

Ladymount Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306417
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Inspector	Jean Evelyn Thomas
Setting Address	9 Portal Road, Wirral, Merseyside, CH61 5YD
Telephone number	0151 648 8005
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Registered person	Ladymount 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 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?

Ladymount Pre-School opened in 1984 and operates from two rooms and the school hall within Ladymount Primary School, in Pensby, Wirral. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.00 and three afternoons 13.15 to 15.15, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 42 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a local catchment area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five members of staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The health and hygiene procedures help to protect children from infection, for example, the staff promptly implement the sick child policy when children are not well to meet their individual needs and to protect children from infection. However, written consents are not obtained from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. There is always at least one member of staff on duty who is qualified to administer first aid. Children are encouraged to become independent in all their self-help skills. They learn about the importance of following hand washing routines after toileting and before eating and are encouraged to use tissues as necessary.

Children benefit from healthy foods at snack time which primarily consist of fresh fruit and vegetables. The foods provided and planned activities, such as sandwich making develops children's understanding about a healthy lifestyle. Children's food preferences are respected and alternatives are provided. However, staff have not gained knowledge about the food safety and hygiene regulations in connection to their handling of food. Children choose whether they would prefer to drink milk or water and serve themselves. Water is available throughout the session and children respond to their bodily needs and drink when thirsty. Parents provide information about children's dietary requirements.

Children enjoy energetic play indoors and in the outdoor play area. They explore and experiment with small and large apparatus, such as bikes, balls or join in parachute games. They develop a good awareness of their own physical abilities and learn that exercise is beneficial.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming setting. The displays of children's art work, child-friendly posters and the organisation of play equipment contribute to creating a stimulating and interesting environment. Children confidently select resources and play materials of their choice. Labelled containers and the use of open shelving for storage ensures that a wide range of equipment is easily accessible to children. They freely explore clearly defined play areas, such as the home corner or messy play. Children independently use the toilet facilities.

The risk assessments and procedures promote children's safety. For example, there are effective arrangements to control the admission of persons to the premises, practising the evacuation drill and procedures for the collection of children. All areas are checked before the session commences. Children benefit from outings, a detailed risk assessment is carried out before these activities take place. A high adult-child ratio is maintained on outings to offer greater supervision for their safety. Children are encouraged to tidy away toys and equipment. This helps children take personal responsibility for keeping the environment orderly and in a safe condition. Without prompt from staff children brush up the spilt sand because they know they could slip on it.

Staff have a secure understanding of child protection issues and procedures. Staff have completed refresher training to up date their knowledge. However, the written statement does not include the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children smile happily when they arrive and separate confidently from their parents and carers. They greet each other and staff members enthusiastically. The key worker system and the settling in procedures which are designed to meet children's individual needs contribute to their self-confidence and sense of belonging. The children develop a strong sense of identity as a valued member of the group. The circle time provides opportunity for children to relate to each other as they share news or show special items they have brought in. The children show great interest in a hand made kite and a wasp nest which children had brought from home. They eagerly ask questions to extend their understanding.

The staff implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure the younger children attending benefit from a wide range of activities to promote their development. The framework provides the foundation for the planning, observation and assessment to help children make progress.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Staff are enthusiastic in their delivery of the curriculum. As a result, children enjoy a range of interesting and fun activities and make good progress. Children's achievements are linked to the stepping stones. Staff use observations to record and evaluate children's progress and to use in the planning. The plans identify the next steps in children's learning and development. The key workers are knowledgeable about their children and adapt activities to support children's progress. Information is obtained from parents about what children already know and can do when they start. However, this is not formalised to use as part of the initial planning. Staff are skilled in responding to children's interests and embrace spontaneous situations. For example, children bring snails into a session from home. This sparks the group's interest and staff adapt activities to the theme of the snail, for example, making reference books available, organising spiral painting and musical movement. There is a strong emphasis on children making choices to increase their confidence and independence. If children have difficulties with this staff put forward suggestions and sensitively encourage them to decide what they would like to pursue. This results in children being well motivated and learning. For part of the session the children are encouraged to take part in planned activities with their key group. Children show good levels of concentration at these times and enjoy participating in these activities, such as rhyming sounds card game, operating programmable toys, craft and construction. Children know that they can ask to move to another group activity if they wish so long as the group size is not too big. Staff are skilled at providing open ended questions that enable children to think, communicate and to solve problems, such as investigating the wasp nest and in construction. Children are inquisitive and ask questions.

