

Little Lambs

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY379912
Inspection date	05/03/2009
Inspector	Samantha Smith

Setting address	Little Lambs, St Mary's Parish Rooms, 201 High Road,, Loughton, Essex, IG10 1BB
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Telephone number	07761 692749
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Email

Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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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

Little Lambs registered in 2008. It operates from the first floor of St Mary's Parish Rooms, which are situated in the centre of Loughton, Essex. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time and there are currently 35 children on roll. The setting supports a number of children who have English as an additional language. The setting is open Monday to Friday, between 09:15 and 12:15, during school term times. All children can access a secure enclosed outdoor area. The setting employs eight staff; four hold a relevant qualification and two are currently working towards a level 2 qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. The organisation of the setting is not good enough to fully support children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting does not effectively meet the learning and welfare needs of the children attending. There is little understanding of promoting inclusive practice and, because of this, the setting sometimes unknowingly disadvantages some children. There is little evidence to suggest that the setting is evaluating its provision. The management team acknowledge that there are no self-evaluation systems in place, though they have recently been thinking about this and recognise that they are a new setting that would welcome some support.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles (Assessment arrangements) 13/04/2009
- use observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child (Assessment arrangements) 13/04/2009
- promote equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice to ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged (Organisation) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) 13/04/2009
- ensure rooms are maintained at a temperature which ensures that the premises are safe and suitable for their purpose (Suitable premises, environment & equipment) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) 13/04/2009
- maintain a record of risk assessment carried out and 13/04/2009

when and by whom they were carried out (Suitable premises, environment & equipment) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register)

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop systems for self-evaluation; these should include staff, parents and children and set clear targets for future improvements
- develop positive relationships with parents and other knowledgeable adults to support children's learning more effectively

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is not effectively organised. Though there are written policies in place some of these are in need of updating as they do not reflect the current framework. Half the staff hold a relevant childcare qualification and have sufficient knowledge of the EYFS framework, however, the setting is struggling to deliver the EYFS successfully. As a result, outcomes for children are not fully promoted. There are sound procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff. New staff are given appropriate support in their professional development as they access various training courses. As a result, staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities which are generally carried out consistently.

Interest in other cultures and backgrounds is created through the celebration of different cultural festivals and through the provision of toys and resources that reflect diversity, though these are not freely accessible to children and, at times, are not reflective of the children attending. The management have taken some steps to address inclusion issues. For example, they have recently devised new registration forms to include information about children's backgrounds including culture, religion and languages spoken at home. They recognise the need to explore this further to ensure that the setting is fully inclusive by recognising and valuing the uniqueness of each child.

Risk assessments are in place and carried out systematically. However, these are ineffective because the setting does not always identify potential hazards and, when they do, appropriate action is not always taken in order to safeguard children and promote their health and well-being.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

It is unclear how much, if any, progress that children are making towards the early learning goals. This is because their starting points have not been clearly identified and information from parents is not used when making an initial assessment. The learning environment is sufficiently planned, although some areas of learning are not afforded equal attention which limits opportunities for children. In addition, activities provided do not always have a clear focus with regard to children's learning and adults take too much control and are too directive, impacting on children's enjoyment and creativity.

Daily routines are in place which provide children with some structure to their day. However, too much emphasis is placed on the routines and this impacts on children's enjoyment, for example, when children express an interest in a particular activity and are refused as it is not the right time, and when children do not want to go out but are expected to as this is part of the routine. Children spend much of their day waiting for things to happen as staff are busy preparing or organising the group.

Children's general health is sufficiently promoted through the sound policies and procedures in place. Staff have a good knowledge of the accident, sickness and medication policies. Children benefit from the provision of healthy snacks which consist of a selection of fruit, crackers, toast and a choice of milk or water. However, some of the hygiene practices expose children to the risk of cross infection. This is because a communal hand wash basin is used in the class for children to wash their hands after they have engaged in messy play and, in the bathroom, children wash their hands in the same water which has been stored in the sink. In addition, there are no systems in place to ensure that children still in nappies are checked regularly and changed according to their needs.

Staff take time to talk to parents as they drop off and collect their children. However, this does not ensure that parents are provided with enough information so that they can contribute towards their children's learning. Policies and procedures are readily available to parents as they are located in the foyer and the setting has a parent representative in place. However, parents whose first language is not English may not be able to read the policies and procedures or feel confident enough to approach their child's representative.

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?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	4
How well are children safeguarded?	4

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	4
How well are children helped to be healthy?	4
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	4
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	4

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report 13/04/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report 13/04/2009

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 registration.

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.