

Little Oaks Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	258581
Inspection date	08 February 2008
Inspector	Susan Riley
Setting Address	92 High Street, Kimberley, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG16 2PD
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Registered person	Linda Jayne Birkin
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 Oaks Nursery is privately owned and opened in 1998. It operates from a purpose built building on the site of an old farm in Kimberley. It is within walking distance of local schools and shops and is in easy reach of the A610 and junction 26 of the M1. The setting serves the local and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 72 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, closing for Christmas week and all main bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 58 children from eight months to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs 23 members of staff on a full- or part-time basis. Of these, 21 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is soundly promoted as the setting takes positive steps to promote the children's good health and encourages them to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs. Children are encouraged to wash their hands appropriately. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures are taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines and their own policies and procedures to prevent cross-infection. The premises are clean and the nursery has a no shoe policy within the baby area. This fully protects the younger children as they crawl about their room.

The children's welfare is promoted because the provider can respond to accidents appropriately as current first aid certificates are held by six staff members. The first aid box is up-to-date and easily available and accidents are recorded. However, some accident records do not contain sufficient information to fully protect children and some records have not been signed by the parents or carers. This puts children at risk as parents are not always fully aware of what has happened to their child. Suitable medication procedures are in place to fully protect children and all children have parental consent in place for the seeking of emergency medical treatment or advice. Children are learning about their personal hygiene and how to keep healthy through staff's encouragement. The preschool children have had a visit from the dental hygienist who has talked to the children about the care of their teeth.

The children are appropriately nourished. They have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the setting provides children with regular drinks and food that is nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious needs. The children are learning about healthy living through a range of activities that develop the children's understanding of what foods are good for them. The preschool children bring their own water bottles from home so they can help themselves to a drink as they become thirsty. This promotes their independence. All food in-take for the younger children is recorded for the parents so they are fully aware of what their child has eaten and drank throughout the day. This ensures the well-being of children.

The children enjoy varied opportunities to experience physical activities and develop their skills. Children go outside in the fresh air daily to play and be active. Physical activities are provided inside. Children engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination such as picking up toys, fixing items together, moving parts on the activity centres, completing jigsaws and for the older children lots more complex resources are also readily available. Provision is made for children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep according to their own needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and are very well cared for in premises that are secure and suitable for their purpose. This is because the setting ensures that the environment gives children good access to a comprehensive range of facilities that successfully promotes children's development. The premises is welcoming and child-centred because it is set up for children prior to them entering.

The children always use a wide range of equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the setting provides furniture, equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose.

They are of suitable design, condition and are well maintained. Children can safely access resources and make their own choices. Activities are stimulating, fun, interesting and provide sufficient challenge for all children.

Children's safety is well promoted because the staff takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings. The provider ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise identified risks to children. Daily checks are made of the premises and equipment to ensure safe and suitable for children. The premises are kept secure and the nursery has effective systems for the safe arrival and collection of children. There are suitable procedures for outings, the children are kept safe because parental consent is given, risk assessments are carried out, contact details and first aid resources are taken and appropriate ratios are maintained.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as the staff offer gentle reminders and go through the setting's rules. They also practice the emergency evacuation procedures to raise their awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency. The children are adequately protected from harm because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection. They are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They enjoy their time at nursery and freely select activities according to their needs and interest. Children are confident to approach staff to ask questions or for help and support. For example, younger children communicate their needs in a non-verbal manner as they take a book over to a staff member for them to read a story. The younger children enjoy close relationships with their carers and readily seek comfort and contact with them, increasing their sense of well-being. Children relate and make attachments to members of their group, starting to use each other's names as well as the staff's names. The staff are skilled at encouraging children to extend their experiences and at listening and talking with them. For example, the older babies respond with excitement as they walk over the large sheet of bubble wrap and listen to the popping noises that they make. This raises children's self-esteem and confidence.

