



Little Rascals Nursery & Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY281171
Inspection date	06 June 2005
Inspector	Susan June Stone
Setting Address	11-13 Charlton Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5PG
Telephone number	01749 346644
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Registered person	Little Rascals Nursery & Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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

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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Rascals Nursery and Pre has been registered since March 2004. The Nursery operates from two buildings on the Shepton Mallet Leisure Centre site providing care for children from the surrounding area.

The nursery is registered to care for 46 children under 5 years of age of whom not more than 9 may be under 2yrs. There are currently 55 children on role which includes 12 funded four-year-olds and 9 funded three-year-olds. The nursery

supports children with special educational needs. There are no children attending with English as an additional language.

The nursery opens from 8.00 until 17.30 daily for 51 weeks of the year, with funded pre school sessions from 9.15 until 11.45 and 13.00 until 15.30. Children attend for a variety of sessions and short term care is also offered for parents wishing to use the leisure centre facilities. The nursery is closed for a week during the Christmas period.

There are nine core members of staff employed within the nursery including the Manager. Staff are suitably qualified for their roles and responsibilities. The Manager having a Btec National certificate in Childhood studies.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is maintained due to the effective practices and procedures in place throughout all areas of the nursery. Good procedures such as staff in the baby room consistently wearing protective gloves and aprons for nappy changes, and thorough cleaning routines within the setting, sustain high levels of hygiene and help prevent the spread of infection. The older pre school children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well planned daily routines. They know, for example that they wash hands after using the toilet and before eating to ' help stop the spread of germs'.

Children benefit from a healthy diet, their health is promoted through being offered healthy and nutritious snacks by the nursery. Food provided by parents is clearly labelled and stored appropriately until needed. Children enjoy lunch time as a social occasion when all children eat together, thereby developing their social skills and understanding of mealtime etiquette.

All children explore, and develop their physical skills through a good variety of daily indoor and outdoor experiences. The pre school children have a positive approach to physical exercise, they confidently climb and balance during outdoor play. They use a range of tools such as cutters, knives and scissors which all aid their development and coordination skills. The babies and younger children enjoy using the space within their immediate environment to explore, crawl and toddle, thereby developing their physical skills.

All staff keep all documentation and records up to date regarding children's health, medical and dietary requirements, this ensures children are cared for according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, well maintained and generally child friendly environment. Children have space to move about, play freely and enjoy the activities safely. The nursery is divided into different areas of play. Babies crawl and play under the close supervision of staff, they have their own protected area of the main nursery.

Resources are suitably stored and organised to allow children to select items for themselves, encouraging their independence. Equipment is of high quality, and is checked regularly to ensure it is safe to use. Children use equipment that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. An example being the different sized outdoor slides and climbing apparatus in the garden area, allowing all the children to develop their climbing and balancing skills at their own pace, within a controlled, safe environment. Staff make general checks each day before the children arrive to ensure the setting is safe and free from hazards, most safety aspects have been addressed. A general written risk assessment of the nursery is in place. However, it is not sufficiently detailed to ensure all hazards are identified within the nursery. The storage of resources and other items in the cot room compromises the health and safety of babies while sleeping and using that room.

The staff's sound understanding of their responsibilities in child protection contributes to the children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident to attend the nursery. They feel settled and secure in the warm, welcoming environment created by staff. Children show enthusiasm and enjoyment at the activities available and soon settle to their chosen task. Children are keen to take part in a broad range of activities available to them and benefit from a well resources environment. The younger children enjoy the positive interaction from staff, which helps the children to learn and progress in all areas. Staff in the nursery and baby room provide very worthwhile and purposeful activities that help with the children initial development and learning. Good sensory experiences are offered like touching and exploring cold, cooked spaghetti allow the children to explore using their senses as appropriate. Staff are beginning to implement the Birth to three framework which is showing positive results for the children. Unfortunately the grouping of children, mainly in afternoon sessions is not always suitably organised to allow all children maximum potential for development and learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Planning shows a good range of activities and opportunities are provided for the children to cover all the areas of learning, helping them to learn and develop and make progress through the stepping stones within the foundation stage. Children are offered first hand experiences and are encouraged to explore and investigate using their senses as appropriate. Staff monitor and record children's progress through the stepping stones and use this to

plan for the next stages of the children's learning and development. Staff are mostly suitably involved in the activities, however at times some staff become involved in their own activity and do not always acknowledge and contribute children's involvement which leads to children not gaining fully from the experience.

