



Little Rascals Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY270903
Inspection date	20 March 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Musgrove
Setting Address	45 Chesswood Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 2AA
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Registered person	Sharon Anne Ashworth
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 Rascals Day Nursery was registered in 2003. It is privately owned and run by the proprietor. The nursery was extended in 2006 to cater for children under 2 years. It operates from three rooms on the ground floor and three rooms on the first floor of a large house, close to the centre of Worthing. A maximum of 35 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to secure and enclosed outdoor

play areas.

There are currently 51 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 17 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and come from a wide catchment area. The setting does not currently have children with special needs. They offer support to children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 staff. Over half of the staff, including the proprietor and her deputy hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because staff follow highly effective routines and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. The exceptional adult support and guidance helps children gain an excellent understanding of hygiene and they have a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children benefit from good explanations about why hygiene is important; they automatically wash and dry their hands after visiting the toilet; they know and can talk about how this helps prevent the spread of germs. Children's self care skills are highly developed, for example, they recognise occasions when they need a coat for outside play and collect this from their own peg; the children then independently change from indoor shoes to their boots before going to play outside.

Children are cared for in a clean environment, where hygiene has a high priority. All staff have received training in Basic Food Hygiene; this ensures children's meals are prepared in accordance with good hygiene practice. All staff hold a Paediatric Medic First Aid certificate; this means they can give appropriate care in the event of an accident. There are clear written guidelines in place for parents, detailing when and why to keep sick children at home and this ensures that unwanted contagious diseases are not spread.

Meal and snack times are a delight and children are genuinely interested in developing healthy eating habits. Children receive healthy snacks; these include toast, breadsticks and a variety of fruit that on occasions children select from a local market. Children are actively involved in the choice and preparation of their snacks and enthusiastically cut up slices of apples and pears or spread butter on their own toast. Children benefit from a range of home cooked hot meals and these include chilli con carne and chicken pie served with fresh vegetables; desserts include banana custard, yoghurts and fresh fruit. Children receive plenty of drinks and can confidently and independently serve themselves from jugs of water that are available at all times.

Children benefit from regular discussion about being healthy and use computer software that promotes healthy eating. Links with the community reinforce healthy

messages and a growing awareness of their own self care, for example a visit to the local hospital and a visit from a dentist.

Children enjoy an extensive variety of stimulating and creative outdoor activities on a daily basis. The outdoor area provides wonderful opportunities for an enquiring young child to develop their creative, imaginative and physical skills. Inspirational areas that children enjoy exploring include a secret garden, seaside area and a playhouse. Young children develop their co-ordination skills as they roll balls down lengths of gutter, test their skills on the climbing frame and enjoy the slide. Children develop balancing skills as they negotiate their way across the footpath of rubber tyres. Children develop skills of co-operation and co-ordination as they derive pleasure from a variety of wheeled vehicles available for their enjoyment or as they run around and kick a ball on the grassy area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a child-friendly, welcoming and well organised environment. This allows them to move around independently and play safely. At the beginning of the day staff prepare a range of interesting and stimulating resources that support learning in a variety of areas; however, the setting has recently introduced free-flow activities, this means the children are encouraged to make selections for themselves and become independent as they make their own decisions and choices. Children in the setting benefit from and are highly motivated as they explore a wide range of equipment suitable for their developmental needs.

The security of the premises is good and there are effective systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they regularly practise evacuation procedures. Potential hazards have been identified by staff and risk assessment sheets have been collated; however, these are not always used in a systematic way that will ensure risks to children are minimised at all times. Good staff interaction helps children develop an awareness of safety within the setting, for example, when children are running with cutlery, staff explain what the result will be if they fall and why this is not desirable behaviour. High levels of staffing in the outdoor area ensure that children enjoy their play in a safe and secure environment. There are clear procedures in place to keep children safe on outings and extra staff are deployed for this purpose; adults wear brightly coloured fluorescent jackets in order to be clearly seen. In the event of a child being lost or uncollected there are clear procedures that give details of the required action.

Children in the setting are well protected because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection through recent training. They have an awareness and knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what action to take and the procedures to follow if they had concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is stimulating and exciting. Staff take time to build close relationships with individuals; this means that children arrive happily, settle quickly and are absorbed in activities throughout the day. The high staff ratio coupled with their quality, dedication and enthusiasm means that children receive good support and encouragement while at the setting. As children participate in activities, such as music and movement and art and craft, staff skilfully develop their language skills and extend their learning through a variety of open ended questions.

Children choose from a good range of activities and resources. These are set out by staff or easily accessed by children, if they wish to choose their favourite resource. They include dressing up clothes, construction equipment and a quiet area for browsing books alone or with the support of an adult. Young children spend time concentrating on activities, for example mark making with chalks on an easel, exploring the outdoor area or constructing a marble run. Most children participate enthusiastically in group activities and are beginning to join in with action songs; these help them to develop their co-ordination skills. Children develop their creativity and imagination through activities such as role play, for example in a garden centre, or when they design and make a pattern for a t-shirt.

Staff understand that young children develop and achieve at different rates and when planning activities or talking to children take this into account. Staff have a working knowledge and use the guidance offered in Birth to Three Matters and will receive further training during the year.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a competent understanding of the Foundation Stage and the areas of learning. The setting has made a successful start on curriculum planning and has the key elements of long, medium and short-term planning in place. The focus activity for each week identifies the learning intentions for the children. Staff make regular observations of children and the key worker records these on the child's developmental records. However, these individual assessments are not rigorous enough to underpin and inform the children's future learning.

