



## **Ladybird NHS Nursery**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY279099
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 February 2006
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<b>Registered person</b>	Southend Hospital NHS Trust
<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 satisfactory. 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 NHS Nursery is run by Southend Hospital NHS Trust. It opened in 1991, moving to new premises in 2004. It operates from four base rooms in a converted house adjacent to Southend Hospital in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. A maximum of 68 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open on each week day throughout the year from 06:45 until 19:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 133 children from 0 to 8 years on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area as most of their parents are Health Authority employees within the Southend area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 22 staff. There are 18 staff, including the manager, that hold appropriate early years qualifications and 2 staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff take steps to prevent the spread of infection and keep the premises clean and hygienic in most areas of the nursery and cleaners are responsible for most of the cleaning tasks. Some areas, however, are not cleaned as well as others so children are not fully protected from the spread of infection.

Children are beginning to understand some ways in which they can keep themselves healthy, for example, washing their hands. Staff reinforce healthy practices with them both through the activities and in daily routines.

The hospital prepares the lunchtime food for children. This is adequate in quantity but lacks fresh fruit and vegetables so does not fully provide for the nutritional needs of the children. Staff provide additional fresh fruit and vegetables at snack and tea time when possible but although most children are present at snack time, they are not all present at tea time.

Although there are drinks available at set times during the day and children can ask for additional drinks, there is no water available for children to help themselves to. More able children, such as the 3 and 4-year-olds are not given the independence to take responsibility and respond to their own thirst.

Staff follow policies and procedures for caring for sick children and meet their needs effectively, ensuring they are comfortable and monitored until their parents are able to collect them. Medication is authorised by parents and carers and recorded by staff.

Accidents to children are managed in accordance with the policy. Records are kept, copies are given to parents and carers and the accident log is evaluated to see if improvements can be made.

Children under 3 years are learning new skills and practising ones they have mastered because staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework in their planning. Staff develop some of the ideas such as getting the children to catch and pop the bubbles and carefully positioning toys to encourage children's mobility.

Children aged 3 and 4 years are developing their physical skills through planned activities and daily access to the outside area. They learn to manoeuvre bikes and scooters, judging distance and obstacles and develop their sense of space. Children use the balance beam with increasing control and use smaller equipment to increase their skills in hand – eye co-ordination.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff take some steps to ensure the nursery is safe, for example, there are finger-guards on all of the doors and safety gates are used where necessary. The outside area is enclosed and has a safety surface under the swings. Although there is a safety checklist in each room, there are some basic issues such as the use of carrier bags in the play shop and missing socket covers which could prove hazardous to children.

To help minimise dangers on outings, risk assessments are carried out and strict ratios are adhered to. Regular fire drills are practised to familiarise both staff and children of how to evacuate the building quickly and calmly. Children are encouraged to learn how to keep themselves safe because staff use stories and puppets to illustrate danger and try to show them by their own example.

The child protection policy includes important telephone numbers and details about what to do if allegations are made against staff. The policy is comprehensive and some staff have had training. Staff understand their responsibilities towards safeguarding children and any issues are dealt with appropriately and in line with the Area Child Protection Committee.

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

The provision is good.

Teaching and learning is good. Funded 3 and 4-year-olds are given many learning opportunities to help them to progress towards the early learning goals and children are motivated and enthusiastic. The planning contains the necessary elements for effective practice and takes account of children's individual learning needs. There are detailed evaluations made so that staff can plan further exciting activities.

Staff follow their written plans but allow for spontaneity, for example, children begin talking about the colour of their eyes at snack time and staff get mirrors so all children can look at their eyes. They then compare their similarities and differences. Staff ask relevant questions, give children frequent opportunities to make choices and make predictions and seize opportunities to extend learning. There are well written observations and progress records to help identify the children's next steps in learning.

Counting is encouraged throughout the daily routines so that children can see that numbers can be useful, for example, they readily count how many children there are

and how many drinks they need. They see numbers written around the room and in their play areas and are beginning to calculate through the good use of number songs and rhymes.

Children sometimes copy words or write over the top of words. They have many writing and drawing tools and materials freely available. More able children are beginning to practise writing skills and are learning to form letters. There are imaginative opportunities for all the children to practise their emergent writing in a variety of related activities such as copying writing in Chinese.

Children enjoy listening to stories and joining in with familiar refrains, they choose books from the well stocked book corner and have newspapers in their play shop. There are clearly printed labels all around the room and particularly in the shop corner there are many shopping related words and sentences displayed. Children are developing their competence in conversation skills and can ask questions to find out what they want to know.

