



# Lighthouse Kids Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY344068
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 January 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lighthouse Kids Pre-School
<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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lighthouse Kids Pre-School opened at its current premises in 2006. It is a committee run provision and it operates from one room in a community building. It is situated in Hoo, Kent. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term times from 09.15 to 12.00. Older children stay for lunch club until 13.00. There is also a 'Teddy Bear' group which runs on Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 13.15 to 14.40. The outdoor play area is not used. Children mainly come from the local area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 34 children on roll. Of these eight four-year-olds and 12 three-year-olds receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children who speak English as a second language and children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. It employs a total of six staff, all of whom work part time and all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is sufficiently promoted because staff implement effective cleaning and hygiene routines to minimise the possibility of cross infection. For example, implementing effective cleaning routines for the kitchen and bathroom areas and having appropriate nappy changing practices. Children are encouraged to have appropriate personal hygiene routines, such as, washing their hands after using the toilets, covering their mouth when coughing and having tissues readily available to access if needed. Children's medical needs are effectively met. Sufficient information on children's individual medical requirements and written consent to obtain emergency medical treatment means that medical emergencies can be dealt with promptly. Appropriate procedures are in place for the administration of medication and for recording accidents. However, accidents are not recorded consistently and this means that the information is not always complete to ensure accuracy, such as, surname omitted.

Children have some opportunities to exercise, including music and movement sessions. However, these are limited because of the organisation of the main play area and because the group does not have access to an outside play area at present. Children learn about the importance of having a healthy lifestyle because staff reinforce this in daily conversations and also from having advice from health professionals, such as a health visitor.

Children benefit from a choice of healthy food and drink at snack times where they enjoy a variety of fruits. They can choose when to take their snack and request a drink of water when they feel thirsty. This encourages children to develop healthy habits and successfully promotes their independence. Staff ensure that all food and drink complies with parental instructions and children's preferences, enabling them to have confidence in the choices offered.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in an appropriately maintained, although, a little worn hall. Staff help families feel welcome because there is always someone available to greet them at the beginning of the session. Children play in a secure environment, with sufficient space to accommodate the numbers attending, however, due to restrictions imposed by the hall, staff are unable to display children's work at present. The manager and staff have taken responsibility for ensuring the hall is appropriately maintained and that necessary safety checks are complete so that children can explore safely. Children's self help skills are appropriately promoted because they are able to access the bathroom area independently.

Children play with an appropriate range of maintained and age appropriate toys and resources. These are attractively displayed to encourage children to make decisions about their play and to access them safely. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for the toys and resources because tidying up forms part of the regular and well practised routine.

Written risk assessments ensure children's safety. Children and staff have an appropriate understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. However, the fire procedure is not displayed, this compromises the safety of visitors. Staff are deployed to ensure the safety of the children at all times and an effective collection system, ensures children are only collected by named persons.

Staff have a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms that could indicate abuse and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures staff can act in the child's best interest and safeguard their welfare appropriately.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children who attend the setting are confident and secure. Most arrive happy and ready to join in. Those who are a little upset are reassured by staff and quickly settle. Children are confident and have a relaxed relationship with the staff. Staff work together successfully, working together to plan for the children and their development effectively. Children benefit from routines and variety of play opportunities. However, there is little differentiation for the younger children, and staff have not fully implemented the Birth to three matters framework to support their planning and assessment of younger children.

Staff implement a key worker system to support children's emotional well-being. Key workers are responsible for settling in new children and developing a caring relationship outside the family home. As a result, children build positive relationships. Key workers are also responsible for liaising with parents to share information about children's developmental progress. Staff extend children's thinking as they play alongside them and ask open ended questions, prompting children to find answers and use their imagination effectively. For example, during role play at the hairdressers and whilst enjoying small group play 'in the sea'.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children enjoy their time in the setting and staff know the children well and can identify that children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and although the main planning is completed by the manager and deputy, all staff have some input and this means they have an active role in planning the curriculum for the children based on key worker observations. Although the range of opportunities in place covers the six areas of learning, weakness in the areas of physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are evident. Whilst staff are carrying out activities they support individual children at their pace and level. However, the activities are not planned to show differentiation for the more able or less able children and current planning does not consistently reflect learning intentions and as a result, the proposed aims for children are not clear. Activities are not always evaluated and this means that it is not clear how future planning is influenced.

