

Lymington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110069
Inspection date	09 October 2007
Inspector	Clare Moore
Setting Address	LYMINGTON INFANTS SCHOOL, AVENUE ROAD, LYMINGTON, HAMPSHIRE, SO41 9GP
Telephone number	01590 673355 or 07908447550
E-mail	
Registered person	LYMINGTON 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 good. 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?

Lymington Pre-school opened in 1992. It is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and operates from a purpose built community room within Lymington Infant School. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting is open each weekday during school term times from 09:00 until 12:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five staff. All the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three members of staff working towards a higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children find out about healthy living through themes that cover looking after teeth and also through activities. They compare different sorts of foods and consider which ones are helpful and which ones may be harmful. They enjoy healthy snacks with a variety of different fruit and are never thirsty as they are always able to access water freely whenever they wish. They are encouraged to try foods that may be new to them when making fruit kebabs and celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year which helps them to widen their tastes. This encourages them to eat a wide variety of foods so that they have many different sources of nutrients in their diet.

They understand the need for good personal hygiene and are protected from infection through a clear sickness policy. The setting is clean and tables are wiped down before snacks with anti-bacterial sprays. Children can be treated in the event of an emergency as a well stocked first aid kit is on hand and all the staff are qualified in first aid. However, permissions have not yet been obtained from parents for staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. They find out about how their bodies react to exercise when they feel their hearts then run around and jump. Afterwards they feel their hearts beating again and talk about other changes, feeling hot, tired legs, and breathing more quickly.

Children benefit from fresh air and vigorous exercise every day except in exceptionally harsh weather. They develop confidence and skills and have fun as they use the adventure playground to climb, scramble, balance and jump down. They practise co-ordination of feet and hands pedalling and steering tricycles, throwing and catching balls and using hoops and cones. They also enjoy vigorous activity using the space in the music room when they hop and jump to the rhythm of action rhymes as they re-enact the movements of animals. This helps them to keep fit and active.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected from danger as the staff supervise them carefully, undertake daily risk assessments and ensure children do not have access to hazardous items or materials. They also have a clear emergency procedure that is known to all the staff which clarifies responsibilities and roles. The setting is secure and the main door is locked at all times with the exception of at the start and end of sessions when staff position themselves at the entrance. Visitors sign in and out and there are clear collection procedures so that an unauthorised person cannot gain access or leave with a child.

Children's awareness of safety is raised through the use of helmets when they ride tricycles which helps them to understand that protective kit is needed for many activities to enhance safety. They know why they need to walk rather than run indoors and are reminded to sit safely on the bench. They find out about road safety through using road sets in the playground and exploring traffic lights and what to think about when near traffic and crossing roads. They practise fire evacuation procedures every term which helps them to remain calm, confident and to follow instructions in the event of an emergency.

Children are safeguarded as staff are confident, knowledgeable and experienced in this area of practice. Parents are well informed about child protection which helps them to work together with the setting in the interests of the children. There is a clear written policy and also reference materials, for example, the booklet and chart 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'. Practitioners respect confidentiality and are well aware of the need to keep accurate records.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending as the setting is very child centred and there is something of interest for every individual child. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to evaluate progress and also to give them ideas for activities. For example they use a mirror and ask the children to draw a picture of what they look like, this is kept in the child's folder and when they are asked to do another comparisons can be made to see what progress had been made. Children are supported well as they settle in and time is spent with them in an 'All about me' theme which helps children and staff to get to know each other and children to feel at ease in the group environment. They start to become independent as they select their activities, collect resources from storage and, with help, put on aprons to paint.

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Children are motivated and show a keen interest in their explorations and activities. They develop numerical skills as they enjoy number songs and rhymes acting them out, counting up and comparing numbers as the frogs and ducks leave the group. They compare lengths as they show delight exploring a wide variety of different colour and types of necklaces. They count doors and windows as the houses they are making with cardboard cartons and paper start to take shape. They explore a variety of shapes as they build with foam blocks and shape puzzles. Staff give lots of encouragement and praise children warmly for their efforts and success. They also invite children to talk about their creations and if they are pleased with the result.

Children explore language as they talk to practitioners about the houses they live in when they put together a puzzle. They listen to and follow instructions as they line up and walk quietly together to the music room. They expand their vocabulary as practitioners introduce new words with activities such as stories and topics. They find out about the names of parts of houses and what a 'metronome' is. Children are captivated by stories and listening to the sounds of the whistle, bell and metronome as the story is introduced. They concentrate well and are drawn in as the practitioner encourages them to take part and makes sure they can all see the pictures. The pre-school has a good collection of books of both stories and information. However, children do not often access books freely for themselves. Children ascribe meaning to marks when they label their work with emergent writing and some of the older children are able to write their names. Children develop handwriting skills as they use colouring crayons, holding them skilfully and trace patterns. They practise hand and eye co-ordination as they pour their drinks at snack time, pour sand from one container to another, thread with laces and shape clay with tools.

Children explore construction through a variety of media, for example, they build a railway line with plastic rails, use geometric magnetic blocks, and make houses with cartons and paper. They join them using glue and sticky tape, cut out coloured paper for windows and doors and use coloured pens and crayons to decorate them. Staff support them well, holding the paper to help. They also ensure there are scissors for children who are right and left handed and special scissors for children who find traditional scissors difficult.

Children find out about the outside world through exploring mini-beasts such as worms and enjoying a visit from someone who shows them their giant snail. They use magnifying glasses to examine the insects and worms more closely. They make links in their learning by using books about caterpillars and butterflies, tadpoles and frogs. They gather interesting items from the autumn fields and woods such as conkers, leaves and sweet chestnuts for the nature table. They explore technology by using computers and a remote control bug. Staff support them two children at a time to introduce them to the programmes and show them how to use the mouse. They show interest in exploring different materials such as pasta, rice and sand spooning it into containers and observing how it feels and re-acts. They learn about growing as they plant daffodil bulbs and pansies using a trowel. They firm them in the compost then water them.

Children develop their finer physical skills through a variety of tasks, for example, they use tools such as glue spreaders and they handle and turn jigsaw pieces to fit them in position. They explore malleable materials such as play dough using rolling pins and cutters to make shapes and patterns. They do up the straps on their safety helmets with appropriate help from the staff. They use a broom to sweep up and a variety of tools to shape clay.

Children have frequent opportunities to express themselves through a variety of media. They enjoy painting using brushes, hands and sometimes marbles. They become absorbed in role play which is extended and invigorated through skilful interaction from practitioners. This helps them to express and communicate their ideas, for example, in a hospital set a member of staff becomes the patient. She asks children questions about what is wrong and how to make her better which encourages them to use their imagination to treat her. When they go off at a tangent, for example, when talking about ice cream she tells them about it being helpful for sore throats to include their ideas in the theme. Some of the other highly imaginative role plays that children enjoy include jungle, shop, estate agent, vets, jungle, igloo and post office. Children enjoy music in the music room playing a drum and using rain makers as they sing songs. They also have opportunities to use other percussion instruments such as triangles and maracas to accompany singing.

Practitioners make continuous observations of the children and use the information gathered to plan the next steps of learning. They have high expectations which helps to ensure every child has sufficient challenge. Expectations for both more able and younger children are adjusted accordingly. They keep individual children's records and photos in portfolios which include examples of work and records of achievement. They build trusting relationships with the children and encourage them to learn from new experiences and to explore everything that is on offer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. Practitioners work closely together with parents to find out about interests and experiences to help to settle children in. Children are observed closely to see how they adapt to the setting and adjustments are made, for example, smaller groups if they show that they need a little more support to start off with. Children develop a positive attitude to difference through exploring topics about their families, homes and celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. There is a good selection of books, dressing up clothes and puzzles that are multi-cultural but children do not see images included in the displays that reflect the richness of their diversity.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well as practitioners work together with parents and specialist professionals to look at best ways forward and to seek support and advice. This helps to maximise children's future potential at the most vital time during the early years.

Children behave very well. They busily help to tidy up during the session and respond to reminders from the staff to walk quietly when they go to the music room so that they do not disturb the children in school. A reward system of badges is used and handed out if children help to tidy up particularly well, help other children and try hard at their activities. Also staff praise children warmly for being polite and for perseverance and success. This encourages them further. They dispose of paper towels and rubbish in the bin. They find out about taking turns when they are limited to just two children at a time on the computer and also through the use of a timer set to make a buzzing sound when time is up to take turns with binoculars or another favourite resource. They serve each other at snack time and pass the plate of fruit round. They show concern for each other, for instance when there is a minor accident and a child is hurt they stay close by. They sometimes seek each other out and show affection by sitting next to another child in the car and putting a protective arm around her. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Staff and parents develop trusting and open relationships so that children experience continuity from home to the pre-school. Parents are informed about most aspects of the setting through the 'Information and policy booklet' which they all receive. They see the children's records and also make written contributions as well as frequently discussing progress with the staff on an informal basis. They know about the foundation stage and the areas of learning as they receive information about this. They have access to publications such as information on early education topics, head lice, libraries, learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the local early years partnership. Parents are involved in the management of the pre-school through the voluntary parent committee and are invited in to help on the parent rota if they wish. They have clear information about what to do if they have a complaint or a concern and confidentiality is respected.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. The management ensures that all staff and the committee are checked without delay when there are changes and that all the references required are taken up.

The setting is well organised with practitioners continuously using their inventiveness and working together with other professionals to make the most of the limited space. They use their time well spending it working directly with the children, making observations and assessments as they go along. They meet each term and also informally during sessions sharing observations, ideas and evaluating their provision.

The leadership and management are good. Staff are supported and encouraged to develop skills and knowledge through training and sharing what they know with others. Staff attend training courses and there is an appraisal system though two years have passed since the last appraisal. Management are working to ensure these take place in the current term. Staff work very well together as a team using innovative ideas to contribute to the plans. They make sure there is a good balance of adult and child initiated activities and work together with the school

and outside organisations to evaluate practice and make improvements. This leads to children making very good progress in all areas of their learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to develop practitioner's knowledge of the stepping stones, provide more opportunities for children to be independent and to develop the book area. The staff are now all qualified and demonstrate a good understanding of the areas of learning. Children are able to select resources and use them as they wish and they have access to books which are displayed in a box. However, children do not yet regularly initiate using the books.

The pre-school was also asked to conduct risk assessments, improve practitioner knowledge regarding child protection and to ensure documentation meets the requirements. They now do daily risk assessments, all staff have attended child protection training and documentation is in good order. This helps to ensure children are well cared for and make progress.

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 good. 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):

- obtained signed permissions to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- develop the displays to ensure children see images around them that reflect their diversity to help them all to feel valued and included.

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):

- continue to develop the book area to encourage children to access and make use of the books more often.

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