



## Lapworth Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 200662  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 26 September 2006   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Carol Johnson   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Lapworth Pre School, Station Lane, Lapworth, Solihull, West Midlands, B94 6LR |
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| <b>E-mail</b>                  |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Lapworth Preschool Committee  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Sessional 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?

Lapworth Pre-school opened in 1989 and is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents. The group operates from a purpose built unit next to Lapworth Primary School. A maximum of 30 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:00, during term time. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area and the group also has the use of the adjacent school grounds.

There are currently 23 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group serves the local community and the surrounding rural area and neighbouring villages. The setting has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

There are six part-time members of staff working with the children. Of these, four hold relevant early years qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively protected because all areas of the premises are kept clean and hygienic. Children change into indoor shoes on arrival and know that they have to change back to their original shoes before playing outside. Nappy changing routines are suitable and liquid soap and paper towels are available at all sinks. Children are encouraged to follow good hygiene routines, for example, washing hands after toileting and before handling food. Older children demonstrate good independence with regards to personal care and know why these routines are necessary.

Children's welfare is effectively protected in the event of an accident or illness. First aid supplies are well-stocked and easily accessible; two staff members hold current first aid certificates. Documentation to ensure that children's medical needs are clearly known is well maintained and a shared written policy makes it clear to parents that they must not send children who are clearly unwell and may pose a potential health risk to others.

Children's dietary needs are well met because they are given healthy options at snack times, for example, grapes, bananas, cereals and raisins. Snack times are social occasions and staff sit with children at the table and encourage them to share news and develop social skills. Children demonstrate good table manners and wait patiently to be offered food or drink. Children are not at risk from dehydration as water is freely available throughout sessions and children have a choice of milk or water at snack time. Children are learning about the benefits of healthy eating through planned and spontaneous activities. They take part in regular cookery activities and play games and read books that inspire discussions about food.

Children benefit from regular physical play that helps to develop their muscles, co-ordination and confidence. Staff provide all children with plenty of opportunities for exercise, both indoors and outside, on daily basis. Children regularly play in a fully enclosed play area at the rear of the building and have access to a wide range of equipment including a selection of wheeled toys, a climbing frame and a slide. Also, children go for walks in the local environment and have use of the adjacent school playing fields. Indoors, children move to music and join in with action rhymes. Staff encourage the development of children's small muscles by offering lots of opportunities for them to draw, paint, play with dough and practise using scissors.

Children's emotional well-being is effectively supported because staff take time to get to know the children and respond sensitively to their feelings. A key worker system is in place and parents and their children are supported in making the transition from either the 'twos' room or home. Staff talk to parents on a regular basis and an 'All about me' sheet, completed by parents, before their child starts at the setting provides staff with lots of additional information about individual children's starting points and their emotional and physical needs.

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

The provision is good.

Children have plenty of space to play and move freely because indoor and outdoor space is organised effectively. Resources are safely stored, of good quality and are appropriate for the age and stage of children attending the provision. Staff thoroughly check all areas of premises and equipment before sessions begin and any safety issues that may arise as a result of organised activities, for example, cookery or outings, are thoroughly considered at the planning stage. Extensive written risk assessments are reviewed annually and any resulting identified risks are promptly addressed or minimised.

A wide range of precautionary measures are in place to help ensure children's safety. For example, all heaters are covered with safety guards, exterior doors and gates are well secured and there are no trailing electrical wires or uncovered plug sockets. However, staff sometimes leave the kitchen door open and whilst children are closely supervised at all times and know that they are not allowed to enter, it is still a potential risk to children's safety. Fire drills are carried out each half-term and children that attended the setting last year are able to remember and confidently describe procedures. Children's welfare is promoted and their anxieties allayed as staff carefully explain fire drill procedures and relevant safety issues in a way that they can understand and which does not frighten them

Children are aware of rules to protect their own safety because staff constantly reinforce safety messages and explain why rules are necessary. For example, children know that they should not run inside as they might trip or bump into furniture or other children. Children receive frequent reminders from staff and they promptly and sensibly follow staff instructions. Staff plan activities to alert children to safety issues. For example, during 'Child Safety Week' children were invited to bring in a variety of hats and staff talked to the children about why people, including horse riders and builders, need to protect their heads. Children were then allowed to bring bikes from home and safety messages were reinforced as children wore cycle hats whilst riding their bikes around the school playground.

