

Ladygrove Day Nursery and Nursery School
Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403351
Inspection date	24 January 2008
Inspector	Jenny Scarlett
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Registered person	Bramleys Nurseries
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 satisfactory. 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?

Ladygrove Day Nursery and Nursery School opened in October 1998 and is a private nursery forming part of the locally based Bramleys Nursery chain. The nursery operates from purpose built premises known as the Neighbourhood Centre in the heart of the Ladygrove estate and serves the town of Didcot and surrounding villages.

A maximum of 88 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 excluding public holidays and the time between Christmas and New Year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play areas. An after school club provides care from 15.00 to 18.00 for a limited number of children.

There are currently 127 children aged from two months to under five years on roll. Of these 27 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide geographical area. The nursery supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 25 staff including auxillary and bank staff. Of these, 15 staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff are working

towards a recognised early years qualification. There are 10 members of staff who are attending additional training to further develop their child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing good healthy eating habits as they enjoy regular snacks and meals containing nutritious ingredients such as fresh fruit, salads and vegetables. They eat well balanced meals and are offered regular drinks of water throughout the day. Children with specific dietary requirements have their individual needs met well and appropriate alternative food provided when necessary. Young babies are fed in comfortable nursing chairs and receive good one to one care throughout their feeding routines. Children who are too tired to eat their lunch are able to have their sleep early and meals are plated up ready for when they are awake. This demonstrates that staff are consistently meeting the individual needs of the children and their routine care needs. Young children in Moles and Hedgehogs, develop good independence skills as they learn to use a fork and spoon and feed themselves. However, there is less opportunity for children in Owlets and the After school club to develop their independence at tea time. This is because all the sandwiches are served on one plate and they are sat waiting a long time for every one to be served before they can start eating.

Children's health is well maintained. There are good procedures in place to help children learn about their personal hygiene through daily routines. In the baby and toddler areas, effective hygiene procedures are followed by the staff when changing nappies. They wear protective clothing, ensure the changing mat is cleaned after each use and dispose of dirty nappies appropriately. Older children use the toilet independently and know it is important to wash their hands before meal times, after toileting and messy activities. Their understanding of maintaining healthy practices is supported by staff who offer timely reminders and role model good practice. For example, staff encourage children to blow their own noses and dispose of the tissue hygienically. Many staff hold first aid qualifications and there are effective procedures in place for recording and monitoring accidents. All written permissions are obtained from parents for the safe administration of medication which ensures appropriate care is offered at all times. A thorough policy is shared with parents for the care of children who are ill or have infections. In addition, parents and visitors to the nursery are asked to use the anti bacterial hand gel to prevent any member of the public bringing germs and bacteria such as the neuro-virus into the setting. This ensures children are protected from cross-infection and helps them to remain healthy.