Children are developing good relationships with each other and are sensitive to each others needs, they seek out others to share their experiences like outdoor play with the hoops and rocket launcher. They understand the nursery routines and the levels of expected behaviour. They sit quietly and listen to others during circle time, taking turns to share their news, and respond well to the positive praise and encouragement offered by staff. Children able to access books freely and are learning how to handle books carefully and correctly. At story time children enjoy the stories and predict the story from the pictures, encouraged by staff. Children know their letters and letter sounds, they can recognise their written names and use this knowledge to self register each session. Children show an interest in numbers and counting, they regularly count during everyday activities like how many children are present. They name a variety of shapes, and are able to recognise numbers 1 - 10, some children can recognise numbers beyond 10. Through topics and themes children are learning about different cultures and festivals and respecting others views and beliefs. They are exploring and investigating living things. They have planted sunflowers and other plants. They know that plants and flowers 'need water so they can grow'. The children are given ample opportunities to develop their own individual artistic flair and imagination through art and craft activities like junk modelling, painting and role play. Children move around the setting with confidence showing an awareness of others. They practice using a good range of tools and equipment in activities like construction and art and craft. They practice independence skills through everyday activities like pouring their own drinks at snack time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are welcomed into the nursery, there is a friendly atmosphere throughout which means that the children are relaxed and settled, children benefit from staff's friendly interaction with parents. The under three-year-old children are settled and secure because staff ensure that home routines are followed. Staff caring for the babies complete a daily diary which is shared with parents, the diary includes information about sleeps, nappy changes and food eaten.

Children are generally well behaved, they understand the expectations for behaviour which are realistic to their ages and levels of understanding. Staff are consistent in their management of behaviour, they help children to fully understand the consequences of their actions through discussion, which enables them to resolve conflicts and disagreements positively. The pre school children are polite and well mannered during group activities, like meal times where they set good examples to the younger children. At story and news time staff and children show respect and consideration towards others, sitting quietly, listening to what others have to say. Children's awareness of diversity is promoted through the provision of positive images and activities, for example celebrating different festivals like Chinese New

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

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. There is daily contact and exchange of information with parents of children attending the pre school, though parents have few opportunities to contribute to their children's learning. They do not have ready access to nursery policies and procedures which means they do not know about the structure and procedures in place for the care and education of their children. Children's progress and achievements are recorded throughout the nursery, however this information is not actively shared with parents to identify to them the levels and stages their children have reached.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children benefit from an organised premises and planned activities, that enables them to play and explore freely. They experience a wide variety of different play opportunities which support their development and learning. The environment is bright and colourful and organised to stimulate their interest and imagination, this is effective throughout all areas of the nursery. Staff work well together as a team and carry out their responsibilities, which means the children enjoy and benefit from smoothly run sessions.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the setting, and the care and education provided. However these are not sufficiently effective in identifying areas of weakness, for example the grouping of children receiving nursery funding for afternoon sessions. The Manager values the skills and experience of the staff, but formal staff appraisals do not take place to identify individual training needs, or to support staff members in continuing their personal development.

All required documentation relating to the children's education, care, health and safety is in place to ensure that they are cared for appropriately and the outcomes for children are promoted. Overall the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- conduct a rigorous risk assessment of all areas used by the children, and take appropriate steps to ensure children's safety at all times
- review the grouping of children to ensure their needs of all children are supported and their potential to develop is fully promoted, particularly during afternoon sessions (Also applies to Nursery Education)
- develop further the systems for monitoring and evaluating the provision of nursery education, care and outcomes for children (Also applies to Nursery Education)
- develop staff appraisal systems
- make sure parents are fully informed about the provision, and the care and education of their children, by ensuring that policies and procedures and necessary information is easily accessible at all times.

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 the partnership with parents to provide more opportunities to share information about the children's progress and achievements, and to be involved in their children's learning

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