



## Little Blossoms Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY101663  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 25 January 2007   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Valerie Fane  |
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| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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?

Little Blossoms Ltd is a privately owned nursery that was registered in 2001. It is located in a rural setting one mile from Upton-upon-Severn. It operates from a purpose-built single-storey building set back from the road with its own car park. It has two enclosed outdoor play areas. Children also go for walks in the owner's orchards and use the on-site forest school area. The nursery serves Upton and the surrounding area.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year except for bank holidays and a week at Christmas. There are currently 108 children on roll. Of these, 44 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

Twenty five staff work with the children. Of these, seventeen have appropriate qualifications to Level 2 or above and others are working towards qualifications. The nursery receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children have good opportunities to develop healthy eating habits. They have snacks mid-morning and mid-afternoon of fresh or dried fruit and they enjoy an interesting and varied range of menus at lunch and teatime. The menus include a good balance of healthy options, such as roast dinner with potatoes, sprouts and swede, alongside children's favourites. The range of food ensures that children are offered at least five portions of fruit or vegetables every day. Children with special dietary needs receive suitable meals because a list of special dietary requirements is posted in the kitchen and in each base room so that all staff are aware of children's allergies or dislikes. The cook provides meals on named or colour-coded plates to ensure children are served the correct meals.

Children develop their understanding of good hygiene because they learn to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and after messy play. They use the facilities with increasing independence. Older children also learn to wipe the tables after cooking activities. Children receive good care in the event of an accident because at least half of the staff have current first aid knowledge. They keep accurate records of any accidents that occur and ensure that these are signed by parents. Children are protected from cross-infection because the nursery has a clear policy not to accept children who are unwell and this is made known to parents in the introductory brochure. Staff also notify parents of occurrences of infectious illnesses and alert parents to likely symptoms. Children's health needs are generally met well because the staff obtain relevant information at registration. However, children's care is potentially compromised in an emergency situation because staff do not obtain written parental permission for staff to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. Babies benefit greatly from the flexibility of staff to meet their individual needs with regard to sleeping. Staff discuss sleep patterns with parents and ensure that babies sleep whenever they need to and in a cot or a pram according to parental preference. They also find out how each child is accustomed to being settled and so ensure that children follow their normal routines as closely as possible.

Children of all ages except the youngest babies have an excellent understanding of the benefits of fresh air and exercise because they play outside for long periods of time every day in almost all weather conditions. Both play areas include an undercover area for use as an outdoor classroom in wet weather. Children take part enthusiastically in a very wide range of outdoor activities and have freedom to initiate their own choice of activity. They develop excellent balancing skills as they try to balance on the rim of the tyres and then decide to put planks across the tyres to create a little obstacle course. The next day they decide to extend the activity and put logs as stepping stones across one of the gardening beds. Staff support children's learning extremely well. They help them to access the materials they need and provide support to less confident children to develop their balancing skills. Children use a wide range of other outdoor equipment to develop physical skills. There are a good range of climbing frames and

ride-on toys appropriate for children of different ages. Younger children develop balance and control as they use the ride-on toys. They go outside wearing suitable outdoor clothing that allows them to have great fun as they explore the mud and the puddles safely. Older children also enjoy regular use of the on-site forest school area except in extreme weather conditions. The youngest babies are taken out in their pushchairs for fresh air from time to time. The nursery self-evaluation includes plans to improve the outdoor provision for the non-walking babies.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use premises that are suitable and are kept clean and well-maintained. The layout of the equipment is attractive and welcoming. Children see their own work displayed as well as information relating to the current topics. They use a wide range of very good equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the staff provide child-sized furniture, equipment and toys that are appropriate for their purpose, are of suitable design and condition and are well-maintained.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where all risks have been identified and minimised. Staff make good use of risk assessments to identify hazards indoors, outdoors or related to outings and take suitable action to minimise the identified risks. There are rigorous collection procedures in place that require parents to name people who may collect their child and that ensure a senior member of staff is on door duty at times when most children are leaving the premises. Children develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. On walks the older children know that they must not run past certain landmarks in the orchard but must wait for slower children to catch up. Indoors they learn to use tools such as scissors safely. In forest school they are involved in making and reinforcing their own safety rules. For example; they agree that there must be no more than four children on the mud slide at any one time. Younger children also learn to play safely. For example; they learn not to get bits in other children's eyes when they are playing with a box of wood shavings.