Children are confident in the environment, they are familiar with the daily routine and make independent choices about their play. Their social skills are developing as they share well and take turns whilst playing together. Children enjoy playing dominoes with staff and they listen

intently to instructions and as a result, they follow the rules and have a thoroughly enjoyable game. Staff support children's play because they provide a good balance of adult led and child initiated opportunities. This includes, enabling children to develop their independence and self help skills appropriately. For example, they use the toilet and wash their hands independently and at the milk bar, they choose their fruit and juice and help pour drinks with increasing confidence. Children behave well and good behaviour is encouraged and recognised by staff. This contributes to enhancing children's self esteem.

Older children are able to write their own names on their work and younger children are encouraged to attempt this during adult led activities. However, when staff help younger children to write their names, they do not correct them when they write from right to left. This means that the basic rules of writing are not being consistently applied and this can impact on children's learning. Most children can recognise their names from name cards as they arrive and when choosing to use the milk bar. Children's language is developing because staff are skilled at asking open ended questions and allowing children time to think about their response and when necessary offering prompts. Children contribute to 'show and tell' at circle time where they are encouraged to contribute a personal item from home and tell the group about it. This helps build their confidence in speaking to others and also contributes to helping them feel valued.

Children show understanding of mathematical concepts, such as number and shape. Children's mathematical language is developing appropriately, language such as bigger than or smaller than is commonly used when trying to work out sizes. Some older three-year-olds and four-year-olds are able to count to 12 and beyond at circle time, and also count the number of cups needed at snack time accurately, demonstrating one-to-one correspondence. Children are able to identify several shapes, such as a square, triangle and circle and although many can recognise these easily, they are not always fully supported to extend their knowledge in this area. Four-year-olds are developing an awareness of calculation, for example, whilst working in the hairdressers, the staff asked how much the hair cut cost and the child replied six pounds. The staff gave him five pounds and he told her he needed another pound to make six.

Children's exploration and investigation skills are developing appropriately, for example, during water play, children pour water from large containers into small containers and are encouraged to think why the liquid does not fit in the smaller container. Children build models from play dough and through using a range of construction toys, such as mega blocks and popoids, where they build their creations with increasing skill. Children have some opportunities to use and learn about information technology, for example, they use table top electronic toys. However, these were not available during the inspection because they were having batteries checked. Opportunities for children to learn about living things are too few because this is not incorporated into current planning and because the outdoor area is not used. Children learn about themselves and others through planned activities based around a current theme, for example, celebrating festivals. However, opportunities for children to explore their local community, by going on outings are too few, because this does not form part of the regular routine.

Children make sufficient use of the space available to them. They demonstrate appropriate spatial awareness as they move around the hall negotiating furniture and people. Children

follow instructions in a spontaneous movement session. They move their bodies appropriately to words, such as, 'sway' and 'shake'. Opportunities for children to practise using their large motor skills are too few because the organisation of space and the daily routine does not support this fully, and children do not have use of the outdoor space at the moment. They learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle because staff reinforce this. Children's fine motor skills are developing appropriately because they use scissors, play dough equipment and pencils with increasing skill.

Children use their imagination well. They have many opportunities to express their feelings and thoughts through role play and in small world activities. They negotiate and agree roles, for example, at the hairdressers, a four-year-old informed the inspector that she was the mummy waiting to have her hair done and he (pointing to another child sitting down) was the daddy. This is well supported with appropriate resources. Children have some opportunities to be freely expressive in art and crafts. They enjoy taking part in adult led painting activities, which also enables them to create their own work. However, opportunities for children to use an easel as a medium to express themselves are very limited because this is not available at present. Children enjoy taking part in daily singing sessions. They recite familiar songs with ease and link actions to songs well.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a sufficient range of resources to reflect a positive image of the community, these include a range of books and role play equipment that portray different cultures and domestic situations. However, those depicting a positive image of disability are too few. Although there are no visual displays of children's work around the room, there are photos available for children to look at themselves doing different things and children bring in items for 'show and tell' and this contributes to them feeling valued in the environment. Gender stereotyping is minimised in the setting as toys are suitable for all children and as they have equal access, children make independent choices of what they would like to play with.

The setting ensures all children and families are welcomed into the setting and supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Staff make observations of children's development and any concerns identified are shared with parents and external support is sought. There is a named special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in place, who has recently attended training in this area and who works closely with the area SENCO in the Local Authority to best meet the needs of children and help them progress in the setting.

