



## Little Oaks Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY245240  
**Inspection date** 08 June 2006  
**Inspector** Ruth Tharme

**Setting Address** Gloucester Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Gloucester,  
Gloucestershire, GL1 3NN  
**Telephone number** 08454 225095  
**E-mail**  
**Registered person** Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust  
**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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Oaks Day Nursery was established in 1991 and moved to the present premises in 2002. It is based on the site of the Gloucester Royal Hospital. The nursery operates from a single-storey building that was adapted to meet the needs of children. The premises include two baby rooms, a dining and play room, a pre-school room, areas for nappy changing, toileting, laundry and staff facilities. There are separate, enclosed outdoor play areas for babies and older children. The nursery is

for children of Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS foundation Trust employees.

There are currently 93 children from six months to under five years on roll. This includes 38 funded children. The nursery supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions as both permanent and flexible places are offered.

The nursery opens five days a week all the year round, except for some Bank Holidays. Sessions are from 07.00 until 18.00 with provision for extended hours until 19.00.

A total of 21 members of staff, both full time and part time, work with the children. Of these, 11 are qualified to at least Level 2 in childcare. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher and advisors from the Early Years Childcare Services.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

A clear record is maintained of all medication administered to children. Documentation includes parental consent and clear details of the medication given. Accidents involving children are also clearly recorded. Staff actively promote the good health of children. They make frequent use of outdoor space for fresh air and exercise. Effective cleaning procedures are well established and children learn how to stay safe in the sun. Pets are cared for appropriately to minimise health risks and a non-smoking environment is provided. Arrangements for first aid ensure that children are treated well following accidents. Most staff hold current first-aid certificates and first-aid equipment is readily available. Arrangements for sick children protect others from illness or infection. There is an exclusion policy in place and those who fall ill whilst in the setting are taken home at the earliest opportunity.

All children have regular access to drinks. Older children have their own, named bottles. Younger children can help themselves from a readily available jug of water. Babies have their own cups and bottles easily to hand. The needs of children with specific dietary requirements are well met by staff who keep written records and have access to relevant information in all food preparation areas. Children's meals are healthy and balanced. Staff store food provided by parents carefully. Snacks of fruit or vegetable sticks are enjoyed by the children.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the warm and welcoming environment. Playrooms are neatly decorated, safe and comfortable. Available space is well organised to meet children's needs. They have easy access to the outdoors and quiet areas, should they wish to rest.

Toys and equipment are stored at low level so children can access them in safety. The setting is well equipped. Children take part in well resourced activities and make use of a good range of attractively presented toys.

Staff know about, and implement, procedures to ensure children's safety. They are well deployed to supervise children carefully and the comprehensive risk assessment programme means that dangers are identified and addressed appropriately. Regular drills and safety checks minimise the danger from fire. Children are safe whilst sleeping. A separate sleeping area is provided and children are checked every ten minutes. The premises are secure so children cannot leave unsupervised and procedures ensure their safe drop-off and collection.

All staff attend child protection training so they are able to identify if a child is at risk. They know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare and procedures ensure that children are protected should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally take part in a stimulating and balanced range of activities which help them make progress in all areas of their development. Staff in pre-school rooms observe and record what children do to help them plan for the next stages in their play and development. Each child has their own progress file with written records and examples of their work included. Baby and toddler room staff use the Birth to Three Matters framework but their observations of children's progress are not yet used as a firm basis for their planning so younger children are less well supported at times. Children enjoy frequent opportunities to make choices for themselves. They select their own activities and resources from the variety on offer. In the baby and toddler rooms there are no records of the resources used each day and there is a frequent change over of staff making it difficult to be sure that the younger children make use of a range of resources over time. Children relate well to each other. They share and take turns willingly. They are involved and interested in their play, concentrating for long periods on specific activities. Children are relaxed and confident in the setting. Staff have developed a warm and caring relationship with them. However, the baby key-worker system is not sufficiently well established so babies do not yet receive consistent care from one specific adult throughout the day.

### **Nursery Education**

Children respond positively to requests from adults. They all join in with tidying up and enjoy frequent praise and encouragement from staff. They seek out other children to share their experiences, such as reading a book or looking at a photograph album together. Children behave well. They show care and consideration for others and have an awareness of the boundaries set and the behavioural expectations within the setting. They take a pride in their achievements and operate independently within the environment, choosing activities and resources for themselves.

Children increase their vocabulary as staff introduce them to new language. They use language for thinking, talking through their activities, reflecting on and modifying their work. They are beginning to link sounds with letters as staff use letter sounds to help children identify written names on their water bottles. Books are generally used effectively throughout the setting to promote children's learning. There is a good range of theme based books on the interest table. However, the pre-school book corner is poorly presented so children make little use of it for their own purpose. They have free access to mark-making equipment such as paint, pens and pencils. They draw lines and circles, using gross body movements to draw spider bodies and legs.

Number lines and posters are displayed at child height. Children are able to make use of them to identify numbers of personal significance such as their age or how many people are in their family. They make good use of weights, balances and measuring cups to help them calculate effectively. Children show an interest in numbers. They ask how heavy they are and use scales to find out. They make simple patterns, using coloured pegs on a board.

