

Little Lambs Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	129098
Inspection date	09 November 2007
Inspector	Teresa Evelina Lucas
Setting Address	The Good Shepherd Church, 79 Moorside Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 5EP
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Registered person	Sharon Cole
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Lambs Pre-School operates from a church hall within the Good Shepherd Church in Downham in the London borough of Lewisham. The pre-school has the use of a large hall which has dividing doors. There are also separate children's and adults' bathroom facilities and a kitchen. The group has access to a small paved outdoor play area and a large fully enclosed playground.

A maximum of 24 children aged two to five years may attend the pre-school, and of these, not more than eight may be under three years. The pre-school operates on Mondays to Fridays from 09:30 - 12:00 and on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:30 - 15:00, during term time. During the summer school holidays the pre-school run an occasional summer playscheme for children under five years. There are currently 39 children on roll. Of these, 33 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and several children who speak English as an additional language.

The staff team consists of two joint managers and two additional members of staff, all of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications. A total of three members of staff are usually present

at every session. The pre-school receives support from the Lewisham Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health, hygiene and well-being are extremely well promoted because there are excellent health and hygiene routines in place which are understood and well implemented by all staff. These are underpinned by a clear written policy which forms part of the nursery's operational plan and are effectively shared with all staff. There is a sick children policy which requests that parents do not bring their children to the nursery if they are unwell. This helps to protect children from the spread of illness. Children's health is also promoted because there are effective systems in place to record the administration of medication, including prior written parental permission. All staff hold current paediatric first aid qualifications and written parental consent is sought for seeking emergency medical attention. These measures help to ensure that staff are able to take appropriate action if there is an accident or emergency.

Children consistently learn about the importance of good hygiene practices through everyday routines. This is because staff regularly reinforce these. For example, they remind children about the importance of making sure that they wash their hands before eating their snack so that they don't get germs in their tummies. In addition, they use carpet time discussions as an extremely effective way of ensuring that children understand about good routines around the use of the toilet, handwashing and the use of tissues when sneezing, coughing or blowing their noses. In addition, very good arrangements are in place in the children's toilets and this ensures that children are able to become confident and independent when using these facilities. For example, they are able to reach the toilets and washbasins because step-ups are available and have good access to liquid soap and paper towels and hot air hand drier.

Children benefit from excellent opportunities for outdoor physical play and exercise on a daily basis. In summer months the pre-school operates a free flow session and this means that children are able to make independent choices about when they want to play outside. Throughout the year and in all weathers, they are also able to enjoy vigorous outdoor play in a very large and fully enclosed astro-turfed area. This area provides children with lots of space and freedom to enjoy vigorous play and exercise. For example, they run, jump and chase each other and members of staff as they play catch and race each other. Opportunities for developing children's physical skills are excellent because children benefit from lots of opportunities to use a wide range of small physical play equipment, including balls and skittles. Children also enjoy extremely good opportunities for indoor physical play because this area of provision is exceptionally well resourced. As a result, children greatly enjoy climbing, sliding and balancing and using a range of indoor play equipment.

Staff's very positive approach to the promotion of healthy eating helps children to learn about which foods are good for them and will help them to stay healthy, for example, fruit and vegetables. The effective organisation of snack-time means that children are able to help themselves to healthy nutritious snacks and drinks throughout the session. Consequently, they are becoming independent as they decide when and what they would like to eat and drink, spread their own crackers, pour their own drinks and help themselves to fresh fruit and/or vegetables. Parents participate in the promotion of healthy eating because there is a parents' rota for the provision of snacks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Excellent systems are in place to ensure children's safety indoors, outdoors and when going on outings. These are underpinned by a clear safety policy that is shared and understood by all staff. Children's safety is extremely effectively promoted because regular risk assessments are used to identify and minimise potential dangers. Staff carry out regular checks on all toys and equipment and this helps to ensure children's ongoing safety. Appropriate safety precautions are in place and staff often talk to children about safety issues. For example, staff remind children to sit down when eating or drinking and enforce clear safety rules when children go out into the playground. These include good listening, good looking and good walking. As a result, children are learning to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others and are able to move around the premises safely, confidently and independently. Children's safety is further promoted by staff's excellent understanding of appropriate supervision levels.