Children are effectively protected by a staff team who have a good knowledge of child protection issues. They are confident of their ability to put appropriate procedures into practice, if necessary, and are aware that their first priority is the welfare of the children in their care. The manager ensures that all staff, students and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and she, along with another staff member, has received specific training in this area. The setting has a clear written statement about child protection and this is shared with all staff and parents. Children are not released into the care of unknown individuals or left unsupervised with persons who have not been thoroughly vetted.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and eager to come into the setting. They are able to enjoy a wide range of activities that help them to develop in all areas of learning. Daily routines are carefully planned to offer children consistency and security and they benefit from learning and play opportunities both inside and outside. Staff plan as a team and effectively use what they know

about the children to ensure that play opportunities build on children's observed interests and current experiences. Planning in both rooms follow the same themes and learning experiences are adjusted to suit the differing needs of the children. Staff in the 'Twos' room have recently been on training on how to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are now planning learning opportunities based around this. However, they have only recently started to use this planning system and methods for observation, evaluation and assessment are still being developed. Consequently, written information gathered, by staff, to inform future planning and children's progress records is limited.

Children have good relationships with staff and their peers and therefore are confident to explore and initiate their own play. Staff are supportive and treat children with kindness and concern. Children receive meaningful praise and support as required. Consequently, they are encouraged to become increasingly independent and are developing an awareness of what they can do for themselves. Independence is encouraged and children are developing their personal care skills, for example, some children can put on their own shoes and coats. Their communication skills are constantly being developed and encouraged because staff use effective open-ended questioning techniques to encourage children to recall past events and join in with conversations.

Children can easily access plenty of good quality and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment, for example, books, puzzles, role play resources and craft items. Many resources are stored at child height within drawers and on low-level shelving and a selection of adult-selected resources are placed around the setting to inspire specific planned learning. Sessions include a good balance of planned and spontaneous play and children are able to make plenty of independent choices. For example, they can choose to paint, go on the computer, play with small world toys and look at books. However, opportunities for children, based in the 'Twos' room, to freely express themselves are restricted as much of their artwork is based around templates and collage work.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and children are making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children are encouraged to think and develop confidence and independence. They are excited and motivated by the carefully planned and well-resourced learning experiences. Staff frequently evaluate their curriculum planning and observe and assess children. However, systems for doing so are still under development and there is limited written evidence to support what staff know about children and how they intend to move them on to their next steps in learning. Staff know the children and ensure that activities, where necessary, are adapted to suit those who learn at different rates or have particular needs. Staff ensure that the environment is attractive and stimulating. Display boards reinforce topics, reflect diversity and show examples of children's work; this provides information for parents and adds to children's self-esteem. Children understand what is expected of them in terms of acceptable behaviour because staff effectively use positive behaviour management strategies.

Children and their parents benefit from the relaxed and friendly atmosphere that exists within the nursery. Children talk freely about their home and community and are keen to contribute

to discussions and ask questions. Children show an interest in books and they listen to stories with increasing attention and recall. Most children are able to recognise their own names and this is reinforced through the use of name cards that the children select for themselves at the start of each session. These cards are used at register, snack time and throughout sessions to help with letter and word recognition. Some children are developing good pencil control and are eager to practise emergent writing. Writing and drawing implements are freely available and more able children are able to write their own name.

Children show a high level of interest in numbers and counting. Most children can reliably count and match numbers to five and more able children can do so to ten and beyond. A range of activities, including number songs and rhymes are regularly used to help children understand the concept of more or less. Staff encourage children to compare numbers and use mathematical language in their play. At register children talk about the number of boys and girls, they arrange their name cards into groups; they identify which group has the most and match the number of children to the correct numeral on a nearby number line. Resources to support and extend their mathematical skills and knowledge are plentiful and staff approach maths with a positive and confident attitude. Children understand simple computer programs and most demonstrate good mouse control. Available computer programmes include those that help children to acquire mathematical skills and reasoning.

Children show an inquisitive interest in why things happen and how things work. They experiment with equipment in the water tray and observe closely what happens when they pour water using a variety of containers. Staff extend their learning by suggesting the use of additional equipment and that they pour water faster or slower. Children cook on a regular basis, for example, they make bread and learn about the changes that happen to the ingredients when they are mixed. Children learn about the natural world and are given lots of opportunities to examine objects and living things to find out more about them. They went on an outing to a butterfly farm and their learning was extended on their return to the setting through looking at stick insects brought in by a member of staff.

Children are creative and staff provide an environment that is rich and stimulating and includes lots of examples of children's work. Children experiment with texture, form and colour and use words such as shiny, smooth and prickly when talking about leaves they collected on a nature walk. Children enthusiastically join in with favourite songs and more confident children are happy to sing, alone, in front of others. Children move confidently and safely indoors and outside. For example, indoors, they move to music and use their imagination as they pretend to be trees and animals. Outdoors, children demonstrate developing physical skills as they practise ball skills and confidently pedal wheeled toys and climb on the climbing frame.

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

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed and staff ensure that children's individual needs are accurately identified and supported. Children have formed positive relationships with key staff who help to support them through the transition from home or from the 'Twos' room to the pre-school room. The provision has good systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents, other professionals and outside agencies

to help plan and monitor appropriate activities that build on what children can already do. Staff offer good levels of support to all children and ensure that activities meet the needs of all.

