

Little Nightingales

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY348676 |
| Inspection date | 14 May 2008 |
| Inspector | Lindsey Ann Cullum |
| Setting Address | Nightingale First School, Nightingale Drive, Taverham, NORWICH, NR8 6LA |
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| Registered person | The Governing Body of Nightingale First School |
| 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 Nightingales opened in 2007. It operates from rooms within Nightingale First School in Taverham, Norfolk. The children are divided into two group rooms which have access to suitable facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area. The provision also make use of school facilities, such as the field, garden area, 'Trim-trail' and wildlife garden. A maximum of 54 children between the ages of two and eight years may attend at any one time. The provision is open each weekday from 09:15 to 15:15, during term-times only. Children may attend a variety of sessions.

There are currently 78 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 65 children receive funding for early education. Children mostly come from the school catchment area. The setting currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The facility employs 10 staff, 8 of whom, including the Manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is part of the local Early Years Providers Group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted effectively because the setting takes positive steps to ensure the premises and play equipment are clean. Children are becoming increasingly independent in meeting their own personal needs and wash their hands at appropriate times during the routine of the day, needing little reminders from staff. Children are developing effective hygiene routines from a very early age due to topics and discussions with staff. Visitors, such as the Dental Nurse help children understand the importance of good oral health. Clear information is gained from parents at the time of registration enabling children's health and medical needs to be fully met. Staff seek appropriate training in order to meet the needs of children with specific medical conditions. Staff are trained to administer first aid and well-stocked first aid boxes are on hand at all times so staff can act quickly in the event of an accident. Consent is gained from parents for staff to administer first aid and medication as required, contributing to children's well-being. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection, for example, children are not allowed to attend if they are suffering from any contagious illness and staff wipe surfaces before food is prepared or served.

Children are appropriately nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating. They enjoy a choice of fresh or dried fruit plus breadsticks during snack times. Children are starting to grow their own fruit and vegetables in the recently developed school garden and are looking forward to harvesting and eating their crop. Topics on healthy eating and healthy lunch-boxes raise children's awareness of the importance of healthy eating and a good diet. Children with allergies have their needs met appropriately because the parents provide the setting with detailed information to promote their well-being.

Children's healthy growth and development are well promoted. They enjoy being physically active and spend time outdoors each session. They delight in climbing to the top of the climbing frames using either the steps or footholds with increased competence. Older children frequently descend using the pole demonstrating their emerging co-ordination skills. Children enjoy climbing the slides, playing ball games or crawling through tunnels. They ably manoeuvre wheeled toys and use them as part of their imaginative games. Children relish the opportunities to play outdoors and benefit from the fresh air. They enthusiastically use the school 'Trim trail' which promotes a range of physical skills. Staff plan for daily physical exercise and when unable to take the children outside incorporate activities, such as dance and movement, ring games or P.E sessions in the school hall into the daily routine, contributing to children's physical development. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs. A small bench is provided outside and children frequently sit and chat with friends. Indoors, cosy book corners are created in both rooms and a sofa bed in the younger group room enables children to sleep comfortably if required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, warm and welcoming environment. Photographs, pictures and displays of children's artwork around the rooms develop a child-centred atmosphere where children's achievements are valued. Low-level windows allow lots of natural light and enable good ventilation in hot weather. During good weather the doors from both playrooms are secured open so children may freely chose to play indoors or outside. A gazebo has been erected

in the garden to provide much needed shade during very hot and sunny days, ensuring children are protected from the sun. Each child has their own coat peg in the entrance area where they can hang their possessions, promoting a strong sense of belonging. Furniture and equipment is child-height, encouraging their independence as they are able to seat themselves at tables for activities or use the toilet and hand-washing facilities independently. Children are able to choose from a wide range of resources easily accessible on low-level shelving, enabling them to pursue their own interests. Staff maintain equipment in good condition and effective systems are in place to check they remain safe for children's use.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff provide good levels of supervision. The premises are fully secure and any visitors are signed in, supervised and required to wear a visitors identification badge. Staff undertake a daily safety check of the premises to identify hazards and take immediate action if any danger is reported to them. The school carry out risk assessments of their equipment and facilities, for example, the 'Trim trail', garden and woodland walk area. These areas are not risk assessed by staff prior to their use by children, compromising children's safety. Procedures for fire safety are simple and clear and staff understand their roles and responsibilities in the event of a fire, to ensure safe evacuation of the premises. Fire fighting equipment is present, however, this is not immediately accessible, compromising children's safety in the event of a fire. Clear procedures are in place for outings. Visits from the road safety officer, crossing attendant and local police ensure children learn to keep themselves safe when out.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded by a robust child protection policy and the knowledge of senior staff from attendance on relevant training courses. All staff are aware of the need to report any concerns to the designated member of staff who deals with referrals. Up-to-date guidance is to hand for reference. Parents are made aware of the setting's responsibility to report concerns through the setting's brochure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and thoroughly enjoy their time within the setting. They are greeted warmly by staff and follow a familiar daily routine enabling them to quickly settle and feel secure in their surroundings. Children separate easily from their parents and quickly engage with staff during circle time, responding confidently when their name is called and enthusiastically sharing their news. Children have formed close relationships with staff who are friendly and demonstrate genuine care and affection for them. They thrive on the attention and support they receive from staff. As a consequence, children are becoming self-confident, sociable individuals. Children's concentration skills are encouraged, for example, as they complete a puzzle or persist with trying to cut with scissors. Effective use of praise helps children to persevere with challenges and the self-esteem of younger children is enhanced as they complete their chosen task. Children enjoy playing with their friends and actively seek them to play imaginative games or chat outside. Staff work effectively as a team, supporting younger children as they move into the older group to ensure transitions are smooth and a positive experience for children.