Staff pay very good attention to security at the premises. For example, the outside doors are locked during the pre-school's operation and visitors can only gain access by being admitted by a member of staff. A visitors' book is accurately maintained and the hours of attendance of all children and staff are carefully recorded. Written procedures to be followed if a child is lost or uncollected also help to ensure that children stay safe. Children's safety in the event of a fire is also very well promoted because clear written fire procedures are displayed and regular fire drills are carried out and appropriately recorded.

The pre-school is warm, welcoming and exceptionally child friendly because staff work hard to ensure that they provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for children and parents. All areas of the premises, including the entrance foyer and children's toilets are enhanced through the imaginative and creative use of attractive displays of children's work and the use of colourful charts and posters. The pre-school environment is extremely well organised in clearly designated areas for all areas of play and learning, for example, creative area, home corner, language and literacy area, writing and graphics area and maths area. Very good use of the outside play area helps to ensure that children enjoy a very good balance of indoor and outdoor activities.

Children benefit from a very wide range of extremely good quality resources which are of excellent quality and plentiful so that children are able to play with them effectively. Most resources are accessibly stored and this enables children to make lots of independent choices. Children are learning to take care of equipment because staff actively encourage them to take part in looking after the pre-school environment and take responsibility for tidying away after themselves. For example, at clearing up time they all sing a song together about making sure that everyone takes a share in clearing up. As a result, children readily take part in clearing away activities.

Staff understand their responsibilities relating to child protection/safeguarding children and ensure that appropriate measures and procedures are in place to protect children from the risk of harm and neglect. They are fully aware of the action to take if they are worried that a child may be being abused. There is a clear written child protection/safeguarding policy which includes procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Parents are also fully informed through the pre-school prospectus and a policy statement on the notice board. The designated safeguarding officer takes steps to ensure that she and the rest of the staff team update their knowledge of safeguarding issues, for example, by attending regular training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy, settled and confident at the pre-school. They greatly enjoy a very varied, balanced range of interesting and challenging activities where the emphasis is clearly on learning through play and through everyday pre-school routines. Staff work very hard to provide an extremely well organised and exceptionally rich and stimulating environment. Activities are extremely well organised in clearly designated areas, for example, a home corner, a writing and graphics area and a language and book area. This very effectively promotes children's free choice and independence. The highly effective key worker system helps to ensure that children settle well and are happy and secure. Children are sensitively and lovingly supported by caring and skilled staff who recognise and acknowledge children's individual needs and interests. Interactions between staff and children are excellent. Staff talk and listen to children, engage them in chatty conversations and ask lots of open-ended questions to make them think. Children benefit from very warm, affectionate and loving relationships with staff. They are very enthusiastic and clearly enjoy playing with the children and getting involved in their activities. Frequent use of praise, encouragement and humour helps ensure that children's self esteem and confidence are extremely well promoted.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff get to know the children well and ensure that they clearly establish each child's individual starting point. As a result, they are able to plan effectively and ensure that each child is making progress. Very good planning systems are in place and staff use the Foundation Stage guidance extremely effectively. This helps to ensure that children enjoy a varied, balanced range of activities which reflect their interests. Consequently, they are making rapid, sustained progress towards the early learning goals. All staff are involved in planning and plans are effectively shared with parents. Planning includes long, medium and short term plans where focused activities and learning intentions are detailed. Daily plans are based on evaluations of the previous day's activities. Staff use their observations to identify the next steps for individual children's learning and this informs the next day's planning. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress, For example, individual play and learning plans are drawn up for each child and parents are given opportunities to contribute to these. Excellent records are kept of children's individual progress and achievements through individual files that contain dated examples of children's work, detailed observations and photographs.

Children's personal, emotional and social development is excellent. They are very sociable and friendly and are thriving in the warm and supportive pre-school environment where the staff provide excellent support. Children are extremely motivated and focused on their activities because staff emphasise the importance of making choices. They also benefit from regular opportunities to make their own decisions and, as a result, are beginning to understand about majority decisions and democracy. For example, they decide individually whether they want to stay in or out and then very maturely and sensibly accept the majority decision. Children's sense of belonging is developing very well because staff welcome them into the group by saying good morning to each child individually when they call their name on the register. Pre-school routines help children to learn to take turns; for example, they understand that two helpers are chosen every day so that each child gets a turn. Behaviour is exceptionally good because staff are excellent role models for the children, for example, they treat children with respect and consideration at all times. Consequently, children are beginning to share well, be co-operative with others and to show care, concern and consideration for each other. They are learning right

from wrong because staff regularly promote and re-enforce positive behaviour through the use of praise and encouragement. For example, before the children go outdoors staff remind them about good listening, good looking and good walking and praise them when they do so. Children's independence is developing well because there are very good opportunities for them to learn to take responsibility for themselves. For example, putting on coats and painting aprons, using the toilet facilities, taking a share in clearing up and helping themselves to drinks and snacks.

Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is excellent. Children are learning that books are a source of pleasure because staff are very enthusiastic about books and story-telling. Consequently, children greatly enjoy story times and are developing positive attitudes towards books and reading. They concentrate extremely well and delight in participating as they predict and retell favourite stories. Children also benefit from choosing books to take home and enjoy with their parents. They are learning to speak confidently, individually and to a group, for example, at carpet time and story time. Children's language development is progressing extremely well because staff regularly introduce new words. Exceptionally good access to a range of writing resources encourages children's early writing skills. There is a well resourced writing and graphics area

and, in addition, notepads or clipboards and pencils are available at every activity including during outdoor play. Many children spontaneously use these to mark make, for example, they try to write their name. Resources in the home corner also provide children with lots of opportunities to write, for example, diaries, address books, notebooks and envelopes. Children are learning that print carries meaning through the very good use of labelling in the pre-school environment and through access to newspapers, catalogues, leaflets, lists and menus in the pre-school environment.

An extremely well organised maths area with wealth of good quality equipment, displays, charts and activities helps to ensure that children are making extremely good progress in their mathematical development. They are able to explore mathematical ideas and concepts, for example, shape, pattern and number. Staff are very skilled at bringing maths into everyday routines naturally and incidentally. For example, children routinely count each other at register time, compare and calculate and use mathematical language confidently to describe quantity, size, shape and position. Number songs and rhymes such as 'Five Currant Buns' also help to reinforce mathematical concepts and ideas.

Children enjoy excellent opportunities to explore their own creativity, for example, painting, collage, playdough, cutting and sticking, chalking and drawing. They can access many resources for themselves and, as a result, are able to design and make their own unique objects. Children also benefit from a very good balance between staff led activities and those they choose for themselves. Opportunities to express themselves imaginatively are extremely good, for example, through small world play, puppets, dressing up and home corner play. Children's imaginative play is enhanced through the provision of an excellent range of props and resources. Singing and music feature largely in the pre-school's daily routine and children benefit from frequent opportunities to enjoy songs and music. Children, staff and, sometimes, parents, participate enthusiastically and have lots of fun as they sing together and join in action songs. Regular access to a well resourced music area which the children helped to set up provides children with lots of opportunities to explore music, rhythm and sound freely. For example, they are able to use a tape recorder by themselves and listen to different types of music. Staff introduce them to creative and imaginative ways of enjoying music, for example, drawing in time to the beat and words of songs.

Children are making excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are learning about other cultures and religions because staff plan activities around celebrations and festivals. Children's awareness about others in the community is supported by a very good range of multi-cultural resources including books, dolls, puzzles, home corner props and dressing up. They are learning about customs and traditions, for example, they make poppies and talk about Remembrance Sunday and how important it is to remember people who have died in wars. Children benefit from very good opportunities to build and construct through a range of construction activities and are learning to use simple tools, for example, scissors. They are learning about technology because they have very good access to a computer. Children are becoming competent in using a mouse and keyboard and are able to competently select and use simple programmes for themselves. They also enjoy playing with cameras, mobile phones and various electronic toys. There are very good opportunities for children to learn about nature and the natural world. For example, they are able to observe, feed, draw and talk about African land snails. The outside area also enables children to learn about and observe nature. For example, they discuss what happens to trees in the autumn and collect buckets of leaves to use indoors. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is further enhanced through frequent outings in the local community including the library, local shops, and going to the post box to post letters. Visitors to the pre-school also help children to learn about others in the community and include the police, fire fighters, the dentist and the lollipop man.

Children's physical development is progressing extremely well. Children benefit from planned activities that provide them with excellent opportunities to take part in a wide range of indoor and outdoor physical play activities. They enjoy regular vigorous play and exercise and benefit from lots of opportunities to develop and practise their physical skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle well at the pre-school because very good systems are in place to identify their individual needs. These include detailed discussions with parents and seeking and recording information about all aspects of children's needs. The highly effective key worker system helps to ensure that children's needs are appropriately and sensitively supported. In addition, settling in procedures acknowledge that children differ greatly in how long it takes them to settle. Key workers work with parents to ensure that children's early experiences at pre-school are positive. Consequently, children feel secure and happy and confidently participate in pre-school routines and activities.

Diversity is positively acknowledged and valued, for example, through the availability of a very good range of resources including dolls, books, puzzles, play figures and home corner props. Children are also learning to respect and value others in the community because they take part in activities around festivals and celebrations, for example, Diwali. There are excellent systems in place for identifying and supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These are supported by a written policy that takes account of the code of practice and by the drawing up of individual play plans for all children. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator demonstrates a very strong commitment to all aspects of inclusion and is pro-active in ensuring that all children are able to take part in the full range of activities while at pre-school. Staff support for children with English as an additional language is exceptionally good. This includes identifying familiar words in children's home languages, displaying words in different scripts in the pre-school, using dual language books and displaying a welcome poster in a variety of languages. Parents are also invited to help children learn about other languages, for example, a parent who speaks Russian translated a story that was very familiar to the children into Russian.

and then told it to the children using all the same gestures and sounds that the children already knew. This meant that even though they could not understand the words, they were still able to follow and enjoy the story.

Children are forming strong relationships with staff and each other. Their behaviour is extremely good because staff provide very positive role models for them and treat them with respect at all times. Staff have realistic expectations of children's behaviour and ensure that they use consistent strategies that take account of children's age and level of understanding. They use frequent explanations and this helps children to learn right from wrong, think about others' feelings and become self-disciplined. Staff promote positive behaviour through the frequent use of praise and this encourages children to feel good about themselves and grow in confidence. The pre-school's 'golden rules', which are regularly re-enforced, remind the children about good listening, good looking, as well as remembering to take turns, share, help, be kind and always tell the truth. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Staff are very approachable, friendly and welcoming towards parents. Parents are fully aware of who their child's key worker is and know that they can discuss any concerns with them, the managers or any other members of staff. Information about the pre-school is shared via a notice board and a regular newsletter. Parents also receive a welcome prospectus which provides them with information about many aspects of the pre-school's operation, including the Foundation Stage curriculum. A clearly written well organised operational plan is readily accessible and parents are asked to read and sign their agreement to all policies and procedures when their child first starts. These measures help to ensure that parents are very well informed about the setting. Parents are invited to participate in a parents' rota and to contribute directly to pre-school activities and events. For example, they bring items for snack time and take part in 'bring your dad (or mum, nan, granddad) to pre-school'. Parents are extremely well informed about their child's progress and very involved in future planning, for example, drawing up children's individual play/learning plans. This includes agreeing the next steps in their child's learning and means that parents can take an active role in their child's learning. Meetings take place on a termly basis, but parents can also talk to staff informally at the beginning and end of sessions. Children's individual folders which include their progress records are also a very effective method of sharing information with parents. All parents approached gave very positive feedback to the inspector. For example, they commented on staff's friendliness and approachability, staff's excellent interaction with their child and commented on how happy, settled and confident their children are and how much they enjoy coming to the pre-school. Some parents also said how pleased they are with the excellent progress their children are making and said that they feel very involved in their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children benefit from an extremely welcoming, child-friendly environment where they have access to a balanced and stimulating range of activities across all areas of development, play and learning. Space is creatively and imaginatively used and organised in clearly designated areas. Children have good access to an excellent range of good quality resources. The pre-school session provides an extremely good balance of activities and includes regular opportunities for outdoor play. Consequently, children benefit from lots of opportunities to make independent choices and decisions. Staff ratios are very good and effective staff deployment ensures that

children are appropriately supervised at all times. Children are looked after by an exceptionally caring, competent and committed staff team who are extremely enthusiastic in their approach. Interaction between adults and children is excellent and this helps children gain in confidence and self esteem.

Appropriate documentation is in place, for example, attendance, accident and medication records and is consistently maintained and confidentially stored. The nursery's operational plan is very well organised and includes policies and procedures relating to all areas of the nursery's operation. These include all polices required by the National Standards, for example, a complaints policy and complaints log and a policy of the procedure to follow if a child is uncollected or becomes lost.

Sound recruitment procedures ensure that all necessary checks are carried out to establish that all staff are suitable to work with children. In addition, children are never left with unvetted persons. Good staff records are kept and include a record of training attended. A clear management structure is in place and staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. All members of staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications. Staff demonstrate a positive approach to attending training, for example, safeguarding children training and this helps to ensure that their knowledge and understanding is up-to-date.

Leadership and management is outstanding because the excellent nursery education programme ensures that children are making extremely good and consistent progress towards the early learning goals. Planning is highly effective and there are very sound systems in place to evaluate children's progress and achievements. Individual learning plans are drawn up for all children, based on the stepping stones. Evaluations are appropriately and consistently used to plan the next steps in individual children's learning and are effectively shared with parents and children. Systems for recording children's progress are extremely good. The pre-school managers monitor and evaluate the nursery education programme on an ongoing basis through observations and by overseeing planning and children's progress records.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection an action was set to improve the standards of care provided. This action has been fully met and, as a result, children's health is now more effectively promoted through improvements in handwashing procedures, for example, the use of paper towels.

Four recommendations were also made. As a result, a consistent behaviour policy is in place that is routinely shared with all staff and parents. Staff have developed a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour. Consequently, children's behaviour is very good. Since the last inspection the kitchen area has been refurbished and is now maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Systems for the identification and providing support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have been significantly improved and include making detailed observations and regularly reviewing children's individual play plans. The organisation of documentation has also improved because attendance records now include the hours of attendance of every child. A visitors' book is also appropriately maintained. These measures help to promote children's safety and security and ensure that accurate records are kept of everyone present on the premises. Consequently, the standards of care provided have improved.

In addition, four key issues were identified to improve the quality of nursery education. Considerable improvements have been made to planning systems at the pre-school and planning now includes clear learning intentions for each child. Improved arrangements have been

introduced at snack time and these ensure that children have opportunities to develop independence, for example, they are able to help themselves to snacks and drinks at any time during the session. Everyday routines are now effectively used to help children understand mathematical concepts like addition and subtraction, for example, by children counting each other at register time. Significant improvements have been made to ways of supporting children who speak English as an additional language and include identifying and using familiar words in children's home language, displaying words in different scripts, the use of welcome poster in a range of languages and providing dual language books. As a result, the quality of nursery education has improved.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk