

# Our Lady of Lourdes Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY358418
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 April 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Janette Elaina Lockwood
<b>Setting Address</b>	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Manchester Drive, LEIGH-ON-SEA, Essex, SS9 3HS
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<b>Registered person</b>	Our Lady of Lourdes Playgroup Committee
<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 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?

Our Lady of Lourdes Pre School opened originally in 1970 and moved to its existing premises in 2007. It operates from a purpose-built demountable building on the site of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School. It is situated in Leigh-on-Sea, near Southend-on-Sea. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08.55 to 15.15 for 38 weeks of the year. Children may attend morning or afternoon sessions or for the whole day. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 75 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 56 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties/and or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs eight staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards further qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting is generally a healthy environment for children as staff keep the premises very clean and have individual responsibilities for different areas. Staff wash their hands regularly and encourage children to wash their hands at key times during the day, for example, before snack time and after going to the toilets. However, children sometimes forget to use soap and are not always reminded, so the positive effects of the hand washing procedures may be minimised for children.

There are satisfactory procedures for changing children's nappies, with a large robust changing mat available, disposable gloves and nappy bags to use. However, the use of baby wipes to wipe down the nappy mat after a nappy change may reduce the effectiveness of the otherwise good procedures in minimising the spread of germs.

Staff help children to be healthy and safe in the sunshine by asking their parents to apply and supply sunscreen for them. If necessary the staff will reapply the sunscreen with permission from parents. Extra drinks are offered to the children in hotter weather and children are encouraged to wear their hats as they are frequently in and out of the garden. These measures help children to enjoy the sunshine whilst being protected from its effects.

There are good procedures for managing children who are ill or have an accident and seven staff have up to date first aid certificates. Children's health details are obtained and permission for emergency treatment sought from parents so that staff are aware of children's health needs and can work in partnership with parents to keep them healthy.

Staff provide children with a very nutritious and healthy snack menu and encourage children to try new foods. They talk to children about the foods so they can learn about what is good for them to eat. Many children bring a packed lunch and staff help parents to provide their children with healthy foods. A specific meeting is planned to take place with parents meeting a nutritionist to discuss healthy food options for children. Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day so they do not become dehydrated.

Children have frequent opportunities to develop their physical skills, for example, learning to steer scooters, climb up a frame or wiggle through a tunnel. They use their large muscle skills to control their bodies in the use of equipment and apparatus and are gaining confidence in their own abilities, for example, attempting to skip with ropes. Children are able to choose when to play outside in the well-equipped garden and benefit everyday from the fresh air. Staff take children onto the school field to run around in the large open space and sometimes they roll a huge ball across the field together, successfully coordinating their movements.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe environment where staff identify any potential risks through daily risk assessments. The premises are well maintained and organised to effectively support the needs of the children attending and to help them play and learn in safety and comfort.

There are protective measures taken within the setting such as fitting finger safety covers on all the doors so children can access the toilets and outdoor area safely. Children benefit from

access to a broad range of safe resources and equipment that are stored at child height which facilitates children's independence and choice in their activities.

Children are learning some ways in which they can help keep themselves safe, for example, during the session they are asked not to run around indoors. In addition, there are activities which help them learn about specific dangers such as road safety procedures.

Staff have a clear understanding of their role in protecting children and understand the importance of putting their appropriate procedures into place when necessary. All staff have attended training in order to understand the importance of safeguarding children and the policy is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

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

The provision is good.

Staff relate to children very well and are sensitive to their needs, providing a very good range of activities which are interesting and exciting and as a result, children demonstrate that they are happy and settled by choosing and initiating their own play. They decide whether to play inside or outdoors and the garden area offers an 'outdoor classroom' experience where they can learn effectively through their play. Young children show a strong desire to investigate and experiment with the resources and are given freedom to do so, even if it includes making mud with water from the water tray spilling on the ground.

Staff very cleverly adapt the activities in the planning and additional activities to suit different children's understanding. For example, using a persona doll and a basic story to act out with children joining in when they wish and adding their own ideas. The story moves around the setting with the children and encourages very good imagination and interaction between the children and helps them make connections and gain confidence.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of the early learning goals and how children learn and plan the curriculum to promote effective progress of all children. The written plans have a specific link to meeting diversity and include home links helping use teaching methods that help all children to learn effectively, taking account of their age, capability, special education needs, home language and other relevant factors. Staff manage children successfully throughout the session and children keep busy and show high levels of motivation. Staff have high expectations for behaviour so children work well together and get the best from what the setting offers. Effective use of time, resources and accommodation helps the children take part in many different experiences within a flexible routine, enabling them to develop a sense of security.

Children are challenged in their learning as staff skilfully use assessments of their progress to guide planning and teaching, regularly making observations and recording children's achievements and next steps in their individual learning plans. Children's folders contain charts to show where the children is in their development in particular areas and has targets and strategies to be used. Staff skilfully take account of children's own interests in their individual plans.

