



## Lightwater Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY267718
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 December 2005
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lightwater Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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?

Lightwater Pre-School (Leisure Centre) opened in 2003 and provides sessional care for children aged 2 to under 5 years of age. The pre-school is run by a committee comprising of parents of children attending the group. It serves families from the local community and surrounding areas.

The pre-school operates from the dance studio at Lightwater Leisure Centre in the village of Lightwater, Surrey. Children have access to suitable toilet facilities. Staff

make use of the surrounding grounds and an Astroturf court to provide children with opportunities for outside play. Staff also use the dance studio in a flexible way to offer other opportunities for large physical play.

The pre-school opens five days a week, term time only. Sessions run from 09.30 to 12.30 Monday to Friday.

The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children from 2 to under 5 years of age at any one time. There are currently 52 children aged from 2 years to 4 years on roll. Of these, 39 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school welcomes children with special needs or who have English as an additional language.

There are 11 members of staff who work with the children, 5 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from advisors from the Early Years and Childcare Service.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the effective procedures that are in place to ensure good standards of hygiene and to minimise the potential for the spread of infection. They are accommodated in a clean and well maintained premises. Children learn about the importance of following good hygiene practices as part of the daily routine and through the input of staff as they provide gentle reminders about washing hands. Children are beginning to show an awareness of the reasons for doing this. They queue up to wash their hands after painting and everyone cleans their hands before snacktime. They understand that this is something they do before eating.

Children have a choice of drinks at snacktime although currently they do not have free access to water throughout the session. All children pour out their own drinks. They cope with this well as staff decant drinks into suitably sized jugs that children can lift independently. Staff make a point of offering children more to drink and so they are not left thirsty. Children have a variety of different food items at snacktime. These sometimes link to the weekly theme or to the letter of the week and thus children have the opportunity to experience new tastes. They make sandwiches and on occasions, have hot food which they eat using knives and forks. There are some healthy options, such as fruit, although this is not a very regular occurrence and there is no alternative if, for example, children do not want the biscuits they are offered. Staff seek written information from parents about children's individual dietary requirements. They have instigated an effective daily checking system for ensuring children do not have anything they are allergic to or which is against parents' wishes.

Each day children take part in a physical play session indoors where they can be active. They explore different ways of moving their bodies, for example, as they take part in circle games and obstacle courses. Staff re-arrange the hall to cater for this. The pre-school does not have access to an enclosed area for outdoor play. Children

sometimes use the nearby Astroturf court so they can play outside in the fresh air and on occasions, use is made of the area of land outside the leisure centre. However, dog walkers also use this area and staff are very conscious of possible associated health and safety issues.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the good procedures that are in place to ensure their safety and well-being. They have ample space to move around freely and safely in the well organised environment of the pre-school and they use good quality furniture, equipment, and resources. These are appropriate for their age and stage of development and are of a clean, safe condition. Staff are vigilant of children and they supervise them well. They immediately respond to situations that arise during the course of the session which could be potentially hazardous. For example, they intervene to stop children who run indoors and talk to them about the dangers of doing this. Thus, they help children begin to understand how to minimise the possibility of accidents. Older children learn how to handle hammers and nails in a safe way, under the watchful eye of a member of staff, as they explore a newly introduced resource and create pictures using wooden shapes.

Risk assessment, identification of hazards, good security and fire safety precautions contribute in positive ways to children's overall safety. Children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and staff control access to the pre-school room to ensure that children remain protected. They seek information about authorised persons who may collect children. Children regularly practise fire drills to develop their awareness of the procedure to follow should it be necessary to evacuate the premises.

Children are well protected by staff who have a secure understanding of issues relating to child protection and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Staff have access to relevant documentation and some members of the staff team have recently updated their knowledge through further training. There is a written child protection policy statement in place. However, this does not include details of the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. Despite this, it is evident through discussion that staff are very clear about the action they would take if they have any concerns.

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

The provision is good.

There is a warm, friendly atmosphere at this setting. This is characterised by happy children who are at ease, both within the environment of the pre-school and with their carers. Relationships are good. Most children enter well and separate easily from their parents. Staff provide good levels of support, with gentle words and a reassuring cuddle, for those children who are initially a little reluctant to see their parents leave. Children are familiar with the daily routine and they follow this well. They enjoy their play and remain well occupied as they choose what they wish to do

from the range of activities and resources staff provide each day. Children explore these well but opportunities for them to select further resources to develop and express their own ideas, for example in the role-play area, are somewhat restricted. Careful presentation and good attention to detail, in most areas of the pre-school, ensures that the environment is warm and welcoming and immediately appealing to children as they enter the room. However, the book corner lacks cushions or other soft furnishings to help create a comfy space and to entice children to use it during the free play element of the session. All children do, however, spend time looking at books as part of the daily session.

Currently, staff are not yet using the Birth to Three framework of good practice to support their planning of appropriate activities for children less than 3 years of age. However, the youngest children in the setting do make progress because staff support them well and they are fully included.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning are good. Children are self-assured and display positive attitudes. They are keen to explore the range of resources available to them and they confidently move around the room, making their own decisions about what they do. They enjoy warm relationships with one another and play co-operatively. Children work well together. For example, as they work in pairs to paint and decorate Christmas trees to decorate the stage for their forthcoming Christmas concert. They concentrate well as they create models with construction toys and display a clear understanding of what they plan to make. They talk through their ideas and offer help to each other. They use the tape recorder and on occasions use remote controlled cars. Children display good spatial awareness as they move confidently and competently around the environment. They practice hopping as this links to the letter of the week and note, with the support of staff, how they become puffed out and their breath changes. Their fine motor skills develop and improve as they manipulate playdough, cut with scissors and control glue sticks and pencils. The provision of thin paintbrushes allows children to develop greater levels of control as they carefully complete their pictures. Children enjoy imaginative play. They play for sustained periods in the home corner, preparing and serving "food" to others and incorporate their real life knowledge into their play. For example, as they explain that the "food" is hot when it comes out of the oven and might burn you.