Staff in the nursery show many elements of good practice when ensuring children's safety. However, the child protection policy does not conform to regulations that require it to include written procedures outlining the action to be taken in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or a volunteer. The manager also does not ensure that staff and parents are aware of the procedures. This omission is reflected in the overall judgement. In other respects children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of the symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow if they were to have concerns about a child in their care. Children learn to protect themselves because they are encouraged to express their feelings in circle times using the persona doll. They also develop an understanding of their personal space and their right to say 'no' to being touched by other children for example; if they do not want to be hugged.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children throughout the nursery are very settled and develop strong relationships with their room staff and with the manager of the nursery. All the younger children enjoy interesting planned activities. They benefit greatly from the staff's understanding of the principles of the 'Birth to three matters' framework that underpins all that they do with the children. The youngest babies play contentedly with suitable toys and have frequent opportunities to explore messy activities such as paint. They are given freedom to explore a tray of paint as they please. They discover its texture as they put their hands in it. They begin to make marks as they try hand printing on the paper or on their own bodies. They try using tools as they stick a brush in the paint and then on the paper. They enjoy a bath in a tub of water afterwards! Staff support all children well and give sensitive support and encouragement to those who are not sure about touching the paint.

The two-year-olds enjoy a wide range of interesting exploratory play. For example; they investigate a box of wood shavings to find out what 'treasure' is hidden in the box. They develop their imaginative play as they decide that the wood shavings are snow flakes and make it 'snow' on each other and on the staff. They then decide that the curly shavings are mice. They excitedly look for mice in the box; squealing with excitement when they find one and developing excellent expressive language as they talk to staff and to each other. They develop their hand control as they pour the shavings from one yogurt pot to another. They show sustained concentration and involvement in their play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage that they use to inform their planning, assessment and evaluation of activities. They enjoy a diverse range of planned activities that covers all aspects of the six areas of learning and is linked to the stepping stones appropriate for their age and ability. Staff make regular and comprehensive assessments of each child's progress and evaluate activities carefully. They use the assessments and evaluations well to inform future planning. The planning system is flexible and enables them to adapt plans to accommodate the children's own ideas and initiatives. As a result, the vast majority of children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. However, the nursery does not have clear guidance in place to enable staff to give the maximum support to children for whom English is an additional language.

Children enjoy regular cooking activities. They make recipes such as apple pies or jam tarts. They develop mathematical skills as they weigh out the ingredients and use the numbers on the scales to tell the staff how much flour they need. They improve their co-ordination as they carefully pour a little water into the flour and use tools such as spoons to stir the mixture. They enjoy mark making in the flour as they spread it on the table. and use interesting descriptive language such as 'squishy' to describe the dough. They compare sizes as they decide which shape cutters they need for the base and for the lid. Some children develop the activity by deciding to make their own different shapes for the lids.

Children develop a very good knowledge of their local area. They talk about the weather at circle time and recall the reason why they cannot go to forest school that day. They enjoy regular walks in the surrounding orchards. They discover the icy puddles and look for ducks and hens in the adjacent pond and field. They know particular trees in the orchard. They look at an old tree and investigate the sap running down the trunk. They use good descriptive language and name the tree the 'honey tree' because the sap looks like honey. They express emotions; they are sad when they see that the tree has blown over in a gale. They learn about plants as they discover that they can now see the tree roots and they talk about what could happen to the tree now.

Children become very independent in their personal care. They are accustomed to dressing up to go outside in cold weather and put on one-piece suits and boots with increasing independence. They develop good social skills as they help each other to find their outdoor clothes. At snack time they help themselves to fruit and pour their own drinks. Children develop a love of books. They use the welcoming book corner to look at books alone or with an adult. They enjoy group stories such as 'The Gruffalo'. They improve their awareness of rhyming and alliteration as they join in with repetitive phrases in the story. Children take part in regular role play and enjoy using musical instruments. They explore the sounds made by different instruments and then play along to favourite songs on a CD. Staff provide challenge for more able children as they encourage them to try to play to the beat of the music.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children improve their understanding of our wider society as they play with toys such as dressing-up clothes, cooking utensils, such as woks, and musical instruments from around the world. Children in the Foundation Stage discover other cultures and religions as they celebrate a variety of different festivals. At Chinese New Year they try stir-fry cooking, role play with Chinese cooking implements, look at Chinese writing and make masks and lanterns.

