



Little Lambs Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY320916
Inspection date	27 September 2006
Inspector	Dorcas Forgan
Setting Address	Shepherdswell County First School, Billingwell Place, Springfield, MILTON KEYNES, MK6 3NP
Telephone number	01908 665418
E-mail	
Registered person	Little Lambs Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Lambs Pre-School opened in 2006, having previously operated for several years at another premises under another name. It is managed by a committee of volunteers. It operates from a base room in a school in Milton Keynes, and has the use of several other areas within the school. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09.00 - 11.30 and 12.30 - 15.00 during term time. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 25 children aged from two and a half years to under five years on roll. Of these 17 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area. The group currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The group employs four staff. Of these three including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming, light, bright, clean environment. The children remain healthy because staff follow current environmental health and hygiene guidance. The group have the required policies and procedures in place; however, these do not always accurately portray the every day practices. Children are gaining a very good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through informative activities, such as learning how to care for teeth effectively. They are becoming independent in their own personal care. The staff help them to wash their own hands thoroughly using soap and hot air dryers.

Children benefit from healthy nutritious snacks, which the group provide. These include a wide variety of fruit, vegetables and cereal. The children enjoy learning new skills, such as when they make their own sandwiches, spreading the butter, tasting the different fillings and cutting the bread. They have tasting sessions when the children eagerly try different foods. The children pour their own drinks independently. At snack time children sit together in small groups talking with the staff and other children, socialising. They are encouraged to recognise their bodies' needs; helping themselves to drinks from the water dispenser, as they need them.

Children have regular use of the outside areas so that they can play in the fresh air. Staff provide a variety of activities for the children to experience whilst outside such as sand, water and painting. They also take part in a good range of physical activities, like balancing and playing with balls and hoops. The staff use the school grounds to extend the range of experiences and to provide wider spaces so that the children can play with items such as the parachute. Children enthusiastically take part in walks around the grounds and in the local area. Children are becoming healthy and developing their physical skills very well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good procedures ensure children's safety in a very well organised environment. Staff carry out informal risk assessments daily to ensure that all areas are safe and risks are minimised. Staff regularly check and clean all equipment and toys. There are effective safety and security procedures in place at the beginning and end of each session.

Children are cared for mainly in one room, which is very well organised with separate areas for different activities. The creative activity area extends into a schoolroom and is separated by a removable barrier; this provides the children with additional space and opportunities. The room looks very attractive with examples of the children's work and displays that are related to the themes. The plentiful supply of suitable activities and resources are stored around the perimeter of the room so that children can select from these independently as they wish. A child took a puzzle to the soft seating and attempted this on her own; she was pleased that she managed it independently. Children clear these activities away once they have completed them to their satisfaction. They learn to keep themselves safe and consider others. For example when they sit on the floor to take part in activity songs they are reminded to keep their legs crossed and

feet tucked in so that they do not trip anyone else up and no-one stands on their feet. Children are becoming very familiar with the emergency evacuation procedure.

Adults who are vetted care for children. They are very aware of their responsibility to protect the children. There is a clear policy and procedures for the staff and committee to follow if they have concerns about any child. Children are well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The majority of the children enter the group happily and settle quickly for registration, some children need the support of their parents to give them confidence to take part. Staff greet all the children individually so that they feel welcome and included. Children are beginning to make friends and to include others in their play, for example in the shop and hospital areas. They play alongside each other very well. Children receive a great deal of support from the staff to help and guide them; they are forming trusting relationships. Children access their own resources with confidence and are learning to clear away when items are finished with.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. In the main children participate in the wide range of activities. Senior staff have a firm knowledge of the Foundation Stage. All activities are well planned and resourced; they are suitable for the children's various abilities. All staff interact very well with the children; they use very good questioning and confirming strategies. They make learning fun.