Children show curiosity and take an interest in why things happen and how. They enjoy watching the frog spawn and finding out about the life cycle of frogs. They grow their own vegetables and recycle using a compost bin. They investigate construction materials and realise that tools can be used for a purpose. Children show an interest in information and communication technology. They use the computer and a variety of battery operated equipment, such as torches, in their play. They are developing a clear sense of time. They remember and talk about significant events. They show an interest in the world in which they live and are gaining an awareness of the culture and beliefs of others.

Children explore media and materials. They recognise and name a variety of colours and mix paints together to create new shades. They join in with favourite songs and show an interest in the way musical instruments sound. They notice what adults do and imitate what is observed as they engage in imaginary play. Children show an interest in what they see, hear and touch, responding, expressing and communicating their ideas as they observe spiders and their webs.

Children enjoy free access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise. They make good use of the garden and take regular walks in the surrounding areas. The use of space is well planned so children can move spontaneously within the available space. They judge their own body space well and demonstrate good levels of bodily awareness when discussing the need for hats and cream when going out in the sun. Children make confident use of a range of large and small equipment and use tools and materials effectively to engage in activities requiring hand/eye co-ordination.

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear knowledge of the early learning goals and are well informed about each child's progress through the stepping stones. Their planning is clear and effective. It is firmly based on individual children's needs and makes clear the aims of specific activities so adults can support them effectively. Children are grouped according to their age and ability so activities can be organised to provide appropriate challenges for individuals. The use of time and resources is good. Children are given time to complete their work and activities are well resourced. Assessments are used effectively to plan and to inform parents of

their child's progress.

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

The provision is good.

The setting has a clear regard for equal opportunities issues. Children have equal access to toys and activities. Staff work with parents to support those with English as an additional language and children learn about the culture and faith of others.

Staff have regard for the Code of Practice for the identification of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. There are two named staff members with responsibility for supporting such children. They work with parents and other professionals to ensure that suitable care is provided.

Children are well mannered. Staff encourage them to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Behaviour is good. Distraction techniques are used successfully. Staff use positive language and give clear explanations of expected behaviour. Staff skilfully anticipate possible 'flash points' and engage children in activities so behaviour does not deteriorate.

The partnership with parents is good. They are provided with clear information about the setting and their child's progress. They are well informed about the curriculum and have access to written information which enables them to support their child effectively. Parents are encouraged to borrow 'learning packs' to use with their children at home. The setting takes account of parents' needs, ensuring that mothers are able to breast feed their babies in comfort. Parents' opinions are sought through an annual questionnaire to ensure that the care provided meets children's needs. Parents do not currently have access to information about complaints. There is no complaint log in place, but parents do have access to information on how to contact the regulator. A poster including contact details is clearly displayed.

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

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Procedures ensure that the regulator is informed of significant events. There are sound procedures for appointing and vetting new staff. New team members are initially supervised and mentored. The person in charge of the setting is appropriately qualified to provide care for young children.

Good use is made of space, time and resources so children are effectively supported. There is a clear staff structure and a named deputy to provide cover in case of illness or injury. Children generally receive appropriate levels of adult support as mandatory ratios are maintained but the key-worker system does not yet provide babies with the consistent support they need. The recent re-organisation of groups means that pre-school children are supported more effectively.

Records are accessible, stored securely and confidentiality is maintained. The daily register provides an accurate record of children's attendance. The certificate is displayed clearly so parents have free access to information about the conditions of registration.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Ongoing reviews ensure that they receive the training and support they need. Practice is regularly reviewed. There are team meetings each half term to discuss issues arising and the self-evaluation form is regularly reviewed. There are clear strategies in place to monitor children's progress and the setting makes good use of the help and guidance provided by the Foundation Stage Consultant. Some links have been formed with the local school but children moving on to other schools in the area are less well supported.

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

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

At the last inspection the group was asked to ensure that children have opportunities to experience and explore a wide range of sensory and natural resources, both in and out of doors. A range of sensory and natural materials have been provided throughout the setting. Wood, sand and water are readily available for children to use. Treasure baskets include a range of interesting and natural resources for babies to explore. The group was also asked to ensure that staff working with children who have particular needs have the necessary knowledge to provide appropriate support. There are now named staff members with specific responsibilities. They are on training programmes to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities effectively.

Significant progress has been made to improve the standard of Funded Nursery Education which was judged as inadequate at the last inspection. Staff have worked hard to ensure that children are challenged and supported more effectively. Plans identify expected learning outcomes and are linked to the stepping stones. Regular meetings are held to review children's progress. The leadership and management of the setting has improved so the organisation, resources and the grouping of children now support their individual needs more effectively. Managers work closely with practitioners and a training programme has been implemented so the wellbeing of children is promoted.

### **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 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):

- ensure that parents have access to information about any complaints made
- implement a system to ensure that babies take part in a variety of activities over time, and continue to develop the key worker system so babies have the opportunity to interact with a consistent adult at frequent intervals throughout the day.

#### 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):

- review the presentation of books so children make better use of them in their play and learning
- further develop links with schools to support children's transition more effectively

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