



# Lechlade Little Learners Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101484
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 April 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Angela Cole
<b>Setting Address</b>	Wharf Lane, Lechlade, Gloucestershire, GL7 3AU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lechlade Little Learners Playgroup
<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?

Lechlade Little Learners playgroup opened in 1971 and is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. It is situated in the town of Lechlade, near Fairford, and serves the local community. The group has its own building within the grounds of St. Lawrence Primary School with whom it has close links. There is immediate access to an enclosed outside area with a variety of outdoor play equipment for the children to use. A maximum of 24 children from 2 years to under 5 years may attend the

playgroup at any one time. The setting is open each day during school terms on Monday to Friday from 09.00 until 12.00 and some afternoons from 13.00 until 15.10, depending on requirements.

There are currently 24 children aged from 2 years 9 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The children come from the local community. There are currently no children with special educational needs on roll, or for whom English is an additional language.

The playgroup employs three staff who are supported by an administrator. Two of the staff, including the manager, hold teaching and appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a level three qualification. The playgroup receives support from local school staff, a mentor teacher and advisors from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and a fieldworker from the Gloucestershire Playgroup and Toddler Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children gain independence and learn the importance of good personal hygiene as they discuss the reasons for washing their hands before eating. Routine procedures, such as thorough cleaning of the premises and use of clean tablecloths, sustain high levels of hygiene and prevent the spread of infection for children. Staff are sensitive to children's needs for outdoor activities. They have clear procedures for dealing with accidents and the giving of medication so children's good health is effectively supported.

The children have regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. They benefit from healthy snacks that include fruit and foods they have prepared, such as soup or sandwiches. The food offered effectively takes into account the individual and cultural dietary needs of all children.

As they discuss their own growth and muscle development, children increasingly recognise bodily changes. They effectively learn about how to look after their bodies as they participate in a good range of large muscle activities with large and small equipment, both indoors and outdoors. Younger and older children have good opportunities to be active or to take part in more restful activities according to their needs.

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

The provision is good.

The well-maintained setting is safe and secure so children's risk of accidental injury is minimised. Effective precautions include restricted access, a high fence and consistent use of safety gates. Conscientious on-going consideration is given to

potential hazards, including deterioration of the concrete, outdoor play surface that is being addressed by the committee. Children are safe indoors and outdoors due to detailed assessment of potential hazards, although this is not used to identify risks on outings.

Children are able to move freely in the thoughtfully laid-out playroom that includes a well-resourced imaginative area and an annexe for one-to-one or small group work. They enjoy free access to outside play later in the session. Indoors and outdoors, a wide range of safe, high quality, developmentally appropriate resources is set out; this ensures that children have safe access to a good choice of activities to support their progress. Other toys are always available on request and staff frequently fetch additional equipment to support individual children's play needs. Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they heed regular reminders to look before jumping off equipment.

All staff have current child protection training. They are competent to put the required procedures into practice.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the playgroup. They are successfully encouraged to be actively involved in an appropriate range of learning opportunities. Staff are well aware of how two-year-old children learn and know how to provide good quality care for older children. Those who are new to playgroup settle particularly well because of the welcoming, warm, and individual support given by all staff. The youngest children make good progress as staff take time to communicate with them, support them to become involved and join in their play to increase self-confidence and esteem. They are effectively encouraged to connect ideas and understand the world as they make patterns with toy animals and compare items in a group by counting 12 cubes. Children gain good small muscle skills by handling many tools with increasing skill, including scissors and laces for threading.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Overall, children make consistently good progress in all areas of learning. They confidently use a wide range of language in conversation, enjoy rhymes and competently write their names as they become ready. When settled, children listen intently at circle-times and to group stories, though older ones do not have sufficient opportunity to express more complex thoughts. Children accurately use and understand mathematical language to recognise and compare numbers of toys and enjoy number songs, for example, by counting how many 'little ducks' are left. They occasionally consolidate such learning using computer programs, including ones to match and count shapes.