All children are very involved in their play and learning and demonstrate good levels of concentration. They make their own decisions about their play as they choose from the wide range of activities and experiences. All children increase and develop new skills throughout their play. Children make positive relationships; the staff are very interested in what children do and say. The social skills of children are promoted through mealtimes as children sit together in their small social groups. Staff also promote turn-taking and the sharing of resources with the younger children. This helps children build up good relationships with their peers. Children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong through the gentle reminders and the positive praise they receive from staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff recognise that children learn in different ways and plan a full curriculum for them. Planning is in place for the outside play area. However, this does not cover what they intend

children to learn from what they provide. Staff work closely with large and small groups of children or individually so that they benefit from an adult's undivided attention. Staff make regular observations of children and use this information to plan for their next steps in learning. Children are eager to learn; self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. The staff appropriately question and challenge the children and are aware of good teaching practices, to suit the children. They provide activities and opportunities for children to enable them to learn by themselves and consolidate their learning. Children's independence is promoted effectively through the daily routines. For example, children are encouraged to help tidy up at certain times during the day. The play environment is planned to allow children to be self-sufficient. For example, coat hooks are set at children's height and drinks of water are readily available to allow children to obtain a drink as they become thirsty. Transition to school is planned for and the staff work very closely with some of the local schools to aid this process and reassure the children.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. They are always busy and keen to get involved, using the resources provided in imaginative ways. Children are confident to speak in a large group and suggest their own ideas. They demonstrate good levels of concentration as they persist for extended periods of time at their chosen activities. Older children play cooperatively with their friends, negotiating rules for their games and taking turns to use tools and equipment. Children are well-behaved and understand the routines of the setting. For example, the use of the colour bands for some areas of play like the sand tray. They are aware that only two children can use it at a time and they wear one of the two bands that are at this activity. Children have good opportunities to develop personal independence and this is encouraged by staff. They learn about the wider community through visits to the local shops, by going on a bus ride and by having visitors to the setting.

Children's communication skills develop well. They are able to listen to others and to take turns in conversations. Children constantly learn new vocabulary and use spoken language to talk about what they have done and intend to do. They learn the sounds that the letters make and staff encourage children to say the initial sound. Children enjoy listening to stories, they know how books work and handle them with care. They understand rhyming words and are quick to recognise words that rhyme. Children are encouraged to write or make marks for their name on their art and creative work. The more able children write their own name. Children learn from the good labelling about the nursery, helping them to be familiar with words and symbols. On Mondays the children have a French lesson to help them learn a different language.

Children are interested in numbers and counting; they are beginning to understand simple addition and subtraction as they sing number rhymes. Counting is encouraged by staff. For example, in water play children are encouraged to count as they fill their bottles up with water. They are also able to state when their bottles are full or half-full. Children complete jigsaw puzzles, this helps to develop their mathematical ideas and helps them to problem solve for themselves. Children demonstrate a strong impulse to explore and investigate and show interest in why things happen and work. Children have good opportunities to use simple tools and techniques in order for them to understand how items are shaped, assembled and joined. They build with a range of small and large construction sets. Children confidently use the computer to support their learning and demonstrate good skills as they use the mouse and keyboard to go through the programme. They are gaining knowledge of their community and the wider world through the provision of a range of resources and activities. These include visits within the community.

Children move confidently and in safety around the setting. They display a good awareness of personal space for themselves and for others. Children use a range of large and small equipment confidently, with increasing control and coordination. They display increasing skills when using tools in their play, creative and design work. Children demonstrate understanding of good practices with regard to eating and personal hygiene. They know their colours and talk about them as they paint. Children have daily opportunities to use different media to stick and create their own ideas from a range of materials. They have good opportunities to use their hands to explore the different textures of materials. For example, paint, sand, water, porridge, lentils and pasta. During singing time, the children are enthusiastic and sing songs from memory. Children use their imagination as they play and have great fun in the role play areas. They use the dressing up clothes to take on roles as they imitate the adults. For example, two children dress up and pretend to get married.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and respected as individuals. They are cared for by staff who work very well with parents to meet individual needs and ensure all children are fully included in the setting. Staff hold daily discussions with parents to pass on valuable information about what their child has done throughout the day. Each room has its own induction sheets to provide parents with information about that room and what their children will need. The children benefit from this as the parents can help with the transition of moving into the next room. Children gain a sense of belonging as they join in the group time activities or see their photographs and artwork displayed around the different areas.