Children are motivated and enjoy new challenges. They concentrate well and are thoroughly absorbed at self-chosen activities, for example, exploring the garden, digging for potatoes in the sand tray or making a card for a family member. Children are very independent. They take care of their personal needs such as putting on their coat, visiting the toilet, washing hands and deciding when to have their drink and snack. Behaviour is of a high standard and children respond positively to staff that spend time talking about taking turns and sharing. Strong relationships are evident throughout the setting. Children have good self-esteem because staff seek and value their ideas and contributions.

Children are beginning to speak with confidence during role play activities, for example, when using telephones. Staff talk to children about what they are doing and

respond appropriately to their interests. Children enjoy selecting books, browsing them alone or sharing them with an adult. There are many opportunities to develop early writing skills and a number of children are confident writers. The graphics workshop provides daily opportunities for fun writing activities and children are beginning to understand that writing is a form of communication.

Children learn how to use numbers in everyday activities, for example, when cutting fruit into pieces. Children learn about addition and subtraction through worthwhile activities, for example, as they enjoy number rhymes and set the table at lunch time. Children's understanding of shape, space and measure is developing well. They recognise and can sort simple shapes, continue a pattern and are encouraged to use appropriate mathematical language during sand activities, for example, full and empty. Many children are confident in recognising and counting numerals from one to ten in a familiar context.

Children are confident in using information and communication technology. They demonstrate good mouse control when playing games on the computer. They enjoyed an Information, Communication and Technology walk in the local community, when they identified equipment, for example, fire alarms and the green man at the crossing. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of different cultures, for example, during Chinese New Year they investigated Dragon fruit. They are encouraged to talk and bring artefacts and photos from their family holidays, for examples photos of them tasting Paella in Spain.

Children have free access to a good range of resources and materials. They demonstrate proficient skills in using a variety of tools and scissors safely, for example, small spades while exploring the sand or scissors in the graphics area. Children enjoy musical activities and respond enthusiastically during action songs. They love playing a variety of musical instruments including tambourines, hand bells and shakers and are fascinated as they discover how to make quiet, loud and quick sounds.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children and their families are welcomed and play a full part in the life of Little Rascals. The staff value and respect their individuality and the unique family context of each child. Children have a wealth of opportunities to learn about the world around them and the setting has established strong links with the local community. For example, they took part in a tree planting ceremony, wrote to the Mayor and attended the local Remembrance Day parade. Staff have a positive attitude to diversity. Children become aware of their own and other cultures through a range of resources and stimulating, fun activities. They ate noodles with chopsticks during Chinese New Year and explored the colours and patterns of saris that Indian families wear.

There is a named member of staff who is responsible for providing the appropriate care and learning for children with special needs. Currently, there are no children on roll who have additional requirements; however, there are systems in place to support a child if necessary. The nursery has experience of working alongside

parents and outside agencies; this ensures that children's needs are well planned and met.

Children behave exceptionally well and respond to any request for good behaviour. Children benefit from staff who offer a calm, considered and consistent approach. Appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, help children to understand right from wrong; these include simple explanations, distraction and a respect for other people's feelings. Children learn important social skills and are able to share and take turns. Staff are polite and courteous as they talk to children and actively listen for their reply. Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement and this means they have a good self esteem and a positive attitude to learning. These strong aspects of the provision foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. This contributes significantly to children's well-being in the nursery. Parents receive a good range of information about the Foundation Stage and topics, this outlines how and what the children will learn. This ensures that parents play an important role in developing children's skills for the next stage of learning. Parents contribute to their child's assessment at parents' evenings and regular informal discussions ensure continuity of care for the children. Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive. The setting actively seeks and values the opinions and preferences of parents. They send out questionnaires at regular intervals, these ask for feedback and suggestions in order to further improve their service. Parents feel welcome and are actively involved with the setting, for example they helped to create a creative and imaginative garden for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff that have a real love of children. They strive to achieve excellence through continual reflection and evaluation of current organisation and practice. They are suitably qualified, have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and receive regular training. This means the care and support that children receive helps them to feel secure, happy and confident. Staff deployment is effective and ensures that children are well supervised at all times. Areas of learning are stimulating and well organised and staff have a clear understanding of their role when they support children in their play and activities.

All mandatory documentation required for the safe and effective management of the nursery is in place. This contributes to the welfare of the children. Regular informal discussion with parents and Open Days ensure the continuity of the children's care. The setting has a number of records and portfolios on an individual child's development. They make these available to the parents and seek and value their opinions and contributions.

Leadership and management is good. The manager has regularly updated her knowledge by attending relevant courses. This ensures she has sufficient knowledge of current child care practice and is able to support the care and learning of the children. Regular staff appraisals identify training needs and recent professional

development has included training in equal opportunities and child protection. There are effective recruitment procedures in place and a well-thought out induction programme is available for newly appointed staff. This means that suitable, experienced and qualified persons look after the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to ensure that children were not at risk from the internal doors. The setting has now fitted finger shields to the internal doors and this ensures that the children's safety is protected.

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 can be seen 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 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):

- review procedures for carrying out regular risk assessments in order to identify and minimise risk for children.

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):

- continue to develop planning and assessment procedures within the Foundation Stage based on observations and individual needs.

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