Children are curious and ask many questions. They recall searching for mini beasts to examine and model, and investigate many materials on interest tables and during cooking and gardening activities. Regular outings are enjoyed to visit different places such as a farm, and explore the local environment, including the school grounds and

nearby church. Under the topic, 'People who help us', children welcome many visitors. Children enjoy creating, for example, to mix their own painting colours and make models from damp sand, peat, clay and construction materials. They sing favourite songs, create different sounds with instruments and move imaginatively and to music, for example, as 'cats'.

Staff focus on getting to know the children exceptionally well as individuals and collectively use teaching methods most likely to benefit and support their progress. A calm, encouraging atmosphere is fostered that gives children time and opportunity to play and learn using the wide range of high quality resources. All children are actively included in the life of the group, for example, at social times. The conscientious planning ensures children experience a wide, balanced range of appropriate opportunities across the six areas of learning. These are informally, yet clearly, linked to regular assessment of achievement and effectively help children move on to their next stage of learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children have positive attitudes to learning, are keen to choose their play and move smoothly between activities. They concentrate to complete tasks and show initiative in their use of equipment. They gain good personal independence, learning to dress themselves and help tidy away.

All children are known and highly supported as individuals. Families are warmly greeted by staff in premises that are made welcoming by many displays of children's work. Children play with resources from other cultures, as well as some showing people with disabilities, and so begin to treat others with respect. Staff have recently attended training so have the knowledge to support children with special needs. Children are skilfully encouraged to be well behaved, for example, to share physical equipment and take turns at games. Staff ensure they have consistent expectations for behaviour and offer frequent, meaningful praise. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. New children are extremely well settled as staff go out of their way to get to know families. They explain detailed information about the group and its educational provision, so children's care and learning is enhanced through parents' understanding and interest. Their views are actively sought through discussion and strong committee involvement. In practice, parents are well informed about children's progress in regular conversation and at an open evening. Their active involvement through valuable rota help and sharing interests such as family customs, help the children make good progress in their learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is effectively supported by the calm atmosphere generated by the organised, caring adults and the good quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education. The premises and resources are effectively organised to meet the children's needs. Most legally required documentation is in place and regularly reviewed which contributes to their health, safety and well-being. Good regard is given to keeping children's records and personal information confidential.

Many aspects of the provision are managed and monitored informally and efficiently. The highly committed staff and the strong, supportive committee work closely together, for example, to improve the planning of the curriculum and resourcing of sessions to enable children to develop. Continuous modelling of good practice and highly accessible guidance for new and established rota helpers ensure that children learn effectively.

The established keyworker system benefits the children through universal understanding of their needs and close liaison with parents and carers. They are skilfully cared for by the close-knit team of motivated staff who are well qualified overall, respond positively to annual appraisal and attend training whenever possible. Each child's progress is discussed in regular meetings and staff share responsibilities to effectively enhance the breadth of their learning. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

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

The previous care and nursery inspections recommended that the playgroup keeps an accurate attendance record, improves access to construction materials and increases support for more able children in aspects of literacy and number to promote children's learning.

The organisation of the setting has improved for children as staff now make sure that an accurate record is kept of the hours children attend; details of later arrival or early leaving times are accurately noted. Children now have regular access to tools and recycled materials that they use for their own ideas to extend choices and opportunities to be creative. Adults regularly offer support for older children to practise writing their names and forming letters whenever they show an interest in these activities. Children are also effectively supported to develop an understanding of number operations as they play, for example, with model bears and stacking cubes.

The improved understanding of attendance documentation issues and the good use of resources to develop early literacy and numeracy skills has greatly improved children's care, well-being and development.

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

There are no complaints to report.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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):

- ensure children's safety on outings by conducting a risk assessment identifying action to be taken to minimize identified risks.

#### 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):

- consider the organisation of group activities, including story-time, to make learning opportunities for older children more effective.

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