Children are being made aware of the wider society through the activities and resources that the staff provide. For example, activities around the festivals and celebrations, books and posters around the setting, and the dolls and small world play figures that the children use within their imaginative play. Children make positive relationships and they behave well. The younger children are beginning to play harmoniously with each other, through the staff's reassurance and encouragement. Older children play cooperatively with their peers. The preschool children are learning about the impact of their behaviour on others through the marbles in a jar. When the jar is full all children receive a small reward. Children's good behaviour is appropriately fostered by the staff's sensitive intervention and positive reinforcement. This helps to raise children's self-esteem and respect for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit very well from the effective information sharing with parents through newsletters, daily discussions and the detailed notice boards. Good detailed information around the Foundation Stage is available for parents and this helps them to be involved in children's learning. Parents are provided with activity sheets around the current topic of activities they can do at home with their children to extend their learning. All planning is displayed along with the topics. Parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress and achievements through daily discussions and regular parents' evenings. The nursery values and actively seeks parent's views and ideas, through questionnaires and discussions. Parents speak very positively about the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected due to the recruitment and vetting procedures being rigorous. They ensure that all staff have been vetted and are safe and suitable to be in contact with them. All children benefit from effective organisation of the setting. It ensures that children's health, safety and well-being are met. They are cared for in a setting where there is suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of all the children. The management and organisation of the setting is proactive in ensuring the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting.

Staff are well deployed around the nursery. Appropriate cover arrangements are in place to ensure that suitable and additional staff are employed as required. Records are available and retained for inspection, they are suitably organised and kept in a confidential manner. However, the daily registration system for both staff and children is not always effective. This potentially puts children at risk as the true times of arrival and departure are not always being recorded. All policies and procedures protect children sufficiently and are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes for children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management for nursery education is good. The owner and manager have developed sound aims and values for the provision and both have a clear vision for staff continuing improvements for children's care and education. The nursery takes some action to monitor their own practice through completing a detailed self-evaluation assessment, they then use this information to move the nursery forward. They are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses for children's education and what is required for improvement. Training opportunities ensure that children are well-protected and cared for. Staff effectively monitor and evaluate children's learning. The well-established staff team work very well together and are good role models for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the inspection the nursery agreed to a number of recommendations. They agreed to develop the induction training for all new staff members. An induction booklet has been devised with relevant information to help new staff be fully aware of what is expected from them and to give them a clear understanding of the policies and procedures for the nursery. This ensures the well-being and safety of children. The nursery agreed to provide clear planning for the babies. The staff attended training for 'Birth to three matters' and 'building active minds' to increase their knowledge and understanding of how children of this age play and learn. The staff devised planning sheets and use these to plan appropriate activities for the babies. This ensures that staff are fully aware of what is provided for the children and what they are intending the children to learn.

For the nursery education the nursery agreed to provide ways for the children to independently select resources for themselves. Additional resources are around the room in suitable open storage units. The children can easily access these resources for themselves to extend their own play and learning. This also promotes their independence. The nursery agreed to devise and implement a system of self-evaluation to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The nursery have completed the local authority self-evaluation assessment form and from this devised an action plan to address the identified areas of weakness. The nursery uses this as a working document as they are always striving for improvement.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure accident records contain sufficient information to fully protect children and that all records are signed by parents
- ensure the daily registration system shows the time of children's and staff's attendance.

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 further the planning for outdoors to provide clear learning intentions of what children are intended to learn, covering all areas of learning.

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