All children within the setting enjoy some physical out door play activity, this is programmed within the day. However, not all planning gives outdoor play a clear focus. This is being addressed by staff as part of the nursery's development plan to further develop the garden and incorporate free flow outdoor play particularly for the children in Owls. Children successfully negotiate obstacles on a range of wheeled vehicles and practise throwing skills with balls and bean bags. Babies and children experience play both at the provision and during visits to the park where they enjoy feeding the ducks and explore and investigate their surroundings.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery operates from a single storey purpose built building. The play rooms offer varied resources and activities to enable the children to make choices in their play. Staff ensure that the resources are laid out so that children can move around safely. Furnishings, equipment and toys provided are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and with the exception of some of the curtains hanging from broken tracks in Owlets room are well maintained and in good condition. The nursery is brightly decorated with posters, photographs, themed displays and children's own creative work. The comfortable seating in every room provides a homely environment for children to enjoy stories and cuddle times individually or in small groups with staff.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Children experience good levels of supervision and appropriate safety equipment is in place to ensure hazards are reduced. Staff are well-deployed within the nursery and the premises are kept secure whilst children are present. Entry to the nursery can only be gained by alerting staff using the intercom system. Children play without risk of harm or injury because the staff have worked hard to implement a thorough and comprehensive set of risk assessment procedures. They are alert to potential dangers such as using scissors, and staff offer clear guidance to minimise the risk of accidents. Children are actively learning about personal safety because staff discuss potential hazards with them and the children easily recall the rules and remind each other to follow them. Good arrangements are in place to protect children in the event of a fire. Staff are vigilant to keep all exits clear of furniture and activities. The emergency escape plan is practised regularly with the children so that they are aware of what it means and a record is maintained.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures and have undertaken appropriate training. They are fully aware of possible signs and symptoms of children who may be at risk and of their responsibility to ensure the designated person is informed of any concerns. There is a comprehensive child protection statement, which meets the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and is made available for parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff ensure the individual needs and welfare for the under fives attending the nursery is highly promoted. Children and babies are enthusiastically involved, interested and stimulated in the varied range of age-appropriate toys and resources such as construction, sensory activities, play dough and role play activities, which are very well planned. Babies are provided with a good range of toys which staff rotate regularly in order to maintain their interest and keep them stimulated, for example, exploratory toys such as stacking blocks, musical toys, mirrors, dried pasta play and a range of creative activities. Children in Hedgehogs are beginning to understand the concept of sitting for short periods of time during group times and join in when they sing familiar songs such as 'Wind the bobbin up'. Staff constantly talk to babies and toddlers, encouraging their language development and social skills. They take children's individual learning into account by presenting appropriate challenges to increase their knowledge and understanding. This is evident in Badgers where children enjoy a music session and explore making different sounds using instruments. They help make cheese biscuits and begin the concept of turn taking when eagerly mixing the dough with the spoons. Staff interact with the younger children very well. They show interest in children's comments and achievements, ask

them appropriate questions and offer lots of praise and encouragement. Children move freely within the play rooms and are spontaneous in their play and interactions with other children and adults.

Children in Owlets choose to play with the soft toys and explore with staff those that are similar, counting all the dogs and naming the animals. Good opportunities are provided for children to relax and have quiet times. There are well presented and comfortable story corners in each room for children to sit and look at books independently and listen to stories. Children particularly in Owlets enjoy stories read by enthusiastic staff who make them fun for children. Staff have a sound understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and use this to successfully plan activities for young children. Accurate records are maintained because staff complete thorough observations which show children's progress through the development milestones. There are very good transition plans in place to settle children into their new environment when they move through the nursery. These include pre-visits, building up the experience of the different aspects of the daily routines and information sharing with staff and parents about the individual child's care needs routines and favourite activities. Children in Owls are confident and happy and interested in what is going on around them. They confidently choose activities and have opportunities to self select activities and resources of their choice.

Children attending the after school club experience varied activities such as making treasure chests using card paper and pens. The staff plan overarching themes for the after school activities, for example, pirates to develop the children's interests. This ensures children have a good choice of activities available. However, the older children do not play and work well together cooperatively. They arrive from school irritable and their behaviour towards each other is volatile. This causes friction between the group and the older children argue and shout at each other. This impacts on the younger children attending the after school club as they do not feel comfortable to fully include themselves in all aspects of the activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones which enables them to plan effective activities and experiences that are matched to children's needs and interests. For example, children are currently exploring the topic of the Arctic and staff have adapted the home corner to incorporate an igloo with a variety of warm clothing for the children to dress up in. However, whilst they have a selection of choices and can initiate their own play staff do not consistently allow the children to take this further. This means some children lose interest and their play deteriorates. Relationships are generally good. Staff know the children well and their genuine interest in the children, motivates their learning. This is further promoted through an effective key worker system. Written observations made by the staff mean they are able to plan effectively and ensure children are appropriately challenged according to their stage of development. However, not all staff are consistently identifying the children's next steps in their learning. All staff are included in the planning process, putting their ideas and suggestions forward. They make effective use of time and resources and use their monitoring procedures well to evaluate the quality of their teaching. However, assessments do not consistently drive planning, therefore plans do not show how individual children can be extended or supported.