Staff provide a positive role model for the children and as a result children behave well. Staff greet parents in a friendly way and this helps children feel secure. Staff manage children's behaviour in a fair and consistent way, strategies including using diverting children from unwanted behaviour are effective. Children are familiar with the daily routine, for example, they know that it is tidy up time when they hear the bell ring. Good behaviour is acknowledged through the use of laminated cards that the children take home to show parents what they have done well.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident and show good levels of self esteem. Children talk about their experiences during circle time and also when chatting to staff during activities. They are confident in sharing their feelings. Children show caring attitudes towards others in the group and develop caring attitudes through role play. Children relate well with others, as positive relationships are forming. Children have also developed positive relationships with adults in the room, greeting and sharing information or thoughts. Staff know the children well as the setting liaises with families to find out about the child and their individual everyday needs.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff continue to develop effective working relationships with parents and through use of the key worker system and daily conversations. Information is exchanged and parents are encouraged to play an active part in the care of children whilst at the setting. Parents are given some useful information about the setting to help them know how the routine/curriculum is organised, these include a parents' notice board, regular newsletters and information displayed about the current theme, although the activity plans are not readily available to parents because they are currently displayed in the kitchen. Several parents/carers were spoken to during the inspection and all commented on how happy they are with the provision. Comments include "happy with the information received about child's progress" and "the group has achieved a lot since moving premises". One weakness identified is that parents are not given information about the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. This means that parents do not have sufficient knowledge to play an active part in their child's learning.

Required policies and procedures to ensure the safe management of the provision are in place. However, the procedure for dealing with complaints is not reflective of current requirements and there is no complaints log in place. This is a breach in regulations. The provider demonstrates a positive attitude to ensuring this is amended promptly to ensure it is accurate. The risk and impact to children is minimal because there is a procedure in place, which includes the regulator's details and is shared with parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Qualification requirements are well met because all staff are appropriately qualified in childcare. Most staff have a first aid qualification and opportunities for further training are in place. Recent training for different staff includes Birth to three matters, special educational needs training and child protection awareness. However, the practices in place are not completely reflective of the training received, for example, there is little evidence to show the Birth to three framework is used to benefit the younger children. Staff demonstrate an awareness of their responsibility to promote children's welfare and this is evident as staff who are unvetted are not left unsupervised with children.

Space is generally well used and staff are deployed effectively. However, moving into the current premises means that the space available is less than at the previous premises, and as a result the organisation of the routine has not been fully established to ensure all areas of the curriculum are equally reflected, such as, in physical development. Children benefit from an organisation which has secure systems in place to support staff and value their contributions.

Consequently, staff morale is good, as they are committed and motivated to offer good quality care and education. Systems for induction, training and regular staff meetings are in place. As a result, there are policies and procedures in place to meet the National Standards, although the complaints procedure is not reflective of current regulations. Required documentation is all in place and is stored in a confidential way, although the record of accidents is not consistently recorded. This means there is a potential for important information to be missed.

Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Children benefit from a strong staff team who share common aims. Staff work closely with the manager and deputy, supported by the committee members, to ensure the programme is effective. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. This has a positive impact on the quality of education provided for children. The staff plan and provide a balanced curriculum, however, weakness in the current planning means that it is not evident how activities are differentiated to meet children's learning needs, how activities are evaluated to influence future planning and on occasions learning intentions are not clear. The manager and deputy acknowledge this weakness and demonstrate a positive attitude to make making improvements to benefit the children. The setting 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 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.

### **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 satisfactory.

#### **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):



- adopt an appropriate framework for planning and assessing the development of children under three, such as the Birth to three matters framework
- improve fire safety systems by displaying the evacuation procedure
- review and improve the information given to parents relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum and Birth to three matters framework to enable them to actively contribute to their child's learning ( also applies to nursery education)
- ensure the complaints procedure is reflective of current regulations and keep a record of complaints relating to the national standards and any action taken
- ensure the information recorded in the accident record is consistent and accurate

### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to further develop their large motor skills on a regular basis ( also applies to care)
- increase opportunities for children to find out about some features of living things
- review current planning to ensure learning intentions are clear, that the planning shows how activities are differentiated to meet the needs of the more able and/ or older children and how activities are evaluated to influence future planning

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