



Littleways Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY265472
Inspection date	16 October 2006
Inspector	Teresa Ann Clark
Setting Address	81 Albert Road, Levenshulme, Manchester, Lancashire, M19 2FU
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Registered person	Littleways Day Nursery Limited
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Littleways Day Nursery was registered in January 2004. It operates from a converted semi-detached building, which is situated in the Levenshulme area of Manchester. The nursery is a neighbourhood nursery and serves the local community and surrounding areas.

Care is provided over three floors of the premises in four playrooms. There is a secure outdoor play area. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 until 18.00 throughout the year excluding Bank Holidays. The nursery may care for a maximum of 29 children at any one time. There are currently 34 children on roll including three who receive nursery education funding. The nursery supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The manager works closely with the owner and shares overall responsibility for managing the nursery. There are 11 staff working with the children, which includes the manager and owner. Of these, 10 staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children benefit from healthy and nutritious meals which cater for their individual needs and promote their growth and development. They are provided with cooked meals made from fresh produce. The children eagerly tuck into their food, for example, they enjoy the cottage pie and vegetables and ask for more to satisfy their appetites. Mealtimes are a relaxed social occasion where children chat to each other and take their time. Fresh fruit is offered to the children on a daily basis and fresh drinking water is available in all the rooms to ensure children remain refreshed and hydrated. Children's dietary needs are met because staff consult parents and all staff are made aware of children with allergies or any other special dietary requirements.

The staff implement satisfactory procedures to reduce the risk of infection, for example, wearing gloves and aprons to change nappies and using anti-bacterial sprays to clean tables and work surfaces. Children are developing some understanding about hygiene practices. They wash their hands before eating and are reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet. However, the children use cold water because the temperature of the hot water is not safe, which poses a risk to children's health. The kitchen appliances, such as the cooker and microwave are not cleaned to a satisfactory standard and there are pest droppings in an area of the kitchen. These issues pose a risk to children's health and fail to meet the National Standard for health.

Children have regular opportunities for outdoor play where they benefit from fresh air and exercise. They use the apparatus to climb under and through, they run, jump and use wheeled toys to develop their strength and coordination. However, there is limited equipment in the outdoor area to provide challenges for older more able children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

The premises are warm and welcoming for children and parents. There is a good amount of children's work displayed and a wealth of information for parents. Children benefit from space that is generally well organised to allow them to participate in a range of different activities. There is sufficient space for children to play in comfort and safety. The playrooms are organised to provide an accessible learning environment, which promotes children's independence. Children move about freely and make choices about their play and learning. The toys and equipment are safe, suitable and meet the developmental needs of the children. However, children in Little Stars room and Sunshine room do not have access to resources to develop their imagination, for example, domestic style equipment and dolls.

The entry to the premises are secure, which prevents unwanted visitors and children are unable to leave the playrooms unsupervised. The nursery carry out risk assessments and have some measures in place to reduce the risk of injury to children. For example, stair gates and finger guards are fitted throughout the nursery. The soft safety surface in the outdoor area reduces the risk of injury to children if they fall. However, children sitting in highchairs are not securely restrained and cleaning materials and other hazardous substances are accessible to children because they are not stored securely. Environmental Health visited the premises and recommendations have been made in relation to the kitchen. These recommendations have not been fully met by the nursery. Therefore the safety and welfare of children is compromised and National Standards 4 and 6 are not met.

Children are well protected from potential abuse because clear guidelines and procedures are in place. The manager has a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues through relevant training. Staff are fully aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the manager takes responsibility for liaising with other agencies in the event of any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. They benefit from a key worker system, which enables them to receive consistent care from adults who know them well. The staff interact well with the children and are supportive to their individual needs. For example, children who are upset are given lots of reassurance and cuddles. Younger children hold their hands out to their familiar adult to be picked up. As a result, children's emotional needs are met and they develop a sense of trust.