Children are interested and motivated to learn as they involve themselves in a range of activities. They share and take turns and are confident to try new experiences such as exploring with magnets and magnifying glasses. Staff use effective techniques for reinforcing children's

learning such as re-visiting topics and questioning. This is evident during group time, for example, children eagerly discuss what they would wear in the arctic and plan activities such as skiing, hunting and sledging that they could do in the snow. They describe how Innuits live in igloos and the warm clothes they would wear.

Children form good relationships with their peers, staff and student helpers caring for them, approaching staff with confidence and freely talking about their interests. Children are developing their independence as they select what they wish to do and find and put on their own coats before outside play.

Children are confident as they freely access a good supply of writing materials and resources which enable them to practise their early writing skills. For example, children confidently use scissors, glue and a variety of pens to mark-make, which develops their pencil control and hand to eye co-ordination skills. Through displays of written words and their use of books, children are developing a good understanding of words and their meaning. Children's emerging writing skills are valued and supported by staff who provide resources to enable children to work at their own level. For example, children discuss and routinely write their names using name cards and practise their writing skills on their own pieces of work. Through finding their own name cards on their coat pegs as they arrive and at self registration, where children eagerly identify their name on the brick system the children are beginning to recognise their own names.

Children's mathematical development is progressing well through a varied programme of planned and spontaneous activities. Children count with growing confidence and are beginning to understand a range of mathematical concepts. They enjoy playing mathematical games such as matching shapes. Children confidently sort the shapes into colour groups, count how many they have, discuss which group has more, less or the same and solve problems by adding or subtracting shapes to make the correct number. Children use mathematical language in their play. They identify and count how many paperclips they have on the magnet. Others paint with string on folded paper and match the patterns. They explore the patterns and shapes they have made and gain a good understanding of the concept of symmetry with staff.

Staff plan and provide a good range of activities which provide children with opportunities to explore and investigate their environment using their senses. Their technology skills are enhanced as they experience a wide range of opportunities to use computer programmes to develop mouse control and have regular access to calculators, play telephones and a range of battery operated toys and resources to explore with.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff treat children within the nursery with equal concern. The children have access to a varied range of age-appropriate toys and resources which they are able to self-select, developing their independence and promoting free choice. Through role play situations, small world toys and visits into the local area, children are learning about their own community. Their knowledge and understanding of the wider world is developing well. They engage in topics which promote various celebrations such as Diwali and Chinese New Year as well as the customary English festivals. Children have access to resources such as books, puzzles and role play equipment which promote positive images of diversity. Increased support is available for children with specific needs and staff work effectively with parents and outside agencies to ensure the child's needs are met appropriately. Staff are sensitive to the needs of parents as well as children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who speak English as an additional language.

They are effective in assessing individual needs and successfully adapt activities to offer suitable levels of challenge without identifying children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children attending the nursery are mostly well behaved. They share and take turns and staff talk to the children about their actions using distraction and reasoning. However, the older children attending the after school club have little respect for each other, the staff and the boundaries set. They argue and shout at each other and berate the staff when there are no choices in sandwiches left at tea time. The children are encouraged to tidy up and help prepare the tables for tea. However, some of the older children refuse to sit with the others and defy staff to move them. Staff find the children's challenging behaviour difficult to deal with. This is because they do not establish clear boundaries or adopt a consistent and positive approach in the managing of their behaviour. The children's behaviour impacts on the younger children in the after school club and the toddlers in the adjoining Badgers room. As a result, children in Badgers are unusually quiet and shy at tea time because of the arguing and shouting between the older children and the banging on the adjoining door. The younger children in the after school club calmly eat their tea with little opportunity to engage in conversation with each other or staff.

