



Little Flyers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	405004
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Sandra Daniels
Setting Address	10 Woodside Camp, Woodside Road, Thornwood, Epping, Essex, CM16 6LJ
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Registered person	Karen Black
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 Flyers Day Nursery opened in June 2001. It operates from a building which has been redesigned to accommodate full day care. The nursery consists of a suite of five children's playrooms, a self contained kitchen, office, staff room and toilet facilities. The nursery also has a large outdoor play area and serves the local and surrounding areas. There is also a holiday and after school club operating from the premises.

There are currently 52 children from three months to five years on roll. This includes 23 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are a small number of children currently attending with special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week, 51 weeks a year. Sessions are from 07.30 until 18.30. The holiday and after school club opens five days a week, all year round from 07.30 to 08.30 and

15.00 to 18.30 for before and after school care and 08.30 am to 18.30 pm during the school holidays.

There are eight part-time staff and eight full-time staff working with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level 2, 3 or 4. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Babies and children play within a clean, well maintained environment where they develop good hygiene practices through their daily routines. They wash their hands prior to eating and after using the toilet, using liquid soap and paper towels. Staff provide simple explanations to children so that they begin to learn about germs and good personal hygiene. Babies and younger children are protected from cross-infection through good nappy changing procedures and through a 'no outdoor shoes' policy in the nursery playrooms. All rooms are appropriately heated and well ventilated, ensuring a comfortable environment. Staff wipe tables before and after snacks and meals and ensure the bathroom area remains hygienic for use. There is a colour coding system in place to ensure that specific cleaning cloths are only used for one purpose.

Children who become unwell are monitored and supported to ensure their needs are met. The setting has effective procedures for dealing with sickness or injury and staff hold up-to-date first aid certificates. Children requiring medication are cared for sensitively and clear written records of this are maintained. Children's health is maintained through clear, written records of children's health needs and the use of an effective exclusion policy which minimises spread of infection.

Children are very well nourished and have their dietary needs well met. Children attending all day receive breakfast, dinner and tea which are all prepared on the premises. Main meals are nutritious and well balanced and children's individual dietary requirements are acknowledged and respected. There is always more food for those who are hungry and children have free access to drinking water at all times. Children learn about what foods are good for them through their play and discussions with staff. Menus are varied, changed seasonally and displayed for parents to see.

All children have regular opportunities to play in the fresh air in the well-equipped nursery garden where they can develop and practise the skills of climbing, balancing and running. They are also taken on outings to nearby parks. Babies and younger children enjoy regular rest and sleep times in line with their home routines. Older children attending the out of school provision benefit from a range of activities designed to promote their health and physical needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Conscientious staff work hard to make sure that all babies and children are free to enjoy a safe and secure nursery and out of school provision. There are stringent procedures in place to ensure that unauthorised people do not have contact with children and only those nominated by parents are allowed to collect children. The premises is kept secure, with entry being via a buzzer system. Staff are meticulous with the arrangements that are in place for the safe delivery and collection of children to and from local schools. Appropriate restraints and car seats are used and a comprehensive registration system ensures that there is a clear record of exactly who is on the premises at any given time.

Thorough risk assessments are in place for both the inside and outside of the premises and all proposed venues for outings are effectively risk assessed before the outing takes place. Children learn about what action to take in the event of a fire as they practise an emergency evacuation procedure with staff on a regular basis. All staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in this event and children can, therefore, develop an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. A high ratio of adults to children is maintained and staff are effectively deployed within the setting, ensuring that all children are well supervised.

Children enjoy an extremely wide range of toys and equipment which is of good quality and well maintained. Staff make sure that resources are appropriate for the age of children being cared for and regular checks are made to ensure they are clean and safe. Children play an active role in tidying up, helping to maintain a safe play environment. They also learn how to keep themselves and others safe when carrying resources and using tools.

