments have been made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.

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 parents are fully aware of the pre schools policies and procedures.

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 children have regular access to the ICT equipment.
- ensure that planning is informed by assessments of children learning to ensure that children are sufficiently challenged in their progression towards the early learning Goals.

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