

Little Oaks Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 218450
Inspection date 03/05/2012
Inspector Sue Anslow

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Little Oaks Day Nursery opened in 1998. It operates from seven rooms in two converted buildings situated in Newcastle, Staffordshire. The group serves the local and wider area. All children share access to the outdoor play areas. The nursery is open from 7.30am until 6.30pm, Monday to Friday all year round.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 62 children on roll in the early years age range. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who have English as an addition language.

There are 15 members of staff, 13 of whom hold early years qualifications. One member of staff has a degree. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds and receives some support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development and their welfare requirements are met. Generally, most hygiene and care procedures are appropriately attended to. Each child's individuality is recognised in this all inclusive environment and no one is excluded from any of the activities. Partnerships with parents are valued and promoted and links with local schools are beginning to be established. The action and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been implemented and children's safety is thoroughly protected. Systems for self-evaluation are in place and staff continue to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop a systematic and routine approach to using observation and assessment of children to identify and plan for the next steps in their learning
- improve the use of natural materials and resources to enhance children's play and exploration.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are kept safe and secure within the nursery and staff are well aware of safeguarding procedures. Relevant training has been completed by all staff and a comprehensive policy is available for parents to read at any time. Recruitment procedures are sound and staff are never left on their own with children until suitably vetted. Children are safe and secure because staff are vigilant and

supervise them well. Risk assessments are carried out so that any potential hazards are identified. Notices at the entrance remind parents not to let anyone follow them in and good use is made of closed circuit television. Children benefit from ample space within each room and a sufficient supply of toys and equipment, although the everyday use of real, natural play materials is limited. Each age group has a well-resourced bathroom area although the communal, open plan bathroom used by the older children does not fully support their privacy and dignity. Plans to re-instate the partitions between the toilets are in place for the near future.

The majority of the staff team hold early years qualifications and further training is encouraged to update their knowledge and skills. The manager and her deputies have begun a self-evaluation process, involving all staff as well as the users of the service. The action and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been implemented and children's safety and security are given the highest priority. Further changes have been highlighted and the staff team are working hard to improve outcomes for children. Written policies and procedures are in place to support the childcare practice and these are available for parents to read at any time. All children are welcomed and included in all activities. Staff identify any need for additional support as early as possible and work closely with parents and other agencies as appropriate.

Staff encourage good working partnerships with parents and carers. They obtain useful information about each child, such as their favourite toys and current interests, as well as their dietary and personal care needs. This means that parents' wishes and children's individual needs are well met. The registration pack contains information about routines and activities and parents can view their child's developmental profiles at any time. Staff meet and greet parents on arrival and at home time in order to exchange information. Termly newsletters keep everyone up to date with what is happening in the nursery and daily diary sheets are completed with details about what children have been doing. Parents are encouraged to get involved with their children's learning and development and the annual parents' evening helps them become more aware of how their children are progressing towards the early learning goals. Links with local schools are just beginning and staff value any support given by other professionals involved with the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are secure in the nursery and respond to the regular routines. They happily approach staff and display a sense of belonging. Independence is promoted well as children wash and dry their hands, help themselves to snacks and pour their own drinks. Older children find their name labels to register their arrival and practise putting on their shoes and coats to go outside to play. Staff are knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this to support children in their learning. Regular observations of children's efforts and achievements are undertaken and inform the planning of mostly appropriate activities for all age groups. However, these observations are not always used to accurately identify the next steps in their learning and development. All children are included in this lively friendly environment. Children learn about the world

around them through craft work to celebrate different festivals and noticing the changing seasons outside the window.

Each of the four age groups have plenty of space to play, eat and sleep in their bright, colourful rooms. Each group has a range of appropriate toys and equipment, which staff rotate to add interest and stimulation. Natural play materials such as sand, water and dough are available most days but limited use of textiles, boxes, tubing and cosy corners hinders children's experiences and the ability to exercise their imaginations. Children learn through play as staff help them recognise and understand colours, shapes, numbers and letters through songs, stories, activities and craft work. They count the number of steps they take in the 'Mr Wolf' game and discuss whether the pear should be cut into halves or quarters. Children enjoy warm relationships with staff and are praised and congratulated for their efforts, achievements and helpfulness. Minor squabbles are dealt with appropriately as children gradually learn to co-operate and take turns.

Children's health is promoted effectively for most children through good hygiene routines and the appropriate management of any accidents or illnesses. They wash their hands at appropriate times and brush their teeth after meals. Children are provided with quiet places to rest and relax and clean bedding is available for them to sleep on. Children benefit from access to the two separate outdoor play areas where they can enjoy fresh air and exercise most days. Promotion of physical skills and body control is enhanced through freedom of movement to run, jump, hop, balance and pedal. They are well nourished throughout the day with a good variety of freshly prepared meals and snacks. Fresh fruit and vegetables, some of which they grow themselves, are included in the daily menu and drinks are freely available in each room.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met