Children are encouraged to talk about home and their experiences in order to appreciate each others' similarities and differences. During the inspection a parent, who is Chinese, came into the group to share her experiences and show children a range of artefacts and photographs from China. This helped to increase the children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world and also added to the self-esteem of the parent's child. A wide range of resources encourage children to develop a positive self-image and an increased understanding of diversity. Children show concern for others and treat each other and living things with care and respect. Staff help to make children feel special by celebrating birthdays and giving them plenty of opportunities to share news and talk about things that are of interest to them.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They behave well because they know what is expected of them and staff handle incidents calmly and consistently. Staff help children to take responsibility for their actions and provide them with excellent role models. Rules are shared with parents and staff explain, to children, why they exist and why they must adhere to them. Children know that they must share and take turns in their play and they promptly follow staff instructions. Good behaviour and effort is rewarded with praise and reward certificates. Consequently, children are motivated to co-operate and achieve. Stories are used to encourage children's moral development in a way that they understand and can relate to. For example, children listened to a story about a child who did not tidy away and considered how their parents might feel if they did that at home.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. It is effectively enhanced and supported because relationships between staff and parents and carers are friendly and relaxed. A wealth of valuable information is shared, with parents and carers, via notice boards and newsletters. Also, activity plans for both rooms are displayed alongside lots of examples of children's work. Parents receive some information, on newsletters, regarding further activities to try at home but these are limited. Consequently, valuable opportunities are missed for parents and carers to extend children's learning at home and find out what they already know and can do. Staff chat to parents and carers, on a daily basis, about their child's care, behaviour and routines and all parents have received a pack of the playgroup's policies.

Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the provision; several are on the committee and all are invited to help on the parent rota. This helps to increase children's self-esteem and also enables parents to gain an insight into the day to day running of the provision. Staff understand that some parents work and cannot help during sessions and these parents are invited to help in any way that they can, for example, mending dressing-up clothes or sending in items for interest tables. Parents comment positively on the friendly and approachable staff and how well their children have settled. They confirm that they are given opportunities to share what they know about their child and to discuss their progress. They have all received basic information about the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' and have been invited to a curriculum evening where these will be explained in greater detail.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are happy in a generally spacious and attractive environment. Careful thought has been given to routines and activities and as a result children are secure and settled. Staff plan as a team and work well together. Good quality resources are provided for the children and they are effectively stored and presented to encourage children's independence. Adult to child ratios are maintained appropriately to positively support children's welfare and an effective keyworker system fosters children's security and emotional well-being. Children's welfare is enhanced because staff recruitment, appraisal and vetting procedures are suitable.

Documentation to ensure the safe and effective management of the setting is well organised and effectively maintained.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is responsible for the everyday running of the setting and is supported by a voluntary management committee made up of parents and carers. She works closely with her deputy and other staff members and demonstrates a strong commitment towards improving the quality of children's care and learning. The provision achieved the Pre-school Learning Alliance's 'Aiming for Quality' award in 2005. A high priority is given by the manager to staff training and development and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to improving their knowledge and expertise. They have attended a variety of training sessions, for example, 'Helping Children with Behavioural Problems', 'Increasing Self-esteem in the Foundation Stage' and 'Child protection'.

Regular staff meetings and annual appraisals offer staff the chance to share their views about the provision and plan for their own personal development. Staff are kept motivated and challenged because the manager ensures that they do not spend too long working in either room. They move rooms every couple of years and this allows staff to develop their knowledge of providing care and education for both age groups. Activity plans are evaluated on a weekly basis and the manager checks individual children's progress reports, for accuracy, before they are shared with parents. Good systems are in place to help monitor and evaluate the provision's effectiveness and any identified weaknesses are promptly addressed. The manager welcomes regular involvement from the local authority and makes sure that she is up to date with changes in childcare related subjects through reading relevant publications and attending training. 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 agreed to several recommendations; to improve the maintenance of some documentation; ensure that sufficient staff are available over break time; to increase the range and variety of toys and equipment to support equal opportunities; and to improve the opportunities for children to develop climbing skills.

Daily registers now include children's arrival and departure times and children's individual records contain all necessary information. There is no longer an issue over staff deployment at break times as staff do not have breaks during session times and they sit with children whilst they have snack. Additional resources, for example, role play items, puzzles and books have been purchased to increase children's awareness of diversity and develop their self-esteem.



Opportunities to develop children's climbing skills have been increased as changes have been made to the outdoor play area and a variety of large physical play equipment, including a climbing frame, has been introduced. Consequently, satisfactory improvements have been made to children's welfare and safety.

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

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

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

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

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

- make sure that children cannot gain access to the kitchen
- increase opportunities for two year old children to be independently creative and freely express their ideas.

#### **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):

- develop current systems used for observation, evaluation and assessment to help staff easily identify children's starting points and their next steps in learning and to ensure that information gained accurately informs individual children's progress records (also applies to care)
- develop strategies to encourage parents to continue with their children's learning at home.

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