Although staff discuss various aspects of the session, there is currently no formal and consistent system for recording evaluations of the delivery of nursery education, however, some staff do

occasionally write these. This may allow valuable evidence to be forgotten which may impact on the effectiveness of further planning.

Children have good opportunities to foster their personal social and emotional development everyday as staff regularly encourage them to make their own choices and to progress in their independence, for example in accessing their own drinks from a water dispenser when they are thirsty. Staff are always giving them choices and children are busy and interested in the activities on offer. For example, staff use themes such as 'Super Heroes' as a starting point to interest children and this helps them in their communication, language and literacy as they choose particular stories, make maps and talk about their interests. Children are encouraged to practise their mark-making in many different and interesting ways such as using ribbon sticks, painting the fence or using straws to make shapes in the sand.

Children's mathematical development is encouraged through regular counting in circle time as well as the staff's skill at asking children to problem solve throughout their activities. For example, staff are always asking children how many items there are and to compare numbers and sizes of things. This helps children to use their understanding in a practical manner. Another practical strategy staff employ is to let children use the computer regularly for purposeful programmes and to use headphones to listen with. Staff ask children to adjust the volume for them on the compact disc player so they begin understand how things work.

Staff help children to work out some things for themselves, for example, children in the garden wished to watch the older children on the field take part in their games lesson so staff helped them to use building materials to make a ramp to stand on so they could see over the fence. Children are able to use their imagination everyday as they make connections in their play because staff cleverly think about how they present the toys and equipment.

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

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff encourage children to think about each other and to say a prayer before they eat. They are learning to put other's needs first, for example, one child spontaneously gave up his seat so another child could sit next to his friend. Children learn about other cultures and often try foods from different countries, talking about where the food derives from and sometimes linking it up to festivals and celebrations. In addition, the equal opportunity policy is inclusive and is implemented by staff throughout their practice.

Children behave very well because staff expect good behaviour and organise the time, space and resources to facilitate good behaviour. For example, children stop what they are doing in response to a tambourine signal that lets children know it is time to finish off what they are doing. After a few more minutes, a bell is rung to indicate that it is tidy up time so they are ready to help out. Most children show respect towards others and staff are showing them how to share and take turns so they can play together in a harmonious manner.

Staff understand that some children may have special needs and adapt their setting to be inclusive. There is a designated person for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who works closely with other staff, the parents and other professionals to ensure children's individual needs are met. All children have individual learning plans and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have them specifically written to encourage small but valuable steps towards their own goals. There is provision for one to one arrangements with children

and specific equipment can be obtained to support children and enable them to take part in activities with other children.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of children receiving funding for nursery education are made aware of the way in which the setting organises its curriculum and staff work closely with them at all times. There are regular meetings with parents where they are able to find out how their child is progressing at the setting and there are spaces in the children's records for parents comments so they are able to share what they know about their children. Parents understand that their child's achievements are celebrated and their next steps in learning are planned for. A notice board outside the setting highlights forthcoming themes and activities and asks parents to contribute to their child's learning at home by carrying out related activities. In this way parents are able to share learning experiences together.

The setting has its own website where there are further activities to share with children and relevant information is updated regularly. In addition there are newsletters, parent meetings and committee meetings regularly to help parents be involved in their child's pre-school. Parents said the staff are very good at settling children in and feel well informed about what their children are doing during their time at the setting. Furthermore, there have been questionnaires sent out in the past which have highlighted parents' thoughts about the provision and suggestions made are taken forward as action plans.

The setting has its own complaints policy which ensures parents are given opportunities to put forward their concerns and have them responded to in a timely manner.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management are good. The two supervisors work closely with the committee to ensure all aspects of the provision are organised very well including the delivery of the nursery education. All staff are encouraged to contribute to the planning and use a good system of observing children to inform this, using specific time allocated to them to keep up with their record keeping. The setting is able to assess its own strengths and weaknesses effectively and continually has plans to improve the practices and the outcomes for children. Staff are very enthusiastic and aim high, believing in what they strive for and staff continually reflect on their practice although evaluations are not consistently recorded. The range of training staff undertake and their motivation show a commitment to improving care and education for all the children.

There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures which ensure suitable staff are employed, helping children to be protected and benefit from the staff's training and experience of effective childcare practices. Staff attend regular training and go to cluster groups where they meet other providers of childcare and share their knowledge. There is a system of appraisals to help staff identify training needs and interests and to help keep them motivated in their role. In addition the setting use their self-evaluation form regularly to monitor their performance. All staff are deployed well throughout the setting ensuring they work with the children for the majority of the time. Overall, children's needs are met. Records and documentation are well organised, meets the requirements of the National Standards and helps the setting to run smoothly. Parents have access to the policies and procedures so they know how the setting operates.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not Applicable

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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 practices to minimise the spread of germs between children at hand washing and nappy changing times.

#### **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):

- improve the system of evaluating the delivery of nursery education.

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