



Little Swans Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY103338
Inspection date	04 April 2006
Inspector	Sally Ann Smith
Setting Address	330 Yardley Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8LT
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Registered person	Little Swans Day Nursery Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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 Swans Day Nursery opened in 2001. It operates from premises in Yardley, Birmingham. A maximum of 78 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round. There is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play.

There are currently 76 children on roll. Of these 29 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special needs.

There are 16 members of staff who work with the children. Of these over 80% have an early years qualification to National Vocational Qualification, level 2 or 3.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of appropriate hygiene routines and recognise why they need to wash their hands. They understand that germs can get in their tummies if they do not wash their hands before eating or after using the toilet. They dry their hands using paper towels to prevent cross contamination. Planned topics help children to learn about the dentist for example and the care of their teeth. Through various role play such as hospitals, children consider what they need to do to 'make it better'. Appropriate procedures are in place should a child become unwell and parents are advised to keep their child at home so as the risk of infection spreading is minimised. Policies and procedures are in place to promote children's well-being although staff have a limited understanding of notifiable and communicable diseases which compromises children's health.

Children are very well nourished as they are provided with a good range of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. The setting have made a concerted effort to improve all areas of the children's diets and have completely revised the menu in consultation with parents. As a result, all processed food has been eliminated and children benefit from freshly prepared meals to include a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. Menus include fisherman's pie, roast chicken and toad in the hole, a favourite of the children's. Fresh fruit or raisins have replaced biscuits and crisps for snack and children have regular access to fresh drinking water. Children also have milk and the occasional drink of juice. All dietary requirements are well catered for including vegetarian options and Halal meat.

Children are engaged in physical activities inside and outside. They particularly enjoy the weekly dance sessions where they use their imagination to move their bodies in a variety of different ways. Children enact different scenarios such as going for a swim, shivering as they come out of the 'water' and pretending to use towels to dry themselves. Children explore the effects that exercise has on their bodies and what happens to their breathing when they exert themselves. For example children said 'it goes out' when explaining how they get out of breath when running. Children know that their heart beats faster after exercise and slower when they sit down because 'we are resting'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use a range of safe resources and equipment which are developmentally appropriate. Staff talk to the children about safety aspects when inside and outside the nursery to minimise the risk of accidental injury and to protect them from harm.

For example, children understand that they must be careful when using scissors as they are sharp and they must not put them in their mouths. Children know that they must sit on their chairs properly or they could fall and hurt themselves. This helps children take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures which are regularly practised. Staff maintain accurate accident and medication records which are shared with parents. Comprehensive written policies and procedures are in place for risk assessments and staff are familiar with these ensuring that they are carried out on a daily basis. Staff know what to do if a child is uncollected and have appropriate measures in place should another adult arrive to collect a child to ensure children are safe and well cared for.

Staff understand their role in protecting children from harm. They are familiar with signs and symptoms of children at risk and are aware of their responsibility to report their concerns. However, their understanding where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff is limited and the written procedures lack the necessary detail. In addition health and safety policies and procedures are generally adhered to although new staff do not consistently implement these effectively. This compromises children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies receive positive interaction from staff who spend time talking, holding and playing with them. Lots of cuddles and eye contact help to promote their well-being. They explore their surroundings and are provided with challenge and support to encourage them to roll, crawl, pull themselves to standing and learn to walk. Babies respond to the different sounds of the staff's voices and facial expressions, smiling, gurgling and maintaining eye contact. They are given opportunities to select resources independently, happily pulling out the boxes and exploring what is inside.

Children between the ages of two to approximately three years are happy in their play. They interact positively with staff and each other and are beginning to share and take turns. Practitioners providing care for children under three years have started to implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework very effectively to improve and develop all opportunities for children's play and learning. Consequently, children experience a wide range of interesting activities to develop their imagination. For example, children play with the water and become curious as first colour is added to the water then other materials such as glitter, paper and glue. They have great fun as they mould it all together. The end result is that children make their own models which are allowed to dry and then taken home.

Nursery Education.

the quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and its implementation. They capture the children's imagination and interest by providing a wide range of stimulating activities to cover the six areas of learning. Planning of the educational

programme is comprehensive and covers all six areas of learning to ensure that children make good progress. Staff use the stepping stones to identify the knowledge, skills and learning that the children achieve although the written short-term plans do not identify how activities are adapted to take account of children's individual needs or the key vocabulary or questions to be used. However, staff are perceptive of children's needs and provide help and support where necessary so children's confidence and self-esteem is increased. Regular evaluations ensure staff are reflective in all areas of their work and this is used to inform future planning so that children's learning is enhanced.

Staff organise resources to enable children to make choices about their play and planning is flexible in order to respond to children's interests. They work well in groups, sharing and taking turns and generally show consideration for each other. Children enter into the pre-school enthusiastically and settle down to the routine which they evidently know well. They sit and happily share their news and ideas at circle time and are confident to share a range of feelings.

