

# Little Ladybirds Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY295573
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Doubleday / Josephine Ann Northend
<b>Setting Address</b>	Ladybird House, Unit 11 Falcon Court, Preston Farm Industrial Estate, Stockton on Tees, TS18 3TS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 614 020
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Little Ladybirds Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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?

Little Ladybirds Nursery is one of two nurseries run by Little Ladybirds Limited. They opened in 2004 and operate from six activity rooms in a two storey building situated on the Preston Farm Industrial Estate on the outskirts of Stockton on Tees. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 110 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year.

There are currently 218 children aged from six months to nine years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas. The setting supports children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties.

There are 23 full time and seven part time members of staff working with the children. Most of the staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and seven staff members are working towards a further qualification. The setting receives regular support from the Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's physical development is supported well, with daily opportunities for physical exercise both indoors and outdoors. They use the climbing frame skilfully and enjoy participating in action songs and games. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children can rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Children are encouraged to follow some personal hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet. However, older children are not always reminded to wash their hands before snack and babies do not always have their hands washed before lunch. This means good hygiene practises are not always followed. The nursery is warm and welcoming, but not all the nursery rooms and equipment are sufficiently clean. For example, travel cots and floor cushions are marked and door frames and skirting boards in one of the rooms have a build up of dust and finger marks.

Half of the staff hold first aid certificates. Appropriate medication and accident procedures are in place and recording systems meet requirements. The nursery's sick children procedures are implemented well and include contacting parents and making the child comfortable.

Children receive varied and nutritious meals and snacks. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's individual dietary needs are catered for. The cook and staff work well together to ensure special dietary needs are met. Drinking water is available and easily accessed by children within their childcare rooms. This means children do not remain thirsty.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment, where their artwork is displayed. They move around freely while easily accessing a range of safe, developmentally appropriate furniture and toys. However, the equipment used at meal times is not always appropriate as the cutlery used by the older children is not suitable as they use large plastic forks and spoons and do not always have access to knives. There is no domestic style furniture to aid children's mobility in the Tweeny room. Most of the equipment is sufficiently clean and is checked regularly to ensure that it remains safe for children to use. Resources are suitably organised in child-height furniture to encourage independent access.

There are clear lost and uncollected-child policies in place. The security of the premises is good. The front entrance to the building is secured and an intercom system is in place. The child care rooms also have a security pad. The record of visitors is well maintained and there are clear procedures in place for the safe collection of children. This ensures children are safe. Fire procedures are displayed and a drill is practised with the children regularly. Risk assessments are completed and most hazards have been minimised. However, one electric socket at a low level is not protected and there are some trailing wires in the child care rooms on the first floor. These pose a hazard.

Child protection procedures are in place, shared with parents and displayed in the nursery rooms. They include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against staff. The manager and staff have attended training and have a sound understanding of the signs of

abuse and their roles and responsibilities in the event of a concern. This means the welfare of children is protected.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. They arrive happy and eager to participate, and are making good progress. Close and caring relationships with staff increase the children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children are developing their relationships with each other and their communication skills are well supported through good adult to child interactions.

Children move around their rooms freely. There is a good range of both adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Play opportunities are purposeful and developmentally appropriate and activities are set up well. This creates a good learning environment and results in children being motivated and interested. Staff have attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They use their knowledge to plan and provide a good range of activities; this knowledge is also used to assess the children's progress and further develop their learning. Treasure baskets are used well to enhance children's sensory experiences.

There are clear settling in procedures in place for children, which include gaining information from parents about their child's routines and care. Staff are sensitive to and meet children's individual needs well. Children generally behave well and are developing a sense of right and wrong. They respond appropriately to staff who clearly explain why they should not do something.

Children who attend school nursery settle well into the pre-school room and staff show keen interest in their day. Out of school children have their own base room which is set up well for their arrival. They enjoy the activities offered and are involved in suggesting ideas for new activities. During holidays, outings are undertaken twice a week to many places of interest.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy their time at the nursery and achieve well. The room leader plans an interesting and varied programme of activities that covers all areas of learning. Assessment systems are in place and are completed regularly. They link clearly to the Foundation Stage curriculum and show how children are progressing. They are used effectively to guide planning and teaching. The good use of resources, the appropriate grouping of children and the defined activity areas support the learning opportunities offered to children. Staff know the children well and meet their learning needs. They involve themselves appropriately in children's activities and offer good support and praise to them. They use good questioning to develop children's thoughts and ideas.

Children are developing good communication skills. They ask simple questions and initiate conversations. Their vocabulary is extending as they use descriptive words such as sticky and runny when playing with corn flour. Children are developing a sense of time, as they remember what they do at home, for example, they talk about going to Preston Park with their family. They are developing some writing skills and hold pencils correctly, however, mark making is not fully extended into other activity areas. Children are linking sounds to letters as they are becoming aware of the initial letter sounds in words, particularly the letter of the week. They are learning about rhyming words, particularly during story time. Children have good access to

books, handle them well and turn the pages correctly. They listen attentively to stories, predicting what is going to happen next.

Children use a computer well. They control the mouse and complete simple programs with support from staff. They are developing their understanding of number; they begin to recognise some numerals, as they learn the number of the week and count reliably beyond ten. They have some opportunities to use problem solving and calculating, particularly during rhymes and songs. Children recognise and name some shapes confidently. They are beginning to using size language appropriately in play.