Children use mathematics in everyday play. Many children confidently count to 10 and beyond. They actively contribute in counting the number of children at circle time and calculate the number of children absent. They are familiar with shapes and talk about sizes and positions of objects. Children have the opportunity to explore a wide range of media and materials to design and construct. They use clay to make pots and explain the process of glazing their pottery to make it shiny. They build their own vehicles from large soft blocks and other resources available, such as the plastic table on its side. Children enjoy painting using a variety of techniques. Children describe their pictures, for example, 'this is a seagull flying upside down next to the

mountain'. Staff introduce new words to the children's vocabulary 'swooping' and 'gliding'. Children practise their mark making skills. There is a writing station and writing materials are available in the different play areas to give children the opportunity to develop their understanding of writing for different purposes. Children make tickets for the bus journey on the bus they have built. Many children can write their own name and recognisable letters. Children sound out letters and recognise similarities. For example, children notice that 'thirsty' and a particular name begin with the same sound. Books are readily available for children to enjoy. Children are creative. They initiate and develop their own imaginative games and other children join in or play alongside as they learn to interact in play situations. They speak to each other on play phones and prepare for a trip packing the food they need and using a bowl for a hat although dressing up clothes are available. Staff skilfully know when to stand back and allow play to evolve naturally or when to introduce new ideas and extend the game, for example, making a camera to take photographs of their day out.

Children learn about the world around them by going on outings to a local farm and completing a traffic survey. Children have access to technology, such as the new lap top, programmable toys and everyday resources in the role play. Children develop their understanding about the diversity of society through planned activities, such as looking at different festivals and food tasting. Children understand the passage of time as they talk about recent and past events in their lives with staff and children. Children look closely at objects and notice changes, for example, the difference in the leg colouring of the wood louse which had been brought in.

Children have access to a wide range of physical activities and develop good coordination and spatial awareness. They are able to stop and start at will, and avoid obstacles in their path as they play. Children develop good self-care skills as they wash their hands after messy activities without prompt from staff and put on their coats before they play outside aware that the weather is cool and they need to keep themselves warm.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is good. Children benefit from the calm and consistent attitude that is promoted by all members of staff who are good role models. Frequent praise and encouragement from staff enables children to develop their self-esteem as they develop their social skills in the secure and supportive environment. Children's success and individual achievements are celebrated enthusiastically. Children beam with pleasure when they are offered personal praise for good behaviour or a kind act. They willingly help to tidy up taking responsibility for their environment. Children learn to take turns, share and begin to play cooperatively. They learn to listen to instructions and to be respectful of others when they are speaking at circle time. Children learn about the needs of others and how they can help through involvement in charity and sponsored events. Activities and resources help children gain an awareness about the diversity of society. Individual differences and similarities are valued as children benefit from the staff's positive attitudes on diversity. Children's individual needs are met through working in partnership with parents and other professional agencies when required. Children's spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff use the information obtained from parents to meet their individual care needs. Parents receive good information about the service, the Foundation Stage curriculum and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Good communication, formal meetings and regular newsletters keeps parents well informed and how

they can make a valuable contribution to their children's learning. Policies and procedures are available to parents at all times.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on personal development and achievement of all children. The dedicated staff are very well motivated and work co-operatively together. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. There is a shared commitment to planning good quality activities and making ongoing improvements. The manager monitors and evaluates the nursery education through various methods including weekly team meetings, the evaluation of planned activities and use of children's assessments. The manager works directly with the staff and children, and provides a good role model.

Children benefit from being cared for by well organised and skilled staff. Children gain confidence and respond positively to routines. They happily choose from the inviting range of opportunities available during the session. The new outdoor play area extends children's play and learning experiences. Weather permitting staff organise the continuous play provision of a range of activities both indoors and outside. Children confidently move freely between areas to pursue activities of their choice. The staff ratios ensure children receive quality attention and support. Children make progress in all areas of their development as staff provide a balance of free play and adult directed activities to meet individual needs. The key worker system works extremely well, it provides the children with a sense of belonging and ensures that their individual needs are met. The staff's commitment to improvement is evident through the training that is attended, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework. The provider has not revised the recruitment and vetting procedures or the complaints procedure in line with the revised criteria to the National Standards.

All documentation and recording systems are in place with the exception of a system to maintain a log of complaints. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last nursery education inspection the recommendations raised have been met. As recommended the provider has improved systems for recording observations. Staff conduct ongoing observations and these are used to identify the individual children's next steps for learning in the planning. It was recommended that the daily plans identify each area of learning. These are clearly identified in the plans and are used by staff to promote the intended learning outcome. It was also recommended to improve the systems of communication between the committee and staff. There is regular contact for the exchange and sharing of information for the well-being of the children. Lastly it was recommended that parents receive information about the planned activities and to see the records of their child's progress. The systems in place to work in partnership with parents have been further developed offering many opportunities for parents to have access to this information.

At the last care inspection it was recommended that the children's attendance register was kept up to date at all times. Staff follow the procedure of recording the children's hours of attendance to ensure the register accurately reflects the number of children present at all times for their safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint 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 staff who handle food are fully aware and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations
- obtain written parental consent to seek any necessary medical advice or treatment
- include in the child protection statement the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
- review the recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure persons appointed are suitable to work with children
- review the complaints procedure to reflect the revised criteria to the National Standards and develop a system to maintain a log of complaints.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

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

- develop systems to formalise the information obtained from parents when children start about what they can already do and know to inform planning.

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