

Ladybird Day Care

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357015
Inspection date	10 July 2008
Inspector	Melanie Calway
Setting Address	Kirkley Childrens Centre, Kirkley Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 0LU
Telephone number	01502 532 740
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Registered person	Lowestoft College Corporation
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Crèche

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?

Ladybird Day Care operates within Kirkley Children's Centre, which runs in a purpose-built building in Lowestoft, Suffolk. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery at any one time, and an additional 10 children may attend the crèche facility. The setting is open from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 103 children on roll. Of these, 41 receive funding for early education. Children come from Lowestoft and the surrounding area. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager holds Early Years Professional status and the setting is supported for two days a week by a qualified teacher. The setting is currently undertaking the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because there are good hygiene procedures in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and so are learning about good hygiene through the daily routine. Photographs in the two to five room provide a visual prompt for children about how to wash their hands. Children are able to access the toilets independently where low-level sinks are situated and individual paper towels are provided to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Babies are given individual flannels to wipe their faces and hands. Staff observe good hygiene, washing their hands before serving meals and after blowing noses. There are good procedures for sterilising equipment and bedding is washed every time it is used. The premises are cleaned regularly and toys washed, sometimes with the children's involvement, to get them to learn about keeping clean. Nappies are dealt with appropriately. Staff use disposable gloves, wipe mats and dispose of nappies effectively.

Children's medical needs are met as nine members of staff hold a current first aid certificate so there are always plenty of staff available to deal with minor accidents and injuries appropriately. First aid kits are kept in the rooms and one is taken out on outings. An accurate record of all accidents is maintained. There is a system for recording the administration of medicines. Care plans are put into place for children, with medical conditions, who attend the setting. Consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice so that help can be sought in this eventuality. Children are protected from the risk of infection as there are clear procedures on sickness and parents are reminded, by notices, of current infections and exclusion periods. Children are protected from the effects of the sun as a high factor skin cream is used with parents' consent and children are encouraged to wear hats in sunny weather. Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs. Babies sleep in cots in a separate room and are regularly checked and monitored. Some of the older children settle down for a rest or a sleep after lunch on mattresses at one end of the play room. Staff sit with them to settle them and soothe them to sleep.

Children have very good opportunities for exercise and outside play as they can play outside for most of the day. Wet weather clothes are kept so that children can go out in all weathers and there is a covered outside area to protect children from the elements. Children are learning co-ordination and control as they negotiate pathways on ride-on toys, balance on a low beam and jump off low logs. They develop fine motor control as they play with construction, use scissors and play in the sand and water. Babies and toddlers have their own outside area, part of which is covered, and are taken out every day so that they get some fresh air and exercise. Children are well nourished. Healthy snacks are offered and hot meals, which are provided by the school, constitute a balanced diet. Vegetarian options are offered. Some parents choose to send their own snacks and meals and some guidance is issued on how to provide healthy options. A list of children's allergies is displayed so that staff are aware of what children are able to eat. Fresh drinking water is available at all times from a small water dispenser in the play room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. There are good security systems in place to prevent unauthorised persons accessing children. The setting runs within a children's

centre and all the rooms are protected by key pad locks. All visitors are asked to sign the visitor record and are never allowed to be alone with children. Parents ring a bell for admittance and are reminded to always close the door behind them. The rooms are spacious and give children scope to move about freely and the enclosed outside areas give children opportunities to play outside safely.

Most areas of the environment are made welcoming as examples of children's work are displayed as well as relevant posters. Displays in the hallway on the nature of children's play make the environment inviting to parents and families. However, the facilities for nappy changing in the two to five room do not fully ensure the dignity and privacy of children as nappies are changed on a mat on the floor in view of the main play room. Activities are presented at children's level and a good range of high quality equipment and furniture is provided.

Children are kept safe as staff are well deployed to supervise children effectively. The staff team works well together and staff members communicate their movements to each other to ensure that children are always adequately supervised. Regular risk assessment takes place and the manager conducts daily checks on the environment. Risk assessment is carried out prior to outings and the manager alerts staff to possible hazards so that they remain vigilant. Safety harnesses are used when children are taken out to ensure that they cannot escape and a supply is kept in the hall area, where they are easily accessible for evacuations. Children begin to develop an awareness of safety issues because explanations are given, for example, they are asked to think about what might happen if they are not careful when playing on the rocker. Children are protected from the risk of fire as the fire evacuation procedure is practised at regular intervals and when new staff start so that children and staff know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff are aware of their responsibilities to report any child protection concerns. The manager is the designated officer for child protection. Half of the staff team have undertaken recent training in this area and others are due to renew their training. The child protection policy is clear and relevant information is held in the office.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are greeted warmly by staff and most settle quickly to a good range of activities. Children are able to make choices about what they do and there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. The environment is organised so that children can select resources for themselves, with items stored in low storage units and within easy reach. Children can choose whether to play inside or out for most of the day and many choose to play outside, where they can paint, play with sand and water as well as engage in physical activities. The running snack bar enables children to decide when they want to eat and is organised to foster their independence as children are involved in choosing and preparing what they eat, pouring their drinks and clearing away when they have finished. An adult sits with a small group of children at snack time, chatting to them and making it a pleasant social occasion. However, the organisation of lunch time in the two to five room does not promote children's independence. Children are not involved in preparing, serving, clearing or pouring their drinks. As a result some children become bored and restless and adult interaction becomes less positive and more geared towards managing and supervising than promoting learning. Children learn to share and take turns through some small group activities, where children of different abilities work together with an adult and each other.

