

Little Learners Day Nursery

Deaf Trust, Leger Way, DONCASTER, South Yorkshire, DN2 6AY

Inspection date	13/01/2014
Previous inspection date	11/12/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Inspirational leadership and a strong vision for quality has led to the nursery achieving many prestigious awards and being widely recognised for their outstanding level of work.
- Robust and highly effective safeguarding and child protection procedures ensure children are always safe within the nursery and are also used to guide parents in keeping their children equally safe at home and in the community.
- Extremely successful partnerships with parents and a vast range of key agencies and professionals ensures all children's needs are supported to the highest levels.
- Enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff create a nurturing atmosphere where children settle quickly and develop a strong sense of trust and security. Staff use sign language with all children because they fully recognise that effective communication skills are vital to all other aspects of young children's learning.
- Exceptionally well-qualified and highly trained staff provide consistently outstanding levels of teaching and care. As a result, all children make exceptional progress and any gaps in learning and development are rapidly closing.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the premises and surrounding outdoor areas.
The inspector looked at various documents, including policies and procedures,
- children's records, evidence of the suitability of staff, including recruitment procedures and referred to the setting's self-evaluation documents.
- The inspector held a meeting with the principal and managers and talked to staff, key persons and children.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector observed learning activities during indoor and outside play.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Dawn Lumb

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Learners Day Nursery was registered in 2006 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is an integral part of Doncaster Deaf Trust. It operates from eight adapted rooms within a self-contained unit, with access to a courtyard, garden and wildlife area for outdoor play.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday, for 50 weeks of the year. It operates from 7.45am until 5.45pm. The before and after school sessions are from 7.45am until 9am and 3.30pm until 5.45pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 204 children attending; of these 169 are in the early years age group.

The nursery employs 53 members of childcare staff; of these, 46 hold appropriate early years qualifications ranging from level 2 up to degree level and Early Years Professional Status. Seven staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and holds 'enhanced' status for Special Educational Needs granted by Doncaster Local Authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- strengthen the already very effective transition arrangements by building on the use of home visits to include a wider range of children, so that all new starters benefit from this excellent practice.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The quality of teaching is exceptional, particularly in relation to those children who have complex needs. The development of children's communication skills is given utmost priority and this results in all children being able to communicate their ideas, develop a higher-level of thinking skills and build strong friendships. Outstanding practice is evidenced throughout the nursery and this fully enhances all children's future potential and learning. Staff observe children closely, listen carefully to them in different situations, ensure they fully understand and respond effectively to all their needs. As a result, even those children who have development delays when they start at the nursery, quickly make rapid progress as they make the most of the rich language and communication support offered. For example, the extremely high levels of well-qualified staff allows children to have dedicated one-to-one support when they need it. Also, staff use sign language with all children because they fully recognise that effective communication lies at the heart of all other aspects of young children's learning.

A high focus is placed on ensuring children make very strong progress in all the prime areas of learning, so that they gain the key skills they need for their further learning and the eventual move on to school. These are then built upon and developed through a wide range of stimulating and specifically targeted learning experiences, so that children can consolidate and deepen their knowledge and understanding. For example, in the pre-school room, children sit in small groups to review their own learning on a daily basis. They talk about the things they have enjoyed and achieved that day and this helps them to understand what they have just learnt and to consider what they need to learn next. As a result, children are fully involved in planning their own learning journey and are excited to learn more. Staff are highly skilled at recognising the types of interaction, encouragement and learning opportunities that will enhance the learning of individual children. They consistently work with a child's interests to build on their preferences and what they already know. Staff purposefully combine questioning and explanations to motivate children's thinking. For example, pre-school children love experimenting, so staff build on this by giving them a range of different fruits to smell, cut and squeeze. When the children squeal with excitement as juice from a mango squirts out, their level of thinking is deepened as they are encouraged to measure the size of the different fruits and make comparisons between size and how much juice each fruit contains. As a result, outstanding teaching leads to high levels of active learning, thinking, problem solving, curiosity and excitement.