Children are developing some sense of space as they sit on the mat for circle and story time, however, this is not fully developed in the outside area, as they bump into each other on their tricycles. They are developing increasing control as they handle tools and equipment and develop good levels of hand-eye co-ordination, for example, as they cut with scissors. Children have many opportunities for physical exercise in order to develop their large motor skills. For example, they climb stairs confidently, jump and land on two feet, skip and run well and use a climbing frame skilfully. They move around and dance to music during music and movement sessions.

Children are sociable and confident in their play and learning and persist for extended periods of time at activities. They are generally well-behaved and their behaviour is supported appropriately by staff. Children show good interest in their environment and living things, for example, they learn about the life cycle of a caterpillar and grow carrots and sunflowers. They are beginning to learn about the days of the week and features of the weather. They explore well using a variety of materials, such as sand, water, corn flour, paint and junk play. They talk about their own families and are developing a good understanding of other cultures and beliefs through the use of interesting resources and planned activities. For example, they learn about Diwali and Chinese New Year and have learned to count up to five in Chinese. They visit local amenities such as the farm and the park and have a French lesson each week.

Children are developing some self-care skills. For example, they learn to put on their own aprons and wash their own hands. However, this is not fully extended into everyday routines, for example, pouring their own drinks, serving their own meals and using appropriate cutlery at lunchtime. They are developing some knowledge of health and bodily awareness, for example, they are learning about why they need to wash their hands before eating but do not know about the effects of exercise on their bodies.

Children recognise and can name many colours and begin to differentiate between light and dark colours. They use their senses to explore, for example, as they feel the texture of corn flour. They access and use well a range of creative resources and use their imagination well in role play. For example, they have created a space ship and the role play area has been a flower shop. Children use a range of resources to design and construct with a purpose in mind and build three-dimensional structures confidently. Children join in and enjoy familiar songs; they move rhythmically to music and have good access to musical instruments.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They are welcomed by staff and the playrooms are set up appropriately for their arrival. Planned activities are undertaken and good resources are available, reflecting other cultures and races. These help increase children's awareness of diversity and

develop a positive attitude to others. There is a clear equal opportunities policy in place and each child is allocated a key worker. This means staff know children well. The nursery has a clear special needs statement and the named co-ordinator and some of the staff have completed relevant training. The setting works with other agencies in order to support children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties.

There is a detailed behaviour management policy in place. Children are generally well behaved and are supported appropriately by staff. They receive good praise for positive behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the two way sharing of information about their needs and daily routines. Information for parents is displayed in the entrance and in the child care rooms and regular newsletters keep them updated. They receive written information about the setting and the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to attend open evenings and have regular access to their child's development records. Parents are happy with the setting and have opportunities to be involved in their child's learning at home. They have good access to the setting's policies and procedures and receive a copy of key policies during the child's initial settling in period.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel at home and at ease within the childcare environment. This means they are confident to initiate their own play and learning. Indoor and outdoor space is organised appropriately to support play opportunities for children. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are in place and all staff currently employed at the setting have been vetted. Adult to child ratios are maintained, however, the deployment of staff is not always appropriate, for example, the pre-school ratios are not always met at the beginning of the day, but there are sufficient staff in the nursery.

Required documents are available and are stored confidentially. There is a good range of well organised policies and procedures in place. They are shared with staff and parents receive copies of the key policies. Staff work well as a team and aware of their own roles and responsibilities, however, not all staff are sure about some designated roles. There are clear systems in place for the sharing of information with parents about the service and their child's activities. A regulation has not been fully met as an accident occurred to a child at nursery, which required medical treatment and Ofsted have not been informed.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Most staff have early years qualifications and half have up to date first aid certificates. The manager encourages staff to attend relevant training opportunities. The knowledge gained by staff is used to further support children's care and welfare. The manager has clear expectations of staff and is keen to develop the provision. Key staff have good experience and knowledge of the Foundation Stage and teaching effectively supports children's learning. Staff meetings are held monthly and staff receive regular supervision and appraisals. This enables the manager to identify strengths and weakness of practice.

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

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

At the last inspection the provider agreed to obtain written permission from parents for transporting children in a vehicle, ensure some domestic style furniture is provided in the baby rooms and to develop a system for registering children and staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance.

Documentation has improved as written consent is now in place for transporting children in a vehicle and the record of staff and children's attendance now clearly shows hours of attendance. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded. There is now some domestic style furniture in the baby rooms to assist children in developing mobility and to continue normal life experiences. However, it has not been provided in the Tweeny room.

The provider also agreed to improve the curriculum by providing opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills and by making the computer corner more accessible. The room has been re-arranged in order to make the computer more accessible to children. Mark making resources have been increased, however, it is not fully extended into other activity areas.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there has been three concerns reported to Ofsted. Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 2 (Organisation), National Standard 6 (Safety) and National Standard 11 (Behaviour). A Childcare Inspector visited the provision on 16 September 2005. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard National Standard 1 Suitable Person. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. A childcare inspector from Ofsted Early Years then visited the provision on 16 January 2007. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 2, Organisation. An inspector visited the provision on 31 May 2007. Action was raised with regards to National Standard 2, Organisation. Ofsted are satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate action to address the concerns raised. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 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):

- improve hygiene procedures by making sure all rooms and equipment are kept clean and children always wash their hands before eating
- assess the risks to children in relation to trailing wires and electric sockets and take action to minimise these
- ensure Ofsted is informed of all serious accidents
- assess the procedures for the deployment of staff, to ensure ratios are maintained across all areas of the nursery throughout the day.

### **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):

- further develop opportunities for children to use mark making in every day activities
- further develop opportunities for children to be independent.

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)