

Lyminge Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127357
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Jenny Kane
Setting Address	Lyminge Village Hall, Woodland Road, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent, CT18 8EW
Telephone number	01303 863149
E-mail	
Registered person	Lyminge Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Lyminge Pre-School has been registered since 1969. It is managed by a committee of parents. It operates from the main hall and side rooms of the village hall in Lyminge. There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 36 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. It is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 15:00 during term time and occasionally during the holidays depending upon demand. The group serves the local area and surrounding area.

There are currently 42 children on roll aged from two to four years. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs 10 staff including an administrator. Of these, five hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. The group receives support from the Local Authority Early Years advisory teacher. They are members of Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop a good understanding of keeping healthy through a range of routines and activities. The older children take themselves independently to the toilets and remember to wash their hands. They learn to keep their environment tidy and clean. For example, after they have had their snack of fruit, vegetables and toast from the snack bar children take their plate and cup to the washing up bowl. They wash the utensils in the water and dry with a tea cloth. Although they make a mess this activity encourages social and self-care skills. Those children who bring a packed lunch sit with their friends at tables to eat. Staff eat with the children and this makes for a social occasion with children talking about what food they like and things which have happened at home. One child tells the group about a recent holiday and travelling on an aeroplane.

Staff promote the health of the children by maintaining good levels of personal hygiene. They follow procedures that help to minimise the spread of infection and share tasks of cleaning and kitchen duties. However, the toilet facilities are not child-friendly and smaller children have difficulty reaching the sinks. In addition, younger children in nappies and pull-ups are not always afforded privacy during changing. As a compromise, the staff have obtained portable sink units which children use in the play areas for hand washing after messy play and before meals. Staff maintain accurate accident and medication records and work closely with parents to ensure that they have all the information they need to meet children's individual health and dietary needs. Sick children do not attend which prevents the spread of infection. All staff have up-to-date first aid qualification, and clear policies and procedures are in place to enable sick or injured children to be cared for effectively.

Children have very good opportunities to participate in activities, which promote their physical development. A newly developed outside play area is in use continuously during the day. Children choose when they play in the garden and move freely in and out. They move confidently about showing control and coordination when riding the bikes, cars and trucks. A group of children enjoy cleaning the cars and wheel them to a make shift car wash at the water tray. Other children join in the game using sponges, bowls and big sized brushes. "We are the car washers," they tell staff. Another popular activity is the large roll of paper on the grass, which children use for a variety of activities. They try to use sprays with paint but because it is windy, these do not work very well. Children discover that if they fetch the paint pots from inside they can spread paint on the paper and ride their bikes through the paint to make patterns. This game continues with children comparing the marks that their boots make in the paint. During play in the hall with the ribbon sticks children enjoy moving about making circular movements, skipping and swaying to classical music. Staff enhance this activity by joining in and at the end children stop and listen to their heartbeats. They talk about being hot after running and are beginning to understand about exercise being good for them and that it is important for a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a spacious, well-maintained and welcoming environment. The organisation of the resources and equipment means that children move around the play areas confidently and safely. Staff carry out daily risk assessments on all areas and equipment to identify potential

hazards. They have a high regard for children's safety and wellbeing. For example, fire exits are clear, fire-fighting equipment sited appropriately is regularly checked and children take part in fire drills each half term. Staff provide good levels of supervision during activities and good security means only welcome visitors enter the premises ensuring children's safety. Children remain safe when they go for a walk during the inspection. Staff plan this outing carefully and are well prepared by carrying a mobile phone and small first aid kit. Before they leave children discuss where they are going, what they will take with them and if they need to wear a coat.

A good range of toys and equipment are available for children's play, which are clean, well-maintained and meet safety standards. Children's access to the toys is very good and self-selection encouraged. The children freely move about choosing where they play and helping themselves to resources from the shelves and storage boxes. They are learning to care for the toys and their play space by helping to clear up. During one activity a member of staff attracts children's attention by rattling a tambourine. She asks the children "how long before we tidy up?" and children stop and think, with one child suggesting four minutes. They all agree that 'clearing up time' will be when 'the big hand on the clock reaches the nine'.