As children settle into the nursery, staff carry out detailed observations to note what children can already do and know. This is combined with detailed information gained from parents and is used to plan carefully targeted learning objectives for each child that will maximise their progress. Staff regularly assess all aspects of children's achievements and they consistently share information about children's learning and development with parents and any other professionals involved in supporting the child. The progress checks at age two years are well managed and shared with parents and a comprehensive electronic tracking system provides clear evidence of the high levels of progress that both individual and groups of children are making. Very strong bonds are developed with children's families and parents recognise and praise the nursery's highly effective work because they are fully involved in developing the plans made for their children and in sharing all the achievements made. For example, parents consistently review their child's learning and development during daily contact with staff and open evenings are held outside normal operating hours, to discuss key areas of learning and child's the next steps. In addition, parents' meetings are held to complement the transition process as children move up through the nursery or onto school.

The exciting, stimulating and extremely well-organised nursery, together with a sensory room, courtyard, garden and wildlife area, provides children with a rich, varied and imaginative learning environment in which to explore and learn. The carefully planned educational programme is expertly delivered and children gain significantly from everything they do. Staff know how to create the right conditions for learning using effective teaching techniques combined with signing, humour, animated body language and exaggerated facial expressions that develop a joy of learning through effective communication. The management and staff are extremely focused on and committed to promoting the development of all children, including those with special educational needs

and/or disabilities and are extremely proactive in seeking the contribution of external professionals to ensure all children receive the best possible support. As a result, all children make exceptional levels of progress from their starting points and any gaps are closing rapidly.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are cared for in an environment that nurtures and strengthens their individual personalities. They settle quickly into the nursery because each day practitioners greet children and their parents warmly, instantly creating a sense of security. This means that parents and carers are able to leave their child safe in the knowledge that the child's well-being and care are of the greatest importance to those looking after them. Children develop very strong bonds with practitioners. There are plenty of cuddles for the youngest children whenever they need reassurance, comfort or just want to be close to someone they trust. Children's learning is facilitated by highly qualified and trained staff who understand and are sensitive to each child's needs. They know the importance of helping children to feel listened to and understood. This results in all children gaining an exceptionally strong base from which they can build on their personal, social and emotional development. New starters are carefully introduced to the nursery, with information gathered from parents and home visits arranged for some children, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables key persons to get to know the child in their own home and develop very close links with the family and any other agencies involved in supporting the child. These arrangements have proved highly successful and consideration is now being given to extending this to offer a wider range of children the benefits of home visits. Careful preparation and ongoing liaison ensure children are extremely emotionally well prepared for their move on up through the nursery and onto school. For example, staff work closely with these children, building high levels of social and personal skills, so that they are confident to manage new situations. The nursery has close links with all the schools that the children are likely to move onto and highly effective and strong partnerships are developed during network meetings to support all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Staff give the utmost priority to children's health and well-being. They ensure that all children's needs are met, as they work very closely with parents and other professionals, so that children receive the best possible care. Staff are forward thinking and proactive in relation to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children, so that they can fully benefit from everything the nursery has to offer. For example, even the building's kitchen area had been purposely designed to include an open serving area, allowing all children to be involved in cooking activities using various foods available from the on-site vegetable patch. A qualified cook and catering assistants provide freshly cooked meals each day, which are served to children restaurant-style to build strong social skills as children help themselves to a choice of vegetables from serving dishes. The nursery has received a number of prestigious awards for their work in supporting children's nutrition and healthy eating and their exemplary practice is often shared with other settings and practitioners. Inclusion is threaded through everything the nursery does. Extremely high levels of

support is provided for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and resources throughout the setting are well presented to maximise children's communication levels and independence. As a result, all children are active learners who are very capable in carrying out routine tasks for themselves.