Children's ongoing care needs in the nursery are well-met. All parents and carers receive detailed information about the services provided and how their child will be cared for. They receive an informative prospectus and have good access to a portfolio of policies and procedures. A notice board with information about the setting are on display and the large table in the entrance hall provides a range of useful information for parents. Parents also receive regular newsletters about current topics and any upcoming events as well as daily verbal discussions. Daily diaries are completed by staff in the baby and toddler areas and provide information for parents on sleep times, food intakes, nappy changes and activities the babies and toddlers have enjoyed participating in. Staff complete development records in all areas and these are available for parents to access at their request. The ongoing sharing of information ensures continuity of care and gives parents a clear picture of the opportunities for children to learn and develop. Settling-in periods are offered to all new children and the staff work closely with the parents to ensure these settling in times are individual to them and their children. A clear complaints procedure is in place, which is effectively shared with parents through the setting's brochure and an information poster.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early years is good. Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage for nursery education through comprehensive information, which informs them about the care and education provided. They are kept informed about their child's progress through daily exchange of information with their child's key worker and by invitation to more formal one-to-one meetings. Key workers work closely with parents to discuss children's progress and agree strategies to assist them to develop further. Each child has their own development file that parents have access to. These include photographic and pictorial evidence as well as snap shot observations of their achievements. This partnership is further developed as parents are encouraged to be involved in supporting their child's learning through the home activity sheets, which contains current topic information and activity ideas. Children very much enjoy taking these sheets home and sharing the activities and their learning with their families. This helps to build strong links between learning at home and in the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff make effective use of the available areas within the nursery; they provide the children with a variety of play opportunities. Children are developing their independence skills and most are able to select the toys and resources they wish to use with confidence. The ratio of staff to children ensures most children receive individual support within the daily routines. However, the management of children's behaviour in the after school club is inconsistent. An appraisal system is in place and staff identify their individual strengths, weaknesses and training needs through this. They have opportunities to attend training through the Bramley Nurseries own training programme and in-house sessions within the nursery. All of the required documentation to support children's health, welfare and safety is available and all staff are aware of the policies and procedures that are in place. However, the procedures for collecting the after school children from schools within the locality are not formalised. This puts children at risk.

The induction procedures for new staff ensure they become fully aware of all the policies and procedures within the nursery enabling them to quickly become part of the staff team. The manager and owners have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the nursery and have an achievable development plan in place to continue to improve the service they offer to the children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of early education is good. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. There is a commitment to improvement and this is followed through with staff and senior management meetings and support from the Early Years Advisory teacher from the Early Years Childcare Partnership. Planning covers all areas of learning but some staff do not consistently extend children's learning in all activities or allow them to initiate their own ideas in their play. Staff attend regular room and full staff meetings; they use these to discuss individual children, planning and staff training needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection recommendations were made for the staff to devise a system to ensure confidentiality is maintained regarding administered medicines and that records are completed appropriately and review procedures to make staff aware of children with special dietary needs. The nursery education inspection highlighted four key issues to improve practice. These were to, develop the children's understanding of right from wrong and improve staff's behaviour management strategies, develop children's listening skills especially during group times, improve staff's knowledge of the children's development to ensure they support, include and challenge all the children sufficiently and improve the introduction to other cultures and resources depicting positive images of culture and race.

The setting has updated the policies and procedures to ensure they meet current guidance and regulations. These are effectively shared with both staff and parents to ensure children's health safety and welfare are safeguarded and confidentiality is maintained.

Staff use effective techniques for reinforcing children's learning such as re-visiting topics and questioning. This is evident during group time, for example, children eagerly listen to each other and discuss what they would wear in the arctic and plan activities such as skiing, hunting and sledging that they could do in the snow. All staff are included in the planning process, putting their ideas and suggestions forward. They make effective use of time and resources

and use their monitoring procedures well to evaluate the quality of their teaching. However, assessments do not consistently drive planning, therefore plans do not show how individual children can be extended or supported. Through role play situations, small world toys and visits into the local area, children are learning about their own community. Their knowledge and understanding of the wider world is developing well. They engage in topics which promote various celebrations, such as Diwali, Chinese New Year as well as the customary English festivals. Children have access to resources such as books, puzzles and role play equipment which promote positive images of diversity.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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.

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 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):

- improve staff's behaviour management strategies in the after school club
- formalise the procedures for collecting the children who attend the after school club.

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):

- ensure planning consistently identifies differentiation between children and the profiles pinpoint children's next steps
- improve staff's knowledge of the children's development to ensure they challenge all the children sufficiently and provide consistent opportunities for children to initiate their own play.

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