Children's personal safety is closely attended to and staff have a good understanding of how to implement clear child protection policies. The provider ensures that all staff receive up to date training in safeguarding children. Practitioners are vigilant and confident in their ability to protect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children under three years enjoy a wide range of well planned activities. Their development is effectively encouraged by staff who support them in trying things out for themselves. For example, posting shapes into a brightly coloured shape-sorter. Babies and children make good progress and show an enthusiasm for learning and exploring. There are high adult to child ratios which means that children are very well supported. There are some toys and resources stored at child-height, enabling them to begin to make choices and decisions about their play. However, children are usually given resources that have been selected by an adult, such as worksheets, which can limit children's creativity and imagination. Staff have received training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and successfully incorporate aspects of it based on their good understanding of the needs of younger children. Babies are encouraged to form positive relationships, especially with their key worker. Adults have warm relationships with the children and spend time talking and listening to them. This gives children confidence and develops their self-esteem.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners are clear on how to promote children's progress, through the stepping stones, towards the early learning goals. Staff effectively plan children's activities based on the Foundation Stage and planning covers all areas of learning. However, there are limited opportunities for children to make choices about, and initiate, their own play and learning. For example, a lot of activities are adult-led and structured, with relatively few occasions when children can become absorbed in, for example, role-play and spontaneous learning through play. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals and this is monitored through observations which contribute towards developmental assessments in each child's profile. In turn, this information is used to plan each child's next steps for development.

Children relate well to one another, and to adults, and happily link up with others for support. They speak confidently as they are introduced to new vocabulary and have opportunities to use language to communicate ideas, share news, recall past experiences and to talk through what they are doing. Practitioners give children time to talk and actively listen to them. Staff ask questions to effectively promote children's thinking, for example, if it was Monday yesterday, what day is it today? Four-year-olds demonstrate their knowledge, often using complex sentences and descriptive language. They recognise their names when written, link sounds to letters and are developing early writing skills. Children of three and four years listen attentively to stories and also enjoy looking at books individually. They know how to handle books, studying the illustrations and turning pages in turn.

Children count regularly and are also learning to calculate. Each day, when discussing the date, children work it out by being told what yesterday's date was and increasing that number by one. Some children can add small groups of objects together and compare them as they talk about shape and size. Most children can recognise two dimensional shapes and regularly take part in sorting and matching games.

Children show an avid interest in topical activities, such as talking about people who help us. Adults help children to understand this through discussions, stories and books, role play activities and art and craft work. The setting has a good range of construction resources that children can use to build structures of their own design. Children develop an awareness of the wider community as they participate in activities to raise funds for various charities which encourages them to think about children less fortunate than themselves, for example, fun days. They learn about different cultures through planned activities and cultural celebrations.

Children use a range of tools and equipment that support their skills of manipulation. For example, they use scissors safely and with growing control. Children thoroughly enjoy weekly dance and drama sessions where they learn about rhythm and beat and move their bodies to music and songs. Children have opportunities to use their imaginations as they play in the home corner which is sometimes converted into a shop, hospital or another scenario where they can play and learn enthusiastically. A range of different textures is provided to encourage children to explore using their senses. They make things using play dough and pour sand and water from one container to another.

Teaching is good and appropriate for all children. Practitioners have a good knowledge of children's individual needs and know what stage of learning each child has reached. Individual education plans are used effectively to support children with additional needs in their learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced, giving sufficient attention to all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle quickly to games and activities. They enjoy reassurance and cuddles when needed. Children gain confidence and self-esteem as they are equally valued and treated as individuals by practitioners who are sensitive to their needs. Staff work closely with parents to gather information about children's home routines, so they can provide continuity of care. Babies sleep and eat according to their own needs and the wishes of their parents. Parents have good opportunities to exchange information regarding the care and welfare of their children. They receive verbal and written information on things such as food intake, sleep patterns and activities.

Children develop an awareness of differences and similarities amongst people as they celebrate various festivals from around the world. They play with resources which reflect positive images of diversity and disability and learn about different traditions and costumes through books and discussions with staff. Children with additional needs are well supported by practitioners who work closely in partnership with parents and outside agencies to develop individual learning plans for them. This is a fully inclusive environment where all children can play an active role in the life of the setting.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn to be kind, considerate and thoughtful towards others. Staff set a good example to children and gently remind them to say please and thank you if they forget to do so. Children are able to share and take turns and develop a respect for each other and respond well to staff's positive approach to behaviour management. Boundaries and expectations are clear and children learn to take pride in good behaviour as they receive much praise and encouragement from staff.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of funded children receive regular feedback about their child's progress and are given clear information about the Foundation Stage curriculum through written information and discussions with their key worker. Children's learning profiles are made available to parents and newsletters are also informative and useful. Parents contribute to an initial assessment on their child's development so that staff are aware of what children already know and can do. There are opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning and extend it at home. Notices and displays around the pre-school rooms inform parents of the current theme.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. Children are well supported by staff ratios above the minimum standards. Staff are well deployed in the setting and work directly with the children. Extra staff

are employed to cover breaks and school pick-up and drop-off times. The provider works well to ensure that children have good experiences that support them in their care and learning. There are very good opportunities for staff training and development and the staff team are committed to this for the benefit of the children. Practitioners are clear about their roles and responsibilities within the group and work together very effectively as a team. They have a high regard for the well-being of all children and are suitably qualified and highly experienced. Robust arrangements are in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff, including an induction period and regular appraisals.