Children recognise and name colours and shapes. They use mathematical language during the course of their play and when in conversation with others. They eagerly explore the interesting range of mathematical resources available to them, whether it is independently, in small groups or as they work with a member of staff. They competently complete puzzles, identify written numerals and sort and match. They count the number of children present at registration time. Children do not, however, extend their awareness of number and build on their problem solving skills. This is because staff miss opportunities that arise in daily routines to further encourage this.

Children develop their spoken language skills as they chat freely with others and express their ideas. They listen intently at storytime and enjoy looking at the content of the story sack for "Mrs. Honey's hat." They recognise their written names and are beginning to link sounds and letters. Some children are adept in writing their names

independently on their work whilst others ask staff to do this for them using dots which they then write over. They explore mark-making using the materials available to them. However, the range of items that are easily accessible on a daily basis is not broad enough to enable them to further develop their ideas. Staff do not always provide writing materials in the role-play area to encourage children to write for a purpose.

Staff are secure in their understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the way children learn. They spend the majority of their time working directly with children and supporting their play and learning. Children benefit because staff are interested in what they are doing, they ask questions and revisit things, for example previous letters of the week. Staff plan different activities for older children. They provide additional, more complex resources specifically for children attending the setting's rising fives sessions. All staff are involved in the planning of activities and children's progress is monitored. Currently the pre-school is revising and further developing its system for observation and assessment.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel self-assured because staff treat them as individuals and with equal concern. They gain understanding that their contributions are valued. For example, at "show and tell" staff make a point of commenting positively about every item that children bring in from home to share with the group. They allow children the time to talk about why they have brought their object in and ask questions to help those less confident children explain their reasons. All "show and tell" items are displayed attractively on the "show and tell" table, with labels stating who has brought these in. This reinforces children's understanding that they are valued. Actions such as providing all children with their own named tray in which to place items they wish to take home with them, adds to their sense of belonging. Children confidently approach staff and invite them to come and see what they have done, secure in the knowledge that staff are interested and will take pleasure in their achievements. Children show care and concern for others.

Children find out about the wider world and other cultures through planned topic work and the celebration of different festivals throughout the year. Visitors to the setting, such as the police and fire brigade, further enhance children's experiences and build on their knowledge. The pre-school has a variety of resources that reflect different aspects of diversity and these are shared between its two sites. Children therefore do have access to some resources that reflect different aspects of diversity. However, the selection of items available to them on a daily basis is not sufficiently wide enough. Children with English as an additional language receive the support they need to ensure that they are able to contribute to the group and are able to progress. There are suitable procedures in place to support children with special needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is very good. They play well with one another, share resources and understand the need to take turns. They approach staff for help in resolving

minor disputes. Meaningful praise from staff effectively fosters children's confidence and feelings of self-worth.

Children benefit from the effective relationships that staff form with their parents. Staff seek useful and relevant information from parents about their children's individual needs and their likes and dislikes. Parents enjoy good opportunities to share in the life of the pre-school. For example, by helping during sessions via the parents' rota or by becoming involved in the management of the provision by joining the committee. They have easy access to a range of information about the pre-school via the noticeboard, newsletters and the issue of a Welcome pack. Policies and procedures, including the pre-school's written complaints procedure, are easily accessible.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff hold a parent's evening to share information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how the pre-school delivers this. The display of plans means that parents know what their children are learning about and the learning intentions of the activities they are doing. Many children bring in items from home for "show and tell." Parents are well informed about their children's progress and achievements both informally and formally. Children's progress records are sent home each half term. These contain examples of children's work and identify the targets that staff have identified as the next steps in children's learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute their observations and knowledge about their children to this process.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care needs are met through the generally effective organisation and good leadership and management of the provision. All staff are aware of their role and responsibilities. They work together well as a team and their good deployment means that pre-school sessions flow well and that children are well supported. Suitable recruitment and vetting systems ensure that staff have relevant experience, knowledge and skills to care for children. Induction procedures are effective and staff receive ongoing support. Appraisals identify individual's future training needs. The pre-school committee and the staff team work in partnership for the benefit of the children attending the provision.

Most required documentation and other records that underpin the efficient and safe management of the setting and contribute to the health, safety, and welfare of children, are in place. Currently however, although staff are very aware of the procedure they would follow in the event of a child being lost there is no written statement to cover this eventuality. There are mostly good procedures in place to ensure confidentiality. The setting is aware of the recent changes to the National Standards and the committee is in the process of amending existing procedures to incorporate these. There are systems in place to monitor and evaluate existing provision and to identify areas for development.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection one recommendation was made. This related to providing relevant training for staff working with children with special needs. The pre-school's supervisor has recently taken on the role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), following the departure of another member of staff who undertook this role. She has attended relevant training and also attends SEN cluster group meetings. There are suitable procedures in place to support children with special needs.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- expand further the range of easily accessible resources that children have to help them gain awareness of the wider world in which we live
- investigate ways of enabling children to help themselves to drinking water at all times and expand the range of food items offered to children at snacktime to ensure an element of choice and the more regular inclusion of healthier options
- expand the child protection policy statement to include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer and devise a written procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost
- investigate ways of providing children with more opportunities to select resources and to express their own ideas and improve the presentation of the



book corner

### **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):

- provide more opportunities for children to develop their awareness of numbers and practice their problem solving skills by making greater use of daily routines and investigate ways of offering children more opportunities to explore writing for a purpose and to choose from a variety of writing materials.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)