Children under three are provided with excellent choices within the free play programme that is linked to aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff frequently observe children and keep records of their achievements so they can provide activities that help children make good progress in their learning and development. Staff recognise that children learn through first hand experiences and plan activities which enable children to explore and progress at their

own pace. They get to know children well and use their interests when considering activities for the next day. For example, children observed using the play dough to make cakes are provided with small bun cases, chopped straws and glitter to enable them to develop their own imaginative play. There are many opportunities for children to develop their independence in their choice of activity, personal care and at mealtimes. Children are eager to participate. They squeal with delight as they go down the slide or catch the ball for the first time and are proud of their achievements. They relish the support of staff who actively engage in children's play and activities, making these fun and interesting.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of their development. This is because staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and good understanding of the various ways in which children learn. They provide a stimulating and varied range of activities which tempt children to explore and learn through their play. Staff display their enthusiasm and commitment to their work, as a result they maintain a vibrant learning environment which captures children's interest and encourages them to explore and develop their knowledge. Staff make good use of questioning to extend children's thinking, such as children are asked why plants need water whilst watering the vegetable garden. They delight in planting and tending the seedlings in the school garden and are learning about how plants grow. Children quickly become absorbed in activities and concentrate for extended periods.

Children work well together, make friends and invite others to join their play. Their decision making skills are well developed as they confidently choose the activities they wish to undertake. They become absorbed in their play and concentrate well. Children confidently approach adults for help, ask questions or share their ideas. They show pride in their achievements and proudly show off their finished work to other children and staff. Children are becoming confident communicators and enjoy conversations with adults and each other. They self-select from a range of story and picture books and listen attentively to stories. They show good recall as they eagerly and accurately anticipate what happens next in the story about 'Little rabbit Foo Foo'. All children make marks within their routine play. Older children are able to form recognisable letters and write their own names. Children are learning a range of mathematical concepts during activities. They frequently count, both adding and taking away. Children talk about size as they compare their constructions, confidently identifying which is taller than another.

Children are fascinated by their natural environment. They regularly observe the growth of the tadpoles and snails in the tank and visit the school wildlife garden. They have recently planted vegetable and flower seeds in the garden and eagerly help staff to water these each day. Children are aware that plants need water to grow and are looking forward to harvesting their crop. Planned topics raise children's awareness of the natural world, for example, activities reflecting the changing seasons. Children have impressive opportunities to use and explore technology. They are familiar with how to use the interactive whiteboard during activities and are learning key skills for using computer technology, for example, mouse control. Additional resources, such as a microscope, video recorder, digital camera and head-cams are regularly borrowed from the school, enabling children to use and explore how these resources work. Children's knowledge of their own community and the wider world is developed through planned topics, including celebration of the festivals of Chinese New Year, Easter and Diwali.

Children enjoy an excellent range of creative experiences which encourage them to use their imaginations and explore resources. They enthusiastically paint, draw, chalk and make collages, expressing their own ideas. Children delight as they mix paint with their fingers, observing the