Staff plan a suitable range of activities and experiences for children. These include many sensory experiences, such as babies playing in the water wearing only their nappy. They enjoy exploring different materials and objects in the treasure basket, the texture of 'gloop' and sand. Young babies confidently explore their environment pulling themselves up on the furniture and looking at themselves in the mirror. Their early communication skills are positively supported by the staff who listen and respond appropriately to their babbles and sounds.

Children are learning to play alongside each other with support from staff. For example, two children are encouraged to share a shape sorter. A group of children play in the home corner making dinner. Staff have developed the learning environment to take account of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, the planning of activities for children under three years is not yet linked to the framework. Consequently, activities are not planned to meet the individual needs of children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. The continuous provision enables children to take some control of their own learning. Planning and assessments systems are steadily developing with the support of the advisory teacher. Activities are linked to themes, such as The Family. However, plans do not link to the stepping stones or provide sufficient evidence of differentiation for younger

children or children with learning difficulties. Children show a keen interest in activities provided for them and display good levels of concentration. For example, during the painting activity. However, their motivation is sometimes hindered by a lack of challenge because some staff are not confident in questioning children and do not have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage.

Children are secure in the daily routine and the time table display helps them to know what is happening next, such as tidy up time and lining up to go outdoors. They are developing independence in their self-help skills, for example, pouring their own drinks and fastening their own coats. Children enthusiastically help staff at tidy up time. For example, when cleaning the table after a painting activity a child says 'Look at me cleaning up' and another child says 'I would like to help'. Children are engrossed when staff involve them in preparing for the painting activity. They take turns in squeezing the different coloured paints into the trays, help cover the table and gather the paper and brushes before they start. Children are developing their language and communication skills as they talk to each other about their family and friends. They talk about their friends who have gone to school, visiting the park with their Daddy and their birthdays. One child says 'I'm going to get some animals in my house' and another child replies 'My fish has died'.

Children practise their writing skills during planned activities and enjoy mark making in the outdoor area with chalk, paintbrushes and water. However, they are not able to freely access writing materials or maths equipment because they are placed on a shelf out of their reach. Children are beginning to sound out the letters of their name, a child playing with letters in the sand asks a member of staff 'What does your name begin with?'. Children are developing an understanding about shape, size and capacity. They compare the size of their breadsticks during snack time, fit puzzles together and name simple shapes, such as circle and square. Children show great concentration as they fill different sized containers with water. Children use the computer with confidence, they use the mouse to change the songs that are playing. They enjoy using the tape recorder to tape themselves singing songs. However, there are limited resources for children to find out how things work and why things happen, for example, battery and wind-up toys and objects.

Children develop their imagination as they engage in meaningful role play situations with their peers. Children's creativity in art work is well fostered. They explore paint and texture in many different ways. They create bubble pictures, print with conkers, paint their family and favourite fruits. They make model teddy bears with salt dough, explore cornflour before and after adding the water. A child describes it as 'Sticky like play dough'. They explore natural materials, such as stones, shells, bark and fir cones. Children's fine motor skills are developing well as they use pencils and paintbrushes and cutlery with increasing control. Children are developing an awareness of how exercise affects their bodies after physical activity outdoors a child says 'I'm hot now I need to take my coat off'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly greeted on arrival making them feel welcome. They settle well because an effective settling in procedure, which includes a key worker system is in place. Children's

individual needs are identified through discussion during the placement visits. The good displays of children's work and the lovely photographs around the nursery give children a clear sense of belonging. Children enjoy looking at and sharing the photographs with their parents. All children are treated with equal concern and have access to all the resources available. They are proud of their work as they say to staff 'Look at my picture'. Although children are developing an awareness of different cultures through the celebration of festivals, the resources reflecting all areas of diversity are limited. As a result, children are not gaining a sufficient understanding about the wider world in particular those with disabilities. Children with additional needs are well integrated into the nursery. The staff work closely with parents and other professionals to meet children's individual needs. Good support is provided during their transition to school, which makes it easier for children to adapt to their new surroundings.