Their communication skills are very good and children are given time to talk individually and listen to each other. Children speak confidently to share their experiences of home and their families. Discussions are a focal part of the children's daily routine. Their vocabulary is extended due to the quality of the interactions they have with staff and they are asked questions to make them think and consolidate all areas of their learning. Children talk about the days of the week, learn numbers as they discuss how many children are present and talk about the weather. They also discuss the menu of the day.

The programme for communication, language and literacy is good. Children enjoy stories and they sit enraptured as staff use intonation and facial expressions to hold their attention. Children giggle as they make up different story endings for 'The little boy who lost his belly button' and other tales. A strength of this area is children's understanding of the different elements of books. They talk about the title, author and illustrator and the 'spine' of the book. They know that the writing on the back cover is the 'blurb' which tells them about the story and 'whether we want to read it or not'. Children make good use of the comfortable and inviting book corner. They handle books with care, holding the books correctly and turning the pages. Children have numerous opportunities for mark making as they write letters, make shopping lists and send invitations. Children also record their observations using pictures and these are clearly labelled with captions and their names which they attempt to write themselves. However, not all children's home language is positively reinforced through notices and labels and therefore their individuality and self-esteem is not consistently promoted.

Children are engaged in their play and are involved in a variety of activities to promote all areas of their learning. Role play opportunities are particularly well planned and they enjoy playing in the hospital or Chinese restaurant. Topic themes ensure that children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world as they learn about themselves, other people and their environment. They learn about recycling as they observe the different coloured bins containing paper or glass being emptied each week. They often go for walks to the local shops and purchase fruit for a cooking activity. They enjoy visiting Birmingham International airport where they

watch the various planes take off and land, discussing the different countries that they fly to and from. They are encouraged to question how things work and why things happen and learn how cameras work as they take photographs. They are fascinated as they use screwdrivers to take old videos, toasters and kettles apart. Children make very good use of the computer and confidently operate some programmes independently, manoeuvring the mouse with control and coordination.

Daily routines encourage children to develop their mathematical understanding as they count how many children are present at registration. They are able to correct mistakes, for example, children take turns to count children present at registration and are able to recognise if they forget to include themselves in the total. Regular activities are used to develop children's awareness of simple number operations in addition and subtraction, for example building bricks in towers or singing songs such as 'Five currant buns'. Children use numbers in everyday language, for example, 'I asked my daddy to comb my hair a 100 times this morning'. Children compare size as they measure each other and use language such as smaller, larger, tallest and smallest. They use graphs to record their findings. Children use experiments to look at weight, for example why toilet paper is heavier after soaking it in water.

Good use is made of recyclable materials for children to make a variety of different models. They experiment with paint as they mix colours together using palettes. children use a variety of materials, paint and print techniques to develop their imagination and creativity. They enjoy using shaving foam and gloop and using cotton buds instead of paint brushes to create their designs. Children love messy play particularly such delights as cold weetabix and milk or rice pudding. They experiment as they squeeze it through their fingers and explore the different textures.

Children enjoy dance and action rhymes where they can move their bodies in different ways. They like to roll, crawl and slither. Staff and children respond to events as they happen such as changes in the weather. For example, children go outside to catch snowflakes as it starts to snow. A variety of outdoor equipment such as wheeled toys, climbing equipment, balls and hoops enhances all areas of their physical play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed in the nursery and are cared for by staff who liaise closely with parents to ensure their individual needs are met. Staff share information regarding children's care, learning, development and play through daily record sheets and diaries. Parent groups look at different issues such as budgeting, faddy eating and fun things to do with children. This has resulted in the group producing a book of their hints, tips and useful recipes. Parents are aware of the procedure should they have a complaint. However, staff are not aware of the National Standards Addendum and the revisions to the complaints procedure and this compromises the well-being of children.

Children relate well to staff and are well behaved and polite in response to practitioner's expectations. They share and take turns and say thank you, often

without prompting. Children's awareness of different cultures is promoted well as they participate in a range of interesting and fun activities. For example, they enjoy playing in the "Chinese restaurant" using woks and chopsticks. They explore different celebrations, religions and festivals, listening to stories to develop their knowledge and understanding. A good range of resources including puzzles, books and posters promote positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. Children have explored issues around disability through a themed week looking at mobility and wheelchair users as well as visual and hearing impairments. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of inclusion and providing a service that adequately meets the needs of all children. The Special Education Needs Coordinator attends workshops and network meetings to improve knowledge and practice issues and this information is shared with other staff in the nursery. The coordinator ensures activities are planned or adapted to meet any child's specific needs.

The partnerships with parents whose children receive nursery funding are good. Parents receive good quality information about the six areas of learning and how children make progress using the stepping stones. Planning is displayed on the notice board outlining the long and short term goals and how these are to be achieved through a range of interesting learning and play opportunities. Open evenings enable staff to share more detailed information about the nursery education and early learning goals, providing an opportunity for parents to ask questions and share observations of their child's learning. Parents also receive a detailed annual report of their child's progress and development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy in their environment and are cared for by staff who have been appropriately vetted. Staff have relevant experience, qualifications and understanding of the needs of young children to ensure they are appropriately cared for. There is an operational plan to support children's play, care and welfare to include all the relevant policies and procedures although some lack all the necessary detail. Whilst there is an induction procedure, this is not effective in ensuring that all staff consistently carry out all the required elements. Also, registers do not consistently maintain an accurate record of children's arrival and departure and therefore compromises children's safety and well-being.

