



## **Lighthall Under Fives**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	250084
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 July 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Bernadina Lavery
<b>Setting Address</b>	LAYCA Community Centre, Stretton Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 2RL
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lighthall Under Five's Committee
<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 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?

Lighthall Under Fives was first registered as a sessional playgroup in 1994, although operated for many years prior to that date as a parent and toddler group. It is a registered charity run by a committee and operates from the self-contained 'LAYCA Community Centre', in the grounds of Lighthall Senior School in Shirley, Solihull. The group has sole use of a large play room and has access to a kitchen, toilets and there is a fully enclosed outdoor area available for play. The setting serves the local

area.

There are currently 56 children from 2 years 6 months to 5 years on roll. This includes 36 funded 3 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 to 12:00 on Monday and Friday and 09:30 to 15:00 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Children who attend on the full day bring a packed lunch.

There are 5 staff who work with the children, of these, all have an early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3 or equivalent. The group receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children stay healthy because staff promote excellent health and hygiene practice. Staff remind them about washing hands and flushing toilets as part of the daily routine. Children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident or become ill because there are excellent, detailed procedures in place and all staff are first aid trained. Children's health needs are very clearly recorded and discussed with parents. Children play with extremely safe and well-maintained toys and resources within a very stimulating environment. They can rest and relax according to their needs, in the book corner.

Children enjoy physical exercise and this helps contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Frequent use of the outdoor play area and local environment offers excellent opportunities for children to enjoy fresh air. Children enjoy trips to 'Bill's Wood' a local nature reserve. The outdoor play area is used as an extension of the playroom and children love playing with the 'playgroup beach', which consists of a paddling pool and sand area. Children make sand castles using buckets and spades and chuckle with delight as they knock them over. Children learn and improve physical skills such as pedalling, throwing and catching. They design and make models such as 'seaside crabs' and practice cutting and sticking skills very confidently and successfully.

Children learn about healthy living through topics and daily discussions. Children know they need to wear sunhats in hot weather. Healthy eating is encouraged and healthy snacks provided such as toast, apple and banana. Snack times are sociable and enjoyable occasions and staff sit with children and engage in delightful discussions. Children's specific dietary and religious requirements are acknowledged sensitively and vigilantly. Drinks are readily available which encourages children to have sufficient fluids. Children have free access to fresh drinking water as staff remind them about having plenty to drink particularly in the hot weather.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in an environment which is clean, inviting and well-maintained, where they have access to a wide range of safe and appropriate toys and resources. They are developing their independence as they make choices about their play and learning. The open-plan layout of the play room helps children to move freely between activities and feel 'at home'. Children are closely supervised and staff complete daily safety checks. Access to the premises is monitored and staff maintain a record of visitors to the setting.

Children are developing their independence as they make choices about their play and learning. They are able to select equipment from a wide range of quality resources that are clean, safe and suitable for them. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff are deployed effectively and are vigilant about children's safety indoors and outside. Evacuation procedures are practised regularly and children evacuate the building calmly and sensibly. This helps children learn how to react in an emergency situation.

Children are adequately protected from potential abuse or neglect because staff understand the importance of child protection. However, the child protection procedures have not been updated to comply with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and some staff are not clear about what the procedures are if an allegation is made against them.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy their time at the setting. They arrive very confidently and settle very quickly. Children have sufficient toys and equipment because staff have a good understanding of how to meet their needs. Children's confidence and self-esteem are well developed due to staff's consistent use of praise and encouragement. Children are gently encouraged to complete tasks and offered appropriate support if they need assistance. Children respond to staff when they shake the tambourine and stop playing and listen. They tidy up very efficiently when staff put on music. Staff respond promptly and with genuine interest to children's questions and conversations about their homes and families. This helps children to feel valued and appreciated.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. Staff are very calm, patient & tolerant. They have good, trusting relationships with children. They interact effectively in their play and ask challenging questions, such as, "what do you think will happen if we add water to the sand"?

Staff manage children's behaviour well. Children are very well behaved and

encouraged to sit and listen at circle time. Children are rewarded with stickers for good behaviour and participation, such as bringing in things from home for the 'colour table'. Children help each other to resolve disputes and staff use positive behaviour strategies such as negotiation and compromise. The learning environment reflects the local community and the wider world. Resources and equipment reflect positive images.

Adequate systems are in place to observe, monitor and record children's achievements. However, these currently give an incomplete picture of children's all round progress as they do not always include incidental observations. Planning for focussed, small group activities clearly identifies learning intentions. However, systems for evaluating and reviewing planning and assessments are informal and do not always ensure information gained is used to help plan for the next steps of learning in all areas and provide sufficient challenge for all children. Staff with responsibility for special needs and English as an additional language have a sound knowledge of the procedures and have developed good relationships with parents and other professionals so that all children are included in all aspects of nursery life and make good progress.