The daily routine of the pre-school is effectively organised to maximise the various experiences available to the children. Staff introduce themes sensitively. Such as when the majority of new children start at the group, they carry out activities about themselves and their homes. Children sit very well during group activities, they enjoy participating, answering questions and acting out activity songs. They answer their names with growing confidence and join in the discussions about the weather and seasons. They are very keen to explore and try new activities. Children who have been attending the group for longer have very good concentration and work independently when necessary. Children are learning to enjoy looking at books and they handle them with care. They are beginning to recognise their names when written; all attempt to write them, with varying amount of skill. They have many opportunities to mark make, both in role play situations and whilst using various types of materials such as sand and chalks. Their vocabulary is extended well through many activities including singing when they sing about stomping, clicking and walking on tiptoe. Hand eye co-ordination is developed very well through using various tools such as glue sticks, scissors and small pieces of puzzle.

There are a wide range of mathematical resources and displays that children use as they wish. They are becoming very familiar with numbers as they practise counting and use mathematical language frequently. They count the number of children present and their fingers, hands and feet. Staff ask them to find certain items such as two cows, to ensure that they understand the concept. Children enjoy sorting items into sets as they learn about patterns and shapes. They do simple calculation such as how many of the children in the group are boys and how many

are girls. Children enjoy putting the train rails together to make their own track. They explore a wide range of media such as water, sand and paint; they create their own collages and pictures. They carry out experiments with magic snow, and learn that it freezes and melts. Children are becoming familiar with information technology such as the computer and the camera. Whilst out on a walk the children use the camera to take photos of the trees and leaves in autumn, which they later use to paint pictures and make displays. Through interesting activities such as making vegetable soup, they learn about eating healthily, shopping for the ingredients, preparing and cooking the vegetables and later enjoy smelling and tasting what they have made. Role-play is an important activity in the pre-school. Imaginary play is very well resourced, children become very involved in their make believe games. The home corner is also used to introduce new vocabulary, for children with little English, by repeating the names of every day objects. The group use the school's sensory room to introduce singing and musical activities and to provide various types of simulation and relaxation.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are forming good relations with each other and the staff, they are learning to interact and take part in group activities, enhancing their feeling of belonging. A high percentage of children and parents in the group do not speak English as their first language. Staff devise ways of communicating with them and involving them in the life of the group. Staff learn basic words from other languages to enhance simple communication. Photographs are used to illustrate activities and routines. They invite parents to share their celebrations and traditions with the children so that they are all becoming aware of the wider world and other peoples different cultures. Children have access to a varied range of resources that positively reflect diversity. The group are beginning to form links with the school and to learn about the local community.

Staff are developing effective procedures to support children with learning difficulties. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave very well; they are learning to respect one another. Children are clear about what the staff expect of them; for example, sitting quietly and listening to others. Staff are good role models, they give very clear explanations and praise appropriately. Children are learning to share and take turns such as when playing a board game of shopping. They receive very good support and individual attention.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The group give good written information about the facility and encourage parents to exchange verbal information on a daily basis. Staff use the parents' notice board to provide further information and to keep parents up to date with activities. Parents are welcomed into the group to settle their children and to help with activities. Children benefit from parents' involvement in the group. There are no opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress or plans for their future learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from their care being well organised. The new committee of volunteers manage the staff and carry out recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure children are well protected. The monitoring of the staff includes regular discussions with the chairperson and appraisals are carried out every six months. Staff have all attended training recently and further training is planned to ensure that their practices are up to date for the benefit and well being of the children. A keyworker system for the children to enhance their feeling of inclusion has been devised but not implemented yet.

Leadership and management is good.

The new person in charge sets a very good example to her team of staff. She has clear aims and objectives for the pre-school and the children who attend. The dedicated staff work closely to ensure they meet the children's needs they are eager to make improvements. The committee provide support and encouragement to the staff, they also receive support and advice from a manager of another group. The staff deliver the curriculum successfully for all the children through interesting and stimulating activities, although these are not at present evaluated formally through the children's records of achievement. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the registration 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.

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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):

- ensure wording of policies are relevant to actual practices

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):

- involve the parents further in their child's learning and setting expectations of next steps of learning
- implement recording the children's achievements.

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