

Courtney Ladybirds

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY276881
Inspection date	23/09/2008
Inspector	Jeffery Plumb
Setting address	Courtney Primary School, Courtney Road, Bristol, Avon, BS15 9RD
Telephone number	0117 330 8049
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Courtney Ladybirds was previously known as Ladybird Playgroup, which first opened 26 years ago. The name was changed at the time the group transferred to the current premises at Courtney School, Kingswood in 2004. Courtney Ladybirds is a voluntary organisation run by a committee of parents. It is based in a converted classroom, which provides a large play space, toilet facilities, kitchen and small office. Children have use of the school hall. Outside, children have access to the playground and a grassed area. There are 40 children on roll, of whom 28 are funded. The children come from the local community in Kingswood, on the outskirts of Bristol. A very small number of children have special educational needs. The setting is open Monday to Friday during school terms. It offers a range of sessions. Breakfast club operates from 08.30 to 09:00, morning session from 09:00 to 11:30, lunch from 11:30 to 12:30 and an afternoon session from 12:30 to 15:00. Children may attend as many sessions as their parents wish, but are limited to one session and one meal club per day. There are five members of staff, all of whom are qualified and have experience in child care. Staff are supported on a daily basis. There is a high adult: child ratio, which is facilitated by three parent assistants. The group is affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is included in South Gloucestershire Education Authority's Early Years Development Plan. The provider is on the Early Years Register and voluntary part of the Childcare Register

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Courtney Ladybirds Playgroup makes satisfactory provision for children in the EYFS. Children are kept safe. Planning based on careful observations of what interests the children and what they enjoy ensures that the children make satisfactory progress. However, insufficient attention is given to involving parents in the planning of the learning activities for their children. Monitoring based on close observations of what children achieve is satisfactory. The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement is satisfactory.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- involve parents in the planning of learning activities for their children to raise their achievement
- develop the leadership team so that they become better skilled at observing the interaction between staff and children during planned activities and give more robust feedback to staff on how to use opportunities more effectively to develop and extend children's language skills
- work in partnership with the school to enhance the outdoor play environment as a dynamic and exciting learning resource for children

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Good systems are in place to keep children safe. Child protection procedures meet government guidelines. Vetting procedures when recruiting new staff are robust. Every effort is made to provide a clean and safe environment for the children. However, the playgroup leadership are constrained over what they can do to maintain the outdoor play area to a high standard because it belongs to the school. For example, dead leaves gather over the hard surface area, but if the playgroup staff go out and sweep them up it seems to them as if they may be interfering or making a point that they are not satisfied with the quality of site management provided. They know the outdoor environment is drab, but feel they cannot recruit a group of keen mums and dads to spruce it up and make it an attractive space because it does not belong to them.

Satisfactory systems are in place to enable the leadership to know what goes well and what is in need of improvement.

The leadership is very caring. It quickly picks up if a child is struggling or unhappy and takes decisive action to support and settle that child. A child's learning difficulties are identified very early and decisive action is taken to ensure that she/he receives quality and targeted support to help her/him with her/his learning. However, the leadership team are not so skilled or confident in spotting deficiencies in the interaction between staff and children, such as missed opportunities to extend children's language development. They have not received training in how to give robust and constructive feedback to staff when they spot deficiencies. The operational plan is satisfactory and focuses on promoting children's independent learning and ensuring that they are safe and happy.

Communication with parents is good. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make. They say that they feel welcomed and that their children are very happy when at the playgroup. However, they are not involved in the planning of the activities offered to their children. The staff are very good at sharing the developments children make whilst in the playgroup, but not so robust at sharing with parents how they can develop the learning of their children when at home. Partnerships with external agencies are good and support children with learning difficulties exceptionally well. Links with the community, such as the police and fire service, significantly enhance children's learning. Children love it when a fire engine arrives at their playgroup and they learn about how to adopt a safe lifestyle.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Assessment is satisfactory. Observations are used well to improve the quality of provision for the children. For example, as soon as the deputy leader observed that a child was not coping socially in a large group setting, she implemented a small group circle time and joined him with just a few children. He blossomed in confidence and his

language came on leaps and bounds. On occasions though, staff do not sufficiently use open questions to extend children's language development. For example, children being creative and using their imagination whilst manipulating play dough came out with interesting comments such as, 'I've made a sausage' and 'Mine is a present'. Staff did not take time to extend their language development and so missed opportunities to take it forward.

Staff are skilled at encouraging children to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to eat healthy snacks and there is a good emphasis on developing children's independence. Children, mostly, independently wash their hands before eating a piece of fruit at snack time. They understand the importance of putting a coat on to go outside when it is very cold and why they must wear sun hats outside during the summer months. Excellent use is made of a local policeman to talk sensitively with the children about the risks of speaking with strangers.

Staff work very hard to overcome difficulties with regards to the small outdoor play area and go out of their way to ensure that the children are provided with good opportunities for their physical development. Children love running around and scrambling safely outdoors to find eggs planted in hiding places by staff. Their understanding of the use of real coins is promoted well when they shop at local stores to buy ingredients for cooking. Staff are particularly adept at introducing children to the rich activities of the different cultural groups who live in Bristol through the celebration of important festivals such as Diwali.

The welfare of the children lies at the heart of the dedicated and highly caring staff team. They ensure that all electrical sockets not in use are covered as are any protruding corners on furniture. Fire drills are regular and frequent. All staff are trained and up-to-date with child protection procedures and there is a suitable number staff with first aid qualifications. The medical and dietary needs of the children are well catered for. Parents say, 'We feel confident that our children are safe, happy and looked after very well'.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.