Children form good relationships with staff and each other. They are familiar with the daily routine and sing a 'welcome song' on arrival and a 'goodbye song' for going home. They have opportunities to share, take turns and cooperate with each other whilst playing 'sound lotto'. They respond to events with a range of feelings such as being enthralled by the puppet show put on for the playgroup by students from the senior school and squealing with delight as they buried each other's feet in the sand whilst playing on the 'playgroup beach' outside. Children show independence by self-selecting resources. Children communicate effectively, they say 'please' and 'thank-you' and enjoy conversations with each other and staff about all sorts of topics including who won the world cup. They are articulate and developing their vocabulary, for example, a child refers to a 'collapsing giraffe'. They listen and respond with enjoyment to stories and re-enact stories such as, 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. Children are starting to recognise their names by hanging coats on their peg when they arrive and finding their names on the table at snack time. They practise writing skills, including tracing and can write their names, with many letters correctly formed.

Children use mathematical language such as 'big' and 'little' when playing with 'compare bears'. They talk about objects being half full and half empty whilst playing in the water. Children count confidently and can count backwards from 4 whilst singing number songs. Children are developing a good understanding of addition during colouring activities, for example a child said that 3 hearts plus one more heart would be 4 hearts. Children recognise numbers and shapes that are displayed within the room. Children investigate materials using all their senses such as commenting on the texture of sand whilst trying to build sand castles. They are inquisitive and ask questions about things that happen, for example one child spots the moon asks, "why is out during the day?" Visits to the local nature reserve and from the 'Animal Man' help children to appreciate and care for animals such as stroking rabbits and feeding chicks. They are developing a sense of time and talk about the days of the week, checking they have said the right day, such as "Is it Tuesday today"? They talk about their plans for the future and look forward to events such as a child talking about a

'sleepover' she is going to have for her birthday, in the garden under the stars. The are developing a sense of place by talking about where they are going on holiday and how they will travel there. Children show interest in technology as they have access to a computer, which they use competently.

Children move with control and co-ordination. They can pedal forwards and reverse with ease and skill. They can adjust their speed when playing outside and avoid obstacles and each other. They recognise the importance of staying healthy and know they need to wear hats and sun creams in hot weather. Children have opportunities to be creative through activities such as, painting and exploring malleable materials including dough. They work in large scale having contributed to a 'Seasons' display and small scale having made 'angel cards'. Children use music, dance and role play to communicate ideas and enjoy playing with the 'camp site' role play area. They use a good range of instruments to look at rhythm, tempo and beat and sing songs from memory and request their favourite songs at circle time. Children are learning to differentiate between colours through activities and a 'colour of the week' theme. They bring in 'pink' items from home to display on the 'colour' table.

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

The provision is good.

Children play very well together. They develop respect for others because they talk about being kind to their friends. Children's behaviour is excellent. They understand responsible behaviour and help each other resolve disputes. Good behaviour is rewarded through a 'sticker system'. They work very harmoniously together and share equipment whilst playing 'sound lotto'. They develop self-confidence and self-esteem as their work is displayed attractively throughout the nursery.

The partnership with school works very well. Visits into the nursery from reception class teachers and use of the school facilities such as the library, helps children experience a smooth transition by the time they join reception class. Children understand their own needs and respect the needs of others because they have access to positive image resources and cover topics that look at other cultures and celebrations. This ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers regarding nursery education is good. They are given detailed information about the early learning goals and stepping stones. This ensures that children are happy and confident during their time at playgroup. Staff liaise with parents ensuring that children's records contain information which enables appropriate care to be given. Staff welcome parents into the setting. They attend 'key worker' evenings and participate in fund raising events for charity. An 'open door' policy encourages parents to feel settled about their child in the setting and fosters a sense of trust and partnership. Children's achievements and daily routines are discussed regularly ensuring their children's needs are met. Policies, procedures and other relevant information are available to parents. However, the written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if parents have a complaint is

out of date and the group have not yet finalised a procedure for recording complaints relating to the national standards and any action taken, in line with current guidance. This limits the information given to parents should they wish to make a complaint.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from attending this very welcoming, friendly group. They make good progress because the play group is well-organised. Children are supported by qualified staff who provide good role models and are dedicated to providing quality care for children. Staff are happy, motivated and work well together within the established staff team. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensures children are cared for by suitable staff, who follow the setting's policies and procedures. Staff have access to good training opportunities and the staff ratios and group size supports children's learning and play.

Children's personal information is stored securely, which helps to maintain confidentiality. Documentation is well-organised which ensures that parents are well informed about their child's achievements and progress.

Leadership and management is good. This contributes to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. The manager is committed to continued improvement and welcomes support from other agencies, including the support teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The team regularly evaluate practice issues and responds to parental requests and comments. The manager has a clear vision about the future for the playgroup is committed to further training so as to improve the overall quality of care. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The playgroup has made good progress in addressing the previous recommendations relating to behaviour management procedures, public liability insurance and fire safety. This ensures that children are safe and their welfare promoted.

### **Nursery Education**

At the previous inspection of the nursery education the setting agreed to improve staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage and improve planning and assessment systems. Staff have attended training and now have a good knowledge of the early learning goals. They are in the process of changing their planning and assessment systems and this has been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- update written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if parents have a complaint and update procedure for recording complaints relating to the national standards and any action taken
- update child protection procedures to comply with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and include information on allegations against staff and reporting procedures.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure assessment procedures are thorough and information gained is used effectively to guide planning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)