changes in colour as they mix colours together. Handmade shakers are accessible and children enjoy making different rhythms, playing loudly and quietly. Children use their imaginations very well. They adapt the playhouse to become a workshop and pretend to repair the wheeled toys with play tools or make this area into a hospital, acting as doctors to care for the staff who pretend to be their patients. Outdoor play is exceptionally well promoted because staff allow children to take supervised risks in order to help them develop control over their bodies. They climb, slide and balance on the adventure play equipment or 'Trim trail' with increasing skill.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children flourish because they understand they are valued and included. Staff take time to get to know the children and their families so they are able to meet individual needs exceptionally well. Children experience a strong sense of belonging which is enhanced by the use of photographs showing them enjoying a variety of activities and displays of their own work throughout the setting. Staff have high regard for children in their care, enjoy their role and have established close relationships with the children, enabling children to settle well and feel confident in the setting. Children are helped to understand the feelings of others through discussions, for example, sharing happy and sad news, therefore, they show an exceptionally caring attitude towards their friends from an early age.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They make friends easily and enjoy playing together. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about their own community through involvement in local activities, such as the flower festival and village fair. Planned topics and visits from workers in the local community, for example, police, crossing attendant or food store staff help familiarise children with their jobs and roles. Children take part in fundraising activities. They play with a varied range of resources that help them learn about the wider world and focussed activities develop this further. For example, children take part in celebrating festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Christmas, helping them to value and respect differences. Children understand that people communicate in different languages, for example, they respond to their name at registration in their chosen language. Staff provide excellent levels of support to ensure that all children are able to access all aspects of the provision.

Parents complete a booklet 'All About Me' before their child starts at the setting and use this during initial discussions with the manager, ensuring children's care needs are known. The setting is proactive in identifying additional needs and enabling all children to be fully included in activities. Staff have considerable experience in caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enabling them to provide the necessary care and support. They work effectively alongside parents and other professionals to obtain any additional support needed and develop straightforward individual educational plans that ensure children have their needs met extremely well. Appropriate activities are provided and progress closely monitored to help children of all abilities to reach their full potential.

Children are sociable, well behaved and confident in the setting. They are learning to consider the needs of others, share and take turns. Staff act as positive role models, promoting kindness, friendliness, care and courtesy for others. Children understand what is expected of them and are aware of the basic rules, such as sharing resources and not running indoors. Staff give children clear explanations if they intervene. They get down to children's level and quietly talk

about their actions, therefore children begin to understand right from wrong. Praise is used to endorse desirable behaviour, for example, 'well done for sharing' and 'thank you for helping'.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. They are given a wealth of information through the 'welcome pack', policy document and prospectus that clearly explains the care and early years education that the setting provides. Excellent settling procedures take into account the needs of the children and wishes of their parents. The excellent two-way flow of information continues once children are settled, making sure parents remain fully involved in their children's learning. For example, they record in their child's 'home contact book', sharing special events at home, providing photographs of events or noting progress observed when at home. Staff routinely welcome parents and children at the start of each day and children's key workers are available to discuss any issues with parents. Formal parents' evenings are held when parents are encouraged to look at and discuss their children's progress records. Parents are consulted on various aspects of the provision through questionnaires. All parents' comments and suggestions are valued and the management team actively address any issues raised. The school and Little Nightingales have developed their own website where parents can access a wealth of information. Parents willingly contribute their very positive comments on how friendly, approachable and enthusiastic all staff are, how well their children are learning and the support the setting provides for children and their families.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by suitably qualified and experienced practitioners who have a good knowledge of how children learn and develop. Robust recruitment and selection procedures ensure that all staff, volunteers or students working with children are suitably vetted and supervised. Appraisals have not yet been conducted on staff and systems to monitor their ongoing suitability are being devised, in order to maintain children's welfare. The established staff team enjoy working together, are supportive and value each others strengths and skills. All staff are committed to continuous improvement and development, therefore, they are proactive in accessing further training to ensure their knowledge and skills remain up-to-date. Staff are well organised and prepared before sessions enabling them to greet children and parents so they feel welcome.

Children enjoy the relaxed, stimulating environment within the setting. They can move around freely and make choices from the wide selection of resources available. The well-established routine helps children to feel secure and become independent. Staff are effectively deployed, enabling children to be grouped according to their age and ability, contributing to children's ongoing progress and development. Maximum use is made of the outdoor environment to promote children's learning in all areas.

The leadership and management is good. Staff work well as a team and are guided by the senior staffs' skills and knowledge. The setting has very close links with the school and receive a high level of support from the head teacher. Staff take part in joint training, for example, updating first aid or implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff and the head teacher meet regularly and have a clear vision for providing high quality nursery education which enables children to make good progress. Systems are being developed to monitor and evaluate the whole provision in order to fully support children's learning and development. The setting has clear aims and objectives and is committed to working with parents and carers to enhance children's learning. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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 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 thorough risk assessments prior to children using areas of the school premises or equipment and ensure that fire fighting appliances are immediately accessible
- develop the programme for carrying out regular appraisals and systems to monitor the ongoing suitability of staff.

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):

- continue to develop an effective system to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education.

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