Staff have a good awareness of child protection issues and the need to safeguard children in their care. The senior staff have attended recent training and as a result they have a very good understanding of their role and procedures to follow should a concern arise. The written policy reflects the recent changes to procedures and the staff share the policy with parents to ensure they are aware of the group's responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and clearly enjoy their time in the group. When they arrive in the morning they greet staff and self-register by finding their name card and placing it on the board. A pictorial timetable helps children to know which activity is happening next. Each week children spend time thinking about their favourite activities and what they like doing best. They work with staff who write their comments next to their named photograph on a display board. This encourages children to develop independent thinking and an interest in their surroundings. Children have positive relationships with staff who are enthusiastic and supportive. As a result, children are developing preferences, express their feelings and confidently explore new experiences.

Birth to three matters is used well within the pre-school. Staff have a good knowledge of child development and the Birth to three matters framework. They plan a good range of activities, which are stimulating, interesting and help children's all round development. The daily routine flows well and accommodates children's individual needs and capabilities. Photographs, displays and children's development folders ensure parents understand how the activities help their children progress.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are achieving and making good progress across all six areas of learning. This is because staff have a good understanding of the early learning goals. The senior staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are skilled at extending children's learning. This knowledge is regularly cascaded to all staff. Curriculum planning shows clear learning objectives, resources needed, evaluation and show how activities meet children's individual learning needs. There are good systems in place to

identify children's progress and staff use observation and assessment to plan the next steps in children's learning. This results in clear and informative individual development folders, which parents look at on a regular basis. This ensures parents feel able to contribute to their children's education and continue their learning at home.

Children's personal, social and emotional development, fostered through strong relationships with the staff and key workers is good. They cooperate during play and learn to work together. Children demonstrate high levels of independence and decision-making. For example during snack time, they pour drinks and help prepare food. There are good opportunities for children to find out about their environment and the natural world. During the inspection children go for a nature walk. They bring back items they have collected and make a collage using leaves, twigs and other natural items. A spider crawls out of the bag and children delight in watching how it moves and climbs. Staff are enthusiastic and encourage children to hold the spider before agreeing 'it will be happier outside'.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are developing well. Staff extend children's speech through open-ended questions during activities and listening well to what children have to say. As a result, children are confident and clear communicators. There are good opportunities for children to recognise written word and use name labels during snack, registration and on their coat pegs. Some resources and areas have labels for identification but some of the signs are not at children's eye level and there are limited labels in the garden. Children enjoy making mark and some are beginning to write their names on their work. They practise writing on pads in the shoe shops and role-play areas. Children enjoy stories and books. The reading area is used a lot because it is comfortable with books displayed well. Children respond with enthusiasm to an interactive story about Goldilocks. The member of staff dresses up, is narrator, and asks the children to help her. They become engrossed with the story using props and various sized bears to act out the story. Later children enjoy making and tasting real porridge.

Children's mathematical development is promoted through everyday routines and activities. For example, children count the legs on the spider and compare its size during a craft activity. At snack time when cutting up fruit they talk about size, quantity and shape discussing how a slice of apple is a crescent shape before eating it. Opportunities for incorporating counting and number into play, both indoors and in the garden, are good. Children enjoy measuring and pouring with sand and water and have great fun making patterns with their bikes and their boots on the large roll of paper. However, there are no visual displays of number in the outside area. Children enjoy the washing line game where they peg up the socks in matching pairs. They spend a lot of time here discussing colour, size and pattern.

Children demonstrate their creativity and imagination through a range of role-play games and activities. They enjoy making a meal with the play food and utensils in the home corner. One child finds a shopping basket and fills with props while others push the dolls about in the pushchairs. They use their imaginations well and the game extends to the garden where they end up in the wooden playhouse acting out scenarios. Children explore feel and texture when they help to mix up the cornflower 'gloop' using spoons and their hands. They thoroughly enjoy the experience describing how it feels as it runs through their hands. Another sensory activity that is popular is the shaving foam. Children find small items and cars, which they hide in the foam. They make patterns on the table and talk about what the foam smells like. Staff extend their enjoyment and learning by joining in with play and encouraging children to freely experiment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff successfully promote children's individual development through all the outcomes for children. Children benefit greatly from the enthusiasm of all staff towards equalities and inclusion. As a result, children have a positive self-image, good self-esteem and feel valued. Staff treat children with a great deal of respect and frequently offer positive praise. For example by saying and using 'please', 'thank you' and 'well done'. They do not raise their voices and this ensures a calm atmosphere where children flourish. As a result, children's behaviour is very good and there are seldom any incidents of unwanted behaviour because children are constructively engaged in a good variety of activities.