Children behave very well in the nursery. They respond positively to the calm manner and good role models provided by the staff and their consistent expectations for children's behaviour. Younger children learn to share and to take turns with the toys. Their good behaviour is fostered by staff who give them stickers for behaving well, or for achievement such as eating all their dinner. Older children are very helpful. For example; they help each other find their clothes when they are getting ready to play outside. They behave well because they have been involved in making rules for the nursery. Staff use a rainbow reward chart to encourage good behaviour and children try to reach the sunshine at the top of the chart each day.

Children benefit from the good relationship that the staff have with their parents. Parents receive an informative brochure about the nursery before their child attends. They complete a detailed form before their child starts that provides staff with information about their child's likes and dislikes and their daily routine. Children benefit greatly from the continuity of care that this provides. Parents receive ongoing information about their child's care through regular discussions and a six week review each time their child moves to a new room. Children are

protected because parents are made aware of how to make a complaint to the regulator and a log is in place to record any complaints that might be made.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents receive a summary of information about the six areas of learning in the nursery brochure. Children benefit from their parents' ongoing involvement in their learning. Parents receive information about the topics, related activities and the letter for each week through a monthly newsletter. Children are encouraged to bring in things for the letter table each week. Parents have further opportunities to be involved because they are asked to help on outings. They are also given a copy of the children's behaviour rules so that they can provide continuity by reinforcing the same standards of good behaviour at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children flourish in the generally very well-organised nursery environment that retains a strong family atmosphere. They benefit greatly from the experience, expertise and high ratios of staff who work with them. They are protected from harm because the recruitment procedures are thorough. This ensures that all staff have undergone Criminal Records Bureau checks and are suitable to be in contact with children. Children are safeguarded because room supervisors generally keep accurate attendance registers but their care is occasionally compromised by the failure of staff in the younger baby room to record actual arrival times promptly in the morning. Children generally receive good care because all policies and procedures, except one element of the child protection policy, are in place. Staff also collect all required information and most recommended consents before caring for children.

Leadership and management of the funded children is good. Children make good progress because the management team have a clear vision for the provision of the nursery education. They aim to provide learning experiences that children are eager to participate in and that build on and extend their existing knowledge. They place a strong emphasis on the importance of staff functioning as a team and have taken prompt action to improve issues about communication raised at recent staff appraisals. There is a self-evaluation process in place and the managers use this to highlight areas for development throughout the nursery so as to improve the provision that they offer the children. Children benefit from the strengths of each member of the staff team because all staff are involved in planning activities. They also benefit from the commitment of all staff to attend regular training to improve their qualifications and to update or extend their knowledge.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was recommended to ensure adult: child ratios are met at all times, to ensure procedures for administering and recording medication meet requirements and to provide children with opportunities to play with toys and materials which promote their awareness of disability and gender. At the last inspection of nursery education the key issues were to develop the system of recording observations on children's progress, to develop the

system for incorporating information from observations and evaluations of curriculum plans in future planning and to provide opportunities for children to use information technology to support their learning.

The provider has responded well to the recommendations set. Children receive good care because rotas are now arranged so that staff have statutory lunch breaks but alternative staff are on duty to work with children. Children receive good care in the event of needing medication because staff keep accurate records of any medication given and ensure that parents sign both a consent form and the record of the dose given. Children develop their awareness of disability and gender through books and discussions and through visits from people in the local community who provide positive role models such as a joint visit from a policeman and a policewoman.

Children in the Foundation Stage have their progress closely monitored through regular observations that are used to complete assessments for their nursery profiles. The observations are used to help evaluate activities and to inform future planning. Children use a wide variety of technology to support their learning. They have a computer, they program two Bee Bots and they use remote control cars. They operate the CD player and they use technology in their role play.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **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):

- produce written procedures outlining the action to be taken in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or a volunteer and ensure that staff and parents are aware of the procedures

- obtain written parental permission for staff to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- improve registration procedures by ensuring that all children are signed in promptly on arrival.

### **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):

- improve staff's awareness of the needs of children for whom English is an additional language and the ways in which they can support such children in the nursery.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)