Children have a wide variety of activities that help them to develop their creativity. They have innovative opportunities to use a wide range of materials and produce their own work which is displayed. Children enjoy using musical instruments and listen and explore how sounds can be changed. They use their imagination well in role play and are encouraged to take part in situations where they develop ideas through mime.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is being woven into the planning for the children under 3 years and staff are to receive training in this area. Plans currently include messy and creative play, for example, finger painting and play-dough so they can begin to explore their senses.

Children under 3 years have exciting opportunities to explore sounds through using musical instruments and listening to music. They are encouraged to find their voices and make themselves heard because staff respond to them and develop the interaction well. Children are encouraged to listen and enjoy stories in small groups and to look at books themselves with some support from staff.

Children between 2 and 3 years are beginning to make connections through activities such as water play with floating and sinking objects. They are developing their independence and perseverance through encouragement. Activities are set out in an organised manner so the children can make decisions about what they want to do. Children's work is not too prescriptive and they are given a good degree of flexibility, for example, they can put the features on their pictures where they feel they should go.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children aged 3 – 4 years are learning about the world around them and about diversity. They have regular opportunities to learn about and appreciate different festivals and cultures

and are beginning to understand that there are different languages. Some resources are available which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences although this is less apparent in the rooms for children under 3 years.

Children are beginning to relate well to those around them, develop good relationships and are demonstrating a sense of trust and belonging. Children are learning to be kind, considerate and thoughtful to each other; they are well-mannered, share and take turns. Children and adults respect each other and adults praise and encourage children frequently.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. There are regular meetings with parents and managers to establish how the nursery can move forward and improve the service for them and some good ideas have been implemented as a result. Parents and carers are able to influence the care their children receive and have regular information passed to them.

The manager is aware of the changes regarding the recording and management of complaints. A complaint log is kept and there are procedures to follow to ensure any complaints are dealt with in line with the National Standards to improve the service to children.

Staff understand that some children may have special needs and there are effective procedures in place to help them reach their potential. If staff need to speak to parents and carers to alert them to concerns over development they are sensitive and diplomatic and try to be informed so they can offer hope and advice.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management are good. The nursery has a clear management structure and all senior members of staff have defined roles and responsibilities. The person in charge holds a relevant qualification to at least level 3. Staffing levels are good and the large majority of staff hold early years qualifications and have relevant experience. Most of those not yet relevantly qualified are training to become so which helps to bring up to date childcare knowledge into practice for the benefit of the children.

The priority given to staff development and training is good. Staff enhance their skills by attending short courses on specific subjects, for example, on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and reading courses. Staff use their training well to plan and provide exciting opportunities for children. New systems are being developed to evaluate and monitor staff performance to ensure that staff are maximising their ability to care effectively for children. The needs of the range of children attending are met.

There is a clear sense of purpose and direction in the setting and there are always self imposed action plans in place to make improvements. There is a full range of up to date policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed, updated and shared with parents and carers. Recent changes regarding suitability and complaints have

been addressed to ensure the continuing safety and well-being of children.

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

Children under 3 years lack access to an appropriate range of resources promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice so they do not have sufficient opportunities to learn about diversity.

Procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against a staff member or volunteer and procedures regarding staffing, (including documentation) deployment and ratios are in line with the National Standards. This helps to protect children.

Children have opportunities to develop their independence at snack and meal times. The timing of outside play and alternatives indoors is better planned to ensure all children have access to activities to help them develop their larger physical skills on a daily basis.

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

Ofsted received a complaint regarding the staff to child ratios, the supervision of children and notification of staff changes to Ofsted.

Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the provision on 12 September 2005. As a result of the investigation the provider was given two actions under National Standard 14 (documentation). They were as follows:

Standard 14 – Improve knowledge and understanding of requirements set out in the regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters. (This refers to notifying Ofsted of significant events at the earliest opportunity and of staff changes within 14 days)

Standard 14- Ensure that records of internal investigations are always available for inspection.

During the visit the inspector found evidence that suggests that National Standard 13 Child Protection had not been met and two actions were given to ensure that procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer ensure that advice is sought from Social Services or Ofsted prior to an internal investigation being conducted.

A satisfactory response was received from the provider and provision remains registered.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents and carers, 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:

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#### **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 policies regarding the cleaning of the nursery and the provision of nutritional foods offered to the children
- ensure that children under 3 years have an appropriate range of resources promoting equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

##### **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 opportunities for 3 and 4-year-olds to help themselves to water when they are thirsty.

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