The nursery day is structured to make good use of available time and to provide a balance of activities for children. The routine accommodates individual sleep patterns and feed requirements for babies to provide consistency of care. Children soon become familiar with the routine and this helps them to feel secure and comfortable.

The policy and procedure documents contain clear and important information. All staff are familiar with these and implement them well in their work to ensure children's health, safety and enjoyment.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager oversees and ensures the quality of teaching. The provider and manager have a clear vision for the nursery education provision with a strong focus of the personal development and achievement of all children. The group is managed well, making good use of time, staff and resources. The ongoing review of practice and staff's delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum is effective in highlighting areas for improvement and development. Staff are very well supported as they have time to share information, plan and evaluate their practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

At, and since, the last inspection the provider agreed to give consideration to five recommendations to improve practice. These recommendations were as follows - the provider agreed to devise and implement risk assessments for inside, outside and on outings, and ensure they are carried out on a regular basis. The setting agreed to review and update the system for registering children and staff attendance to show their whereabouts throughout each day, and to obtain and display the poster for parents informing them how to make a complaint. The provider agreed to ensure that procedures to record all accidents to children effectively account for existing injuries and incidents of note, and to ensure that staff have a good understanding of babies' dietary requirements and meet these appropriately to promote babies' healthy growth and development.

The provider has since taken several steps to ensure that children's safety and well-being is actively promoted within the setting. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out regularly on the inside and outside of the premises. When planning outings for children a member of staff will visit the venue beforehand to carry out a thorough risk assessment. For example, when taking children to see the Thomas the Tank Engine railway, it was deemed necessary at the risk assessment visit to purchase and use wrist straps for children to ensure their safety. Attendance registers for staff and children are accurately maintained and give a clear picture of exactly who is on the premises, and where, at any given time. This is important to indicate

that staff to child ratios are always maintained. All accidents and incidents of note involving children in the setting are recorded accurately and discussed with parents. This includes making note of any existing injuries that children may arrive with. This actively supports children's health and well-being. Babies receive a balanced, healthy diet according to their individual needs. Suitable foods are prepared and served in appropriate consistencies, depending on babies' preferences and parental wishes. This ensures that babies' healthy growth and development is promoted by staff who have a good understanding of their dietary needs. Parents are informed of how to make a complaint or express a concern should they wish to do so. The Ofsted poster relating to this is clearly displayed in the hallway.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st April 2004 there have been two complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

Ofsted received a concern on 26 October 2006 regarding National Standard 2 (Organisation). An Ofsted childcare inspector conducted an unannounced visit on 03 November 2006 to investigate this concern in relation to this National Standard.

As a result of the visit the provider was given 2 actions as follows:

National Standard 2: ensure that the appropriate adult to child ratios are maintained at all times

National Standard 2: revise the system for registering the staff's daily attendance to ensure that their actual times of arrival and departure during pick up and drop off times are accurately recorded.

A satisfactory response was received for these actions within the specified timescale. The provider changed the starting times of some members of staff in order to ensure that ratios were always maintained and registers clearly show arrival and departure times of staff during pick up and drop off times.

On 23/02/06 Ofsted received concerns regarding the operational procedure and maintenance of staffing ratios during the school run. An Ofsted childcare inspector conducted an unannounced visit to investigate these concerns in relation to National Standards 2: (Organisation) and 6 (Safety).

As a result of the investigation the provider was given 1 Action under National Standard 6. This is as follows:

Ensure there are operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings provided. Records are kept about vehicles in which children are transported, including details and a list of named drivers. Drivers using their own transport have adequate insurance cover.

A satisfactory response to this action was received within the specified timescale. Children are kept safe as accurate records are maintained about vehicles in which children are transported, including a detailed list of named drivers. All drivers using their own transport have adequate insurance cover, details of which are kept on site and are available for inspection.

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 above complaints are all logged in the setting's complaint record.

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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):

- provide regular opportunities for children to freely access resources to enable them to produce individual creative work, using their own imaginations

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):

- review planning to ensure that children can make choices about, and initiate, their own play and 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