Children fully embrace the benefits of outdoor learning. They enjoy getting to know the various outside areas available, discovering all they have to offer. For example, there are enticing, exciting and well-equipped areas that provide lots of opportunities for exploration, creative and imaginary play and building strong physical skills. All weather clothing is provided, so that children can explore outside throughout the seasons and babies enjoy a covered area that provides all the benefits of fresh air while also offering shade or shelter when necessary. Staff teach children about safety and skilfully support them to learn to manage risks for themselves. For example, as children build a tower using cardboard bricks, staff help children to work out how to build it as high as they can, whether it is safe or not and how to avoid getting hurt when it tumbles down. This enables children to think about the consequences of actions and to learn to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The arrangements for safeguarding children in the nursery are excellent. The management team take a robust and wide reaching approach to all aspects of keeping children safe and all staff receive a high level of training in this area. Safe recruitment practice is always carefully followed to ensure the suitability of staff and there are clear pathways to follow for reporting concerns, whistleblowing and making sure staff understand and always meet their responsibilities for protecting children. An excellent example of the nursery's dedication to safeguarding can be seen through their work with parents. For example, they often organise special events and meetings where keynote speakers deliver important information and useful guidance to parents about such things as the safe and appropriate use of social network sites, first aid and staying safe in the community. The nursery's designated health and safety officer works closely with the health and safety committee for the management trust. They provide support in carrying out individual risk assessments for children with medical conditions and specific needs.

Those in charge have a particularly strong vision of what they want to achieve and how to do this. The commitment to partnerships and a multi-professional approach is quite exceptional and ensures highly effective links are in place with a vast range of key agencies and organisations. Consequently, all children's needs are supported to the highest levels at all times. The nursery's skilled team of Special Educational Needs Coordinators drive forward outstanding levels of support for those children who need additional help and often take on the role of lead professional for these children. For example, they arrange and chair a vast number of multidisciplinary review meetings and often share their expertise and exceptional practice with other providers in the area. As a result, the nursery is widely recognised for their outstanding level of work and has achieved many prestigious awards, including gaining 'enhanced' status for providing exceptional care and facilities for children with special educational needs and/or

disabilities. Partnership with parents are equally as strong, reflecting the exceptional levels of quality the nursery consistently aims for and achieves. Open evenings, coffee mornings and special events, such as graduation ceremonies, form an integral part of developing the vital links with parents and families that lead on to developing shared understandings about children's needs, achievements and future progress. As a result, parents are highly complementary about the nursery, describing it as 'fabulous'. They particularly highlight the impressive level of resources, the dedication of staff and the proactive and detailed levels of support provided for all children.

A comprehensive and continual professional development program is used to maintain an exceptional level of well-qualified and highly trained staff. For example, all staff hold training in the use of British Sign Language, with some staff continuing to develop this to higher levels of expertise. As part of their 'enhanced' status, the nursery accesses specific training in line with the needs of the children attending, including such things speech and language delay, Downs Syndrome, visual and hearing impairment, Autism and Cerebral Palsy. These exceptional levels of training develop a level of practice that is worthy of dissemination. Leaders and managers make sure that all teaching strategies are consistently implemented and take an active role in tracking children's progress and the overall quality of practice. Senior staff are highly effective in successfully leading their teams and constantly reflect on and review all aspects of practice. There are comprehensive and carefully planned methods to ensure all staff always know and carry out their responsibilities to their key children to the highest levels. Effective bench-marking for monitoring progress is in place and is overseen by all room leaders. This is effectively tracked using a computerised system to ensure both individual children and groups of children are consistently making as much progress as they can.

Extremely high levels of reflective practice are evident throughout the nursery. Those in charge have precise and effective methods for tracking all aspects of children's enjoyment, progress and experiences and the level of commitment shown to achieving and maintaining outstanding outcomes for all children is outstanding. The continual improvement programme builds on all the evidence gathered within the nursery. This is carefully analysed, assessed and used to constantly reflect on how things could be done better. Astute and well-targeted training programmes, combined with high quality professional supervision, result in staff morale being extremely high and a 'can do attitude' that is highly visible throughout the nursery.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY318526
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	856873
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	134
Number of children on roll	204
Name of provider	Doncaster Deaf Trust
Date of previous inspection	11/12/2008
Telephone number	01302 386730

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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