Children in the baby room are given a range of appropriate experiences, including books, songs, metal utensils and natural objects. There is a soft area for babies to lie and crawl in comfort. Outside they can play with sand and move about to explore their environment. Adults support children who are learning new skills. Children are given plenty of praise and reassurance. Adults speak kindly using smiles and eye contact to interact with children to promote their communication skills. Planning is based on observations of children's key experiences and linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Key workers use their observations to help them to plan for the next steps in children's development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan a range of activities to cover all six areas of learning. Key workers make detailed observations of children's achievements and use these to plan focussed activities so that the planning is responsive to individual children's needs and interests. Staff are deployed to support children as they play, asking questions to promote their thinking skills. The learning environment is well organised to enable children to select resources independently and children are able to make good use of the outside area, where a range of activities is provided, throughout the day.

Children communicate confidently with adults and with each other and respond to simple instructions. They are learning to recognise print as it is displayed around the room and as they look for their names on their coat hooks when they come in. Writing materials are available for children to use and some children can write their names, although materials are not available in the role play area to enable children to write for a purpose, for example, writing pretend lists or tickets. Children enjoy stories in groups and most sit attentively. However the book corner is positioned around a corner and so is not well used by children selecting their own books to read.

Children are given opportunities to count and make simple calculations as they play. Adults ask them 'how many more do we need?'. Children sort objects and are learning to recognise numerals. They are busily occupied with the activities on offer. They are confident in approaching adults and some are forming friendships with each other. The small social interaction groups enable children of different abilities to work together as a team. Children use their imaginations as they play with small world toys. However, the role play area is not particularly stimulating and as a result children do not use it well. Children can express themselves freely using a range of media, including paint which is offered outside. Children learn about the world around them as they are taken on outings into the local community. They make 'journey sticks' to collect items they find on their walk. They have opportunities to explore and investigate as they play in the sand or water and make patterns in soapy sand.

Key workers put their observation notes in the children's learning records and record the next steps for their development which are then used to help plan appropriate activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as the setting gathers information from parents about their care. Key workers liaise with parents and use their observations to get to know the children well. Information about children's daily care is recorded and given to parents at the end of every day so they are kept in touch with their children's routines. Children learn about the wider world as resources reflect other cultures and positive images of different kinds of families

are displayed throughout the nursery. Dual language books are provided and signs show examples of words in different languages to promote an inclusive environment.

Children are given appropriate support. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported so they can be involved and included. The co-ordinator has attended relevant training and works with parents and staff to ensure that children with additional needs are helped to progress. The setting can call on the services of speech and language therapists who work within the children's centre for help and advice. Links with the local community are used to support children with English as an additional language. Children generally behave well as they are well occupied with purposeful activities. Staff use positive language and praise to encourage good behaviour such as 'good listening'. Staff use gestures and sign language to reinforce communication with children to ensure that all children are able to understand. The rules of the setting are positive and displayed with photographs to give children visual cues. Children are praised and rewarded for good behaviour through the use of stickers and examples of positive behaviour are displayed on the tree in the play room. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are forming positive relationships with adults and with each other and learning how to manage their behaviour.

Children are cared for effectively because there is a good relationship with parents. Parents are given good information about the setting. There is a notice board for parents and some attractive displays on outcomes for children. Parents express satisfaction with the care their children receive. Parents are given a set of policies and procedures and their views can be made known through the parents' forum and through annual questionnaires. A record of all complaints is kept in line with regulations and Ofsted's number is displayed so that parents can contact the regulator if they should want to.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents are given information about the Foundation Stage. There are some attractive photographic displays in the hall showing how children learn through outdoor play and through exploratory play. Parents are able to look at their children's records at any time and are invited to formal consultations every six months, when a short report on their children's progress is given. Parents are also able to add their comments to these. They are encouraged to bring in items from home such as photographs to show what children have been doing at home and some parents do this. However, there is no system to ensure that parents contribute on a regular basis. Staff observe children to assess their starting points but there is no system to ascertain children's starting points from parents to help the setting build on what children already know.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery is managed by Lowestoft College who ensure that all staff have received the necessary clearances to work with children. Staff are recruited by the college along with the nursery manager. The manager holds Early Years Professional status and fourteen members of staff hold a level three qualification in child care. In addition, staff attend regular courses and workshops to further develop their skills and knowledge in caring for children.

There is a clear management structure and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The manager meets regularly with her designated line manager from the college and is also supported by a qualified teacher and the manager of the children's centre. Staff work well as a team and have designated areas of responsibility.

All of the required documentation is in place and is maintained in an orderly and accessible manner, with regard to confidentiality. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of the funded children is good. The manager demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement. A self-evaluation is carried out with the staff and areas for improvement are identified and acted on. Peer observations and supervision enable the setting to reflect on the quality of staff's interactions with children in order to effect improvements. The setting is currently undertaking the Suffolk Quality Assurance scheme and staff are encouraged to take up regular training to develop their knowledge and skills.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- review nappy changing arrangements in the two to five room to ensure that children's dignity and privacy are respected
- review the organisation of lunch time to enable children to be more actively involved, for example, in preparing, serving and clearing away, to promote their independence and self-esteem.

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 the role play area to make it more stimulating, including mark-making materials which children can use to write for a purpose, and make the book area more accessible

- devise systems to ascertain children's starting points from parents and to encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning records on a regular basis so that they become active partners in their children's learning.

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