All children are fully integrated into the group and staff work closely with parents discussing routines, preferences and any specific needs. Staff are skilled and enthusiastic about caring for children with special needs and disabilities and share a wealth of knowledge and experiences. All children use some Makaton signing during activities. Staff constantly sign when reading and singing. For example, at group time a member of staff holds up a card saying, "I've got a special sign here". Several children identify it as 'toilet' and go on to make the sign with their hands. Others know the sign for washing their hands and they practise before going to the toilet before lunch.

Children make excellent choices about what they play with. They have equal access to the wide range of play materials, many of which promote diversity and positive images. In addition, there are a good many posters showing examples of culture and disability. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well through the participation in a variety of topics and celebrations. They use their senses when they partake in cooking activities, playing with dough, sand, gloop, foam and other mediums. Children learn about their environment during walks, playing in the garden and visits in the community. They have good opportunities to find out how things work and use programmable toys and gadgets. Children recently took photographs on a digital camera for themselves for a 'what we do at pre-school' project.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The pre-school has excellent strategies in place for working with parents, sharing information and listening to their views. Staff are proactive in communicating through daily verbal feedback, contact books and developmental records. The group's key worker system ensures each child has two allocated members of staff who are responsible for their development and liaison with their parents about all aspects of care. This ensures that children have continuity and that parents take an active role in their children's care and education.

Parents receive very good quality information about the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage. The prospectus is well produced and gives clear guidance to parents about the components of the Birth to three framework and the six educational areas of learning. This information is backed up by good visual displays of photographs and examples of how the children are progressing and achieving. This ensures parents are aware of how children's activities fit into the curriculum. Parents are keen to discuss their children's educational progress with staff and do so regularly. They freely look at their children's developmental folders; attend consultations and parents' evenings. This positive two-way sharing of information significantly contributes to children's wellbeing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff organise their time effectively and good planning ensures children receive good care and attention. Despite the need to clear away most of the resources on a daily basis, staff lay out the play space imaginatively and creatively. Staff deploy themselves well and high ratios ensure they provide good supervision of the children. A very good mix of activities and flexibility means that children partake in age appropriate activities. All required mandatory documentation is in place including daily registers, which show children's times of arrival and departure. The registration certificate is clearly displayed and children's records are secure, confidential and readily available to parents. There are good procedures in place for the recruitment and ongoing support of staff. Photographs and details of qualifications on display in the reception area ensure parents are fully informed about the staff.

Leadership and management are good. The committee are supportive and fully involved in the management of the pre-school. They take overall responsibility for staffing issues and confidently delegate the day-to-day running of the group to the manager and her team. The manager has a good leadership style and works closely with her deputy to provide continuity and stability for children. They frequently meet to plan, discuss and review issues of childcare and education. Staff have good support through induction, regular supervision sessions and appraisals. This gives staff the opportunity to look at their development and identify any training needs. The majority of the staff are enthusiastic about, and see the value in, attending training courses. Senior staff and the committee demonstrate a very good awareness of the need to monitor and evaluate the provision's care and education. They are fully committed to providing an environment where both staff and children can be safe, happy and develop their skills. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection in February 2005, the provider was asked to consider three recommendations.

The group have been proactive in developing staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Several staff have attended the latest safeguarding children training course and information has been cascaded down to all staff and committee members.

Staff have worked together on a system of planning for children under three years which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs. Staff have attended training in Birth to three matters and other relevant courses for younger children. The planning is now clear and based on the four components of the framework.

The committee are conscientious regarding their responsibility for safety and ensure that all appliances on the premises meet health and safety requirements.

At the last education inspection in July 2004, the provider was asked to take one area into consideration.

Staff have given thought to exploring and developing ways to manage and organise the initial start of the session to ensure all children experience the balanced programme of activities. They have reorganised the way that they use the available space and have introduced a system of self-registration when children arrive.

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):

- improve the toilet and nappy changing facilities

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):

- consider ways to provide more examples of written word and number in the garden and some indoor areas.

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