Space is organised to provide a variety of different play opportunities. As soon as children are mobile, they are able to select resources independently, nearly all of which are stored at their height. Displays of the children's work recognises and values their achievements. Staff are effectively deployed to provide good adult-child interaction. The person in charge is supernumerary and monitors any changes to practice as a result of training courses attended by staff. She has identified areas for improvement to develop all areas of the nursery.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The person in charge has

invested time in ensuring that staff in the pre-school understand their roles and responsibilities and that effective planning is in place to support children's learning. Planning and staff's implementation of this is regularly reviewed and evaluated to improve practice. Regular meetings enable staff to discuss and share ideas for children's learning so that all activities are interesting and fun. Staff are made to feel valued and appreciated for their work and efforts in delivering an effective education curriculum. Staff respond positively to any advice from the teacher mentor from the Local Authority to improve their practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection to improve the quality and standards of care the nursery were required to take the following actions; ensure that staff:child ratios are met throughout the nursery and that staff are deployed effectively; ensure children's record of attendance is an accurate record and includes arrival and departure times; provide room measurements and ensure space standards are met at all times; ensure that there is sufficient and suitable equipment to meet the development needs of sleeping infants.

The registered person has made a concerted effort to ensure that correct adult:child ratios are met at all times. The nursery have a bank of staff to help with staff holidays, sickness and absence. They also use agency staff if absolutely necessary to ensure correct ratios are maintained. Staff are deployed effectively to support children's care, learning and play.

Attendance registers are completed by staff for each room and these record whether children attend for morning, afternoon sessions or all day. In addition parents sign a separate register recording their child's arrival and departure times. However, on occasions parents overlook this procedure. The nursery have tried different systems to record children's attendance and are currently reviewing procedures to ensure an accurate record is maintained consistently. As a result of discussions and observations made during the course of the inspection, a recommendation has been made to improve the systems for recording this information.

Room measurements have been provided and rooms were measured during the inspection to ensure space standards are met and to take account of the request to increase numbers in the nursery. The measurements meet space standards.

There is currently one static cot and several travel cots in which infants can sleep. Children also rest on sleep mats on the floor. During the inspection, children were observed to sleep soundly and comfortably. Parents are made aware of sleeping arrangements at their initial visit prior to the child taking up their place at the nursery. This is a verbal agreement and as a result of the inspection an agreement has been reached to obtain written parental consent for all sleeping arrangements.

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education the nursery were required to; improve children's accessibility and opportunities to explore space in and outdoors

in order to enhance their physical development; improve staff deployment including how they organise and use resources effectively to promote children's independence and social skills; improve group size during focused activities and routines in order to meet children's individual needs and extend mathematical development through practical opportunities at routine times including counting and simple addition and subtraction.

More space is now available outside since the building work has been completed. Children have space to ride their bikes, play with a variety of wheeled toys, use balls and hoops and play with the parachute. Children also participate in assault courses enabling them to climb, balance and develop their coordination. Young children enjoy tumblot sessions inside whilst older children benefit from weekly dance and music sessions.

Resources are stored at the children's height enabling them to self-select and initiate their own play. Planning is flexible to allow children to make choices and enable staff to respond to children's interests. There is a good balance of child and adult led activities. Children sit well at circle times sharing their news. They interact with each other during play and chat between themselves whilst having their meals.

Children know that there are number restrictions in each area and this develops their awareness of numbers and calculation. For example, children know that only two children are allowed to play on the computer at any one time or that the role play area only permits four children. This information is also relayed via notices and labels around the room. Focused activities are done in small groups to enable staff to spend time interacting with the children, asking questions and responding to children's individual needs, for example providing one to one support. Numerous opportunities are incorporated into the daily routine and practical activities to develop and consolidate children's mathematical understanding.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint to report.

Ofsted received a complaint concerning heating in the setting. This concern relates to National Standards 3 Care, learning and play, 4 Physical environment and 14 Documentation.

Ofsted asked the provider to investigate these concerns and respond within ten working days. The provider's response satisfied Ofsted that there had been no evidence of a breach of the National Standards.

Ofsted is satisfied that the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 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):

- improve knowledge of notifiable and communicable diseases and the relevant procedures as defined by the Health Protection Agency
- develop further the written statement and staff's understanding of child protection procedures where an allegation is made against staff
- develop further and improve the procedures for recording children's attendance, induction and complaints.

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 the planning to identify how activities are adapted for individual children and the key vocabulary and questions to be asked to extend and consolidate children's learning
- provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning and reinforce this positively through notices and labels.

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