Children are generally well behaved. They are kept occupied and engaged throughout the sessions. They are learning to respect their environment as they are encouraged to help tidy away toys when they have finished playing. Older children enjoy helping to clean the tables before lunch. They volunteer to help, one child says 'Can I sweep up the sand?'. Staff are good role models who are polite to children. They encourage children to use please and thank you and to share the toys and equipment. Children respond well to praise and encouragement by smiling, which helps develop their confidence and self-esteem. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education funding is satisfactory. Children benefit from the friendly relationships shared between parents, carers and staff. Informal chats at the beginning and end of the day provides opportunities to discuss children and any issues relating to their care. Regular parents evenings are held for all children, which helps to keep parents informed about their child's progress and development. The use of daily diaries throughout the nursery, records each child's day and is available for parents to share. The nursery has effective communication systems in place to share information and involve parents. These include regular newsletters, questionnaires and a suggestions box. Parents are involved in the National Book Week, where children bring a book and teddy from home to share at nursery. Parents speak highly about the provision. They find the staff approachable and friendly, they feel they can share any concerns with the staff and management. Overall, parents are pleased with the care provided and that their children are happy.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

There are acceptable procedures in place to ensure staff are suitably vetted and clear induction procedures promote children's safety and welfare. Children benefit from a well qualified staff team who work well together to provide good levels of support to children. The operational plan consists of all the required policies and procedures. However, these are not implemented effectively in practice to meet the National Standards. All legally required documentation is in place. However there are some omissions in consent forms and the record of children's attendance is not always accurately maintained.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager and provider work closely together. The manager has a sound understanding of the 'Curriculum

guidance for the foundation stage' and supports staff with the planning. The nursery works closely with their Early Years Advisor to ensure that the standards of care and education continue to progress. However, there are no procedures in place to monitor the effectiveness of the educational provision.

The standard of the nursery education meets the needs of the children attending. However, the care needs of children are not successfully catered for. Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection an action was raised in relation to a suitably qualified manager. The provider agreed to develop toys and equipment, to improve the fire safety procedures and to ensure all accident and records are signed by parents. Additional recommendations included ensuring hours of children's attendance are recorded in the register and a child protection policy is in place.

The provider has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues. The nursery employs a manager who holds a suitable childcare qualification. The range of toys and equipment has been improved and include natural materials to promote children's sensory development. The fire evacuation procedure is clearly displayed for staff and visitors, so the building can be evacuated safely. Staff now include the hours of attendance for children in the register and accident and medication records are signed by parents. The nursery has a child protection policy, which is shared with staff and parents. These improvements contribute to the safety and welfare of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received four complaints relating to the National Standards.

Ofsted received concerns in July 2004 in relation to National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. The provider investigated the complaint and provided Ofsted with a satisfactory response. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns in September 2004 in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable person and National Standard 6: Safety. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit and an action was raised. The provider provided Ofsted with a satisfactory response to the action. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns in October 2004 in relation to National Standard 7: Health. Ofsted contacted the provision and an action was raised. The provider investigated the concern and provided Ofsted with a satisfactory response. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns in January 2006 in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 4: Physical environment and National Standard 9: Equal Opportunities. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit and contacted other agencies. Actions were raised and Ofsted was satisfied that the provider had taken appropriate steps to address the concerns. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure the kitchen conforms to environmental health regulations
- make sure children in high chairs are securely restrained and make hazardous substances inaccessible to children. Ensure there is hot running water available to children
- ensure the kitchen and appliances are clean.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- improve the planning and assessments to link with the stepping stones; ensure all staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage, planning and assessment systems to ensure they are able to challenge and monitor children's progress across all six areas of learning
- make writing materials and maths resources more accessible to children, improve the outdoor equipment to provide sufficient challenge for older more able children and develop the resources for children to find out why things happen and how things work
- improve the leadership and management by implementing a rigorous and consistent approach to monitoring and evaluating the success of the education provision.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk