

# Early Years @ Lightcliffe

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	303768
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 September 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Early Years @ Lightcliffe 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 satisfactory. 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?

Early Years@ Lightcliffe has been registered since 1997 and is situated within the Christchurch community building in Lightcliffe, Halifax, West Yorkshire. The setting is managed by a voluntary committee. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open Tuesday to Thursday between the hours of 09.15 and 15.00 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged two to three years on roll. Of these, six children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

The pre-school employs five staff; of these, two hold relevant early years qualifications to Level 2 and 3 and one member of staff is working towards a Level 3 qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in warm, clean premises where they become increasingly independent in their personal care. They learn to understand the importance of good hygiene as members of staff adhere to consistent routines to ensure the children in their care remain healthy. This encourages children to learn about and adopt simple personal hygiene practices, such as washing and drying their hands after going to the toilet and before eating and using a tissue to wipe their nose. Resources are in place to enable the children to become independent in their personal care; for example, they access the sink and toilet using a step. Staff have first aid training and are confident to administer treatment in the event of an accident. To support this, the first aid box is fully-stocked, up to date and easily accessible. Accidents are clearly recorded and procedures are in place for the recording and administration of medication to children; however, parents do not currently sign the records to confirm that they are aware of when medication was administered to their child. There are appropriate arrangements in place for when children become unwell and parents have given their written consent for staff to seek medical advice or treatment in the event of an emergency.

Children's health is effectively promoted because the pre-school provides healthy and nutritious snacks and complies with their individual dietary requirements. Snacks include fruit platters, toast and cheese. Children eat lunches provided by their parents and lunchtimes are relaxed, social occasions when they all sit together around the tables. Children are beginning to understand that certain foods are good for them; for example, a three-year-old confidently states as he leaves the table, 'Look how big I am now'. Staff confirm his statement and reply, 'Yes, that's because you have drunk all your milk'. Children are offered drinks regularly throughout the day to ensure they are well hydrated. Snacks are offered café style, so as not to interrupt children's play. Their individual care needs are successfully met because the pre-school obtains medical information, daily routines and details of any allergies at registration. Members of staff understand that children who are well nourished, alert and comfortable have the energy and enthusiasm to benefit from the activities on offer and enjoy the company of others.

Children have regular opportunities to participate in outdoor physical play. They have access to a fully enclosed play area where they enjoy playing on the slide, bikes, climbing apparatus, scooters and with balls. They develop spatial awareness and coordination whilst using the outdoor play apparatus. Children enthusiastically use the scooters competently and enjoy playing on the larger bike using the stabilizers. They giggle as they attempt to catch balls and roll the hoops with the support of staff. As a result, children benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise and they become skilful in a range of movements.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe and benefit from premises that are secure, child-friendly and suitable for their purpose. Members of staff ensure that the environment gives children easy access to a comprehensive range of facilities that successfully promote their development in all areas. Children use equipment that is suitable, well-maintained and conforms to safety standards.

Children's safety is effectively promoted in most areas because members of staff take positive steps to minimise risks to children, for example, through regular risk assessments and fire drills. However, the fire procedure notices are not clearly displayed for visitors' information. Staff are proactive in identifying hazards and raising children's awareness by discussing safe practices with them. For example, children are reminded to climb the slide correctly and to walk in the playroom. Regular visual assessments are conducted to ensure that children are continually kept safe. Children are not allowed to leave the setting without a known adult and the entrance door is locked after children have arrived. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they take part in the regular fire practises, learn about road and car safety during activities and enjoy visits from the fire service.

Children are safeguarded as members of staff have a secure understanding of their role in child protection and are confident to implement local procedures. They are vigilant, aware of how to seek advice and are knowledgeable about the children in their care. Parents are aware of the pre-school's procedures and the action they intend to take should they have any cause for concern. This supports children's welfare, promotes their emotional stability and enables them to develop healthy dependence. However, the procedures have not been updated to reflect details for the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and most are settled. Staff are sensitive to individual needs, for example, young children finding pre-school difficult to adjust to are very well supported by a member of staff, gradually building a sense of security. Parents are also encouraged to stay with their child until they are happy to be left. All children are warmly welcomed by staff. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and enable them to develop feelings of self-worth. Children's play and learning is inspired through staff's high quality interaction with them and they develop confidence through support and encouragement.

Children have access to a broad range of activities and resources, encouraging their autonomy and helping them to achieve in all areas. Toys are versatile, fun and offer sufficient challenge. Generally, children's individual needs are met well as members of staff have a good understanding of their backgrounds, developmental stages and future learning needs. Children under three follow the same curriculum as older children who are funded for nursery education; however, activities are differentiated for their differing abilities. Assessments of their development are made using the 'Birth the three matters' framework; however, the next steps in their development are not recorded and are not used to inform and maximise the effectiveness of future practice. This potentially means that children's individual developmental needs are not always thoroughly met. Members of staff provide appropriate support to enable younger children to take part in all their chosen activities. For example, children are supported to use the pedals on the bikes and to use the scissors at the mark making table. Children enjoy taking part in many interesting activities, for example, they bake bread and pies, and experiment using their senses with the shaving foam, paint, water, sand and dough.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most staff have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. They engage appropriately with them, are good role models and encourage children to develop their play opportunities to help make good progress towards the early learning goals. The planning and children's assessments cover all six areas of learning,

with the learning outcomes for the focus activities clearly defined. However, activities are not evaluated and the next steps in children's learning are not clearly identified to inform future planning. This impacts on staff's ability to meet the specific needs of all the children successfully. Staff set good challenges for the children that are appropriate for their stage in develop. They use effective questioning to enable the children to think and respond in their own words. For example, children are asked what colour red and yellow make as they play with coloured sheets of plastic as they mix them together. They are also asked to think about what they see in the sky at night as they draw pictures at the mark making table. Activities are adapted to provide realistic challenge for older and more able children.

Overall, the children are making good progress in all areas of learning. Children enter the setting confidently as they go and play with the interesting activities and are happy to try new experiences. They have friends that they like to play with and share the same activities. Children are becoming independent as they attend to their own personal hygiene, washing their hands before snack, helping themselves to the fruit and toast at the snack, tidying away resources and finding their own names at registration and snack time. They show a good sense of self when they talk about their home life, their toys and their family. More able children talk about what their intentions are during play and sequence their actions well. For example, children in the role play area talk about going to work and dropping the baby off at the nursery first.

Children show an interest in books and handle them well, turning the pages correctly as they look at the pictures. They develop pre-reading skills as they quickly recognise their own name cards and distinguish the sound of the letter that represents their name. They enjoy mark making activities as they ascribe meaning to their drawings and squiggles that they create.

Children use numbers well during their play. They talk about the number of cars that they have, using their fingers to correctly represent the number. More able children count well as they count the heart shape biscuits they make from the dough, giving a number name for each item. They recognise some shapes in everyday objects as they say they have made heart biscuits and recognise a star shaped balloon on the ceiling. Children begin to order size by length as a child makes from the dough a 'baby worm, mummy worm and a very big daddy worm'.

Children explore their environment and show an interest in why things work and happen. They enjoy making bird feeders and watch the birds feed in the garden. They learn about the life cycles of butterflies and frogs. They enjoy planting and growing seeds and looking for mini-beasts outdoors. They use a range of equipment to investigate, such as magnets, spy glass, cameras and magnifying glasses. They delight in visits from the fire service and experiment helping to use the fire hose. Children use construction well to build and balance as they make train tracks and towers. They know how to operate some equipment as they play with electronic toys and use the mouse on the computer to drag and drop the cursor. Children begin to differentiate between the past and present. For example, they visit a stately home for a 'Cinderella Day' and learn about how people lived in the past. Children also talk about what television programmes they liked when they were babies and what they like now that they are older.

Children use their creative skills well. They become engrossed in their imaginations in the role play area as they pretend to go on a picnic, collecting food in bag and taking a camera, spy glass and a blanket. Children make constructions, collages, paintings and drawings using a good range of materials to freely express their thoughts and feelings. They differentiate between colours well and are beginning to learn what happens when colours are mixed as they play with

the coloured plastic wands. Children enjoy music at circle time and confidently sing songs and play the musical instruments together.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual care needs are valued because members of staff ensure, through regular discussion and precise written information from parents, that they are fully aware of the level of care each child requires. Professional, friendly and open relationships with parents ensure continuity of care. Members of staff recognise that children have specific needs and different personalities and children are treated as individuals, with equal concern.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children benefit from a calm and sympathetic approach and learn right from wrong through careful explanation, reasoning and consistency. They are beginning to understand the need to share and take turns with the more able children showing responsible behaviour and respect for the needs of others. Praise and support helps children to develop self-esteem and members of staff talk to the children, acknowledge their feelings and work with them to find constructive solutions. Through discussions, observations and the celebration of festivals, children develop a good awareness of the wider world and the diversity of adults and children. They are developing an awareness of the similarities and differences and relate well to each other. This is supported in their play as they play with a suitable range of multicultural toys. There are also some resources that positively represent disability in society; however, these are limited.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children's development is promoted through sound, positive working relationships with parents. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are sought before they join the pre-school and these are used to help settle them. They receive good information about their child's progress and information about the setting through daily chats, access to the development records, newsletters, website, notice board and planning information. As a result, children benefit from continuity of care. Comments from parents illustrate that they value the quality of care and education their children receive and feel included in their children's development.

The partnership between parents and carers of nursery education funded children is satisfactory. There is information about the planning of the curriculum in the playroom. Parents are informed of the Foundation Stage in the information leaflet. However, there is no detail about the six areas of learning that children progress through. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by bringing in items related to themes being followed; however, they are not currently given information on how to extend the activities and their child's learning at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children play and learn in a setting where the staff's priority is the children's good health, learning, safety and enjoyment. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures ensure all staff are suitable to have regular contact with young children. This ensures children's welfare is maintained. Members of staff offer warm and consistent care. They are deployed effectively and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Although the named deputy manager does not have a Level 3 qualification in early years she has agreed to work towards

this qualification. Staff are supported well through an induction process, appraisal system, staff meetings and training is available to enable them to update their skills.

Space and resources are used creatively and effectively to ensure that children have a stimulating day. The free flow structure of the sessions allows children the time and space to initiate and extend their own learning. Acceptable policies and procedures underpin the setting generally well. However, the lost child procedure does not clearly state what to do in the event of a child going missing from the setting and the complaints procedure does not reflect the changes to the National Standards in 2005. Effective records are kept, shared with parents and retained for inspection.

Leadership and management are good. Children make strong progress towards the early learning goals because management has a clear commitment to training and development to ensure children receive good quality nursery education. Management is able to identify strengths and weaknesses and take appropriate action to improve and develop. Although children's achievements are assessed, activities are not evaluated to ensure that future activities are adapted or extended to meet individual learning needs. Staff are motivated, work well as a team and have clear aims. This ensures the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good for all children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous childcare inspection it was recommended that improvements were made to documentation and food preparation procedures. Satisfactory improvements have been made to enhance children's welfare. Aprons are used for the preparation of food and perishable food brought in by parents is stored in the fridge. Children also have the use of plates at snack and meal times. Child protection policy and procedures are now in place and are implemented by staff, however, these do not currently reflect the changes to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The recruitment and selection procedures are now clearly defined and include training and induction procedures.

At the previous nursery education inspection it was recommended that improvements were made to the planning of the curriculum and children's assessment records. It was also recommended that improvements were made to children's opportunities to use information and communication technology and their understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Suitable improvements have been made, although not all have been thoroughly addressed. The curriculum planning now clearly shows the learning outcomes of the focus activities to enable staff to extend children's learning; however, this does not cover the continuous provision within the setting. Children now have the opportunity to access information and communication technology resources and they learn about the effects of exercise on their bodies as they play with the stethoscope and talk about how they perspire after playing energetically. The use of evaluation to assess the curriculum and children's progress continues not to be implemented and remains a recommendation.

### **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 complaint 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 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):

- ensure that parents sign the medication records to confirm that they are aware of when medication was given to their child
- update child protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- display the fire drill procedures more clearly for visitors' information
- further develop the lost child procedure to include what to do in the event of a child going missing from the setting
- update the complaints procedure to reflect the changes to the National Standards in 2005
- ensure that the deputy manager obtains a Level 3 qualification in care and education.

#### 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):

- provide more information for parents about the six areas of learning within the Foundation Stage
- develop information for parents on how they can further develop activities and their children's learning at home
- devise systems to evaluate the activities and highlight the next steps in children's learning and use this to inform future planning (also applies to care).

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)