



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 221886

DfES Number: 517054

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 09/12/2004
Inspector Name Susan Christine McGuire

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name The Ladybird Pre School (Cottenham)
Setting Address King Georges Playing Field
Lambs Lane, Cottenham
Cambridge
Cambridgeshire
CB4 8TB

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of The Ladybird Pre School (Cottenham)
1034782

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name The Ladybird Pre School (Cottenham)
Address King Georges Playing Fields
Lambs Lane, Cottenham
Cambridge
Cambridgeshire
CB48TB

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Ladybird Pre-school opened in 1994 and operates from two rooms in a purpose built building. It is situated on the playing fields near to the centre of the village of Cottenham. A maximum of 52 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:00 during term-time. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 109 children aged from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these, 54 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school 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 pre-school employs 19 staff. Fifteen of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and 4 staff are working towards a qualification.

How good is the Day Care?

Ladybird Pre-School provides good care for children.

The staff work well as a team, carrying out individual roles such as special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and health and safety officer, with enthusiasm. The premises is bright and cheerful with children's art-work displayed at a height they can see, so they know it is valued. The layout of some areas of the Ladybirds pre-school room, however, limits children's ability to access resources and move about freely. An excellent operational plan is in place which contains all relevant policies and procedures, but the complaints procedure for parents does not accurately explain the role of Ofsted in the process.

A good risk assessment procedure is in place and staff consistently follow good routines to keep children safe on the premises. The setting is working towards all staff having a first-aid certificate and ensure that specialist training is given so that staff can meet individual medical needs. Children are encouraged to manage their

personal hygiene independently and staff are good role-models, for example, handwashing before lunch. Snacks are healthy and nutritious.

Staff are deployed well in sessions to support children's play and learning. Activities are stimulating and fun and children are happy and relaxed, enjoying positive relationships with staff. Activities are adapted so that all children can take part, and resources include positive images of ethnicity and culture, so children are learning about equality through play. Behaviour is generally managed well, although some staff have an inconsistent approach to the same issues, which gives children mixed messages.

There is a good partnership with parents. They are provided with a range of helpful information about the setting and childcare generally, and are made to feel welcome on arrival. Home visits are offered if required, and parents have an open and equal relationship with staff.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- The provision for under threes is excellent. Staff have regard for "Birth to Three matters" when planning for this age-group, and take very good account of individual needs and capabilities when supporting activities.
- Staff plan and provide a very good range of stimulating activities which support children's play and learning well, but they are skilled in remaining flexible to allow child-led play to develop.
- Snack time is well-organised and provides a relaxed, social activity where children can develop good conversational skills.
- The setting provides parents with a range of well-presented information when they make initial contact, and on an on-going basis through regular newsletters. Staff also offer home visits to help them assist a child to settle in to the group.
- A good risk assessment procedure is followed to keep children safe on the premises. This effectively takes accident records into account. There are checklists displayed in several areas of the setting so staff can see when the daily routine has been carried out.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of the play space in the Ladybirds pre-school room
- the consistency of behaviour management
- the explanation of the role of Ofsted in the complaints procedure.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
4	Improve the organisation of the play area in the Big Ladybirds room so that children have adequate space to carry out activities and can access resources easily.
11	Ensure that the behaviour management strategy is consistently applied by all staff members.
12	Clarify the role of Ofsted in the complaints procedure for parents.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Ladybird Pre-School is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in physical and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff use the key-working system effectively to build positive relationships with the children, who they know well. They respond to children's day to day needs, for example, for exercise after a prolonged period of sitting still, and are skilled in recognising unplanned opportunities to extend learning. They provide a range of planned activities which show they have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals, but assessment is not always used effectively to plan the next steps of learning for individuals or to set sufficient challenge to older, more able children.

Leadership and management is generally good. There is a clear management structure and the staff work well as a team. Regular meetings maintain good relationships and training needs are supported. The committee mainly have a fund-raising role, devolving the daily organisation of the setting to the staff in whom they have the confidence to carry this out. All are committed to continual improvement of the setting and work well with outside agencies to help them achieve this.

Partnership with parents is generally good. Parents speak highly of the setting and have good relationships with staff. They have opportunities to contribute to their child's assessment by identifying learning targets and they are kept informed about themes and topics through newsletters. Parents' evening are held regularly. Parents are given some information about the Foundation Stage and about the six areas of learning.

What is being done well?

- Children's imagination is being very-well developed through daily opportunities for them to engage in role-play, which they often initiate themselves, and involve adults in the setting who respond well by extending the scenario.
- Children's physical development is very good. They show confidence and control in the use of a variety of equipment, and have a good awareness of how their body functions, for example, changes after exercise.
- Staff successfully employ key-working strategies, using group-times to encourage children to develop language skills, and taking unplanned opportunities in these times to extend learning, for example, helping children to notice the same initial letter sounds in words during the taste/smell activity.

- Children are learning to share equipment and take turns in activities, and to consider the needs of those around them, such as the need for personal space.
- Management and staff are very committed to the continuous improvement of the setting. They understand the importance of partnership with parents, and frequently seek their views as part of the monitoring and assessing the nursery provision, and then act on the findings.

What needs to be improved?

- the effectiveness of assessment as a means of identifying the next steps of learning for individuals.
- the programme for children's mathematical development
- opportunities for children to explore, and discover how things work.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in addressing the key issue raised at the last inspection.

The setting has liaised with the local primary school to ensure that they are encouraging children to recognise and write using the style of print employed by the school. Examples of this are displayed and have been circulated to parents so that they can use it at home.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Most children separate from their carers easily and relate well to adults in the setting. They are learning to share and take turns and to consider the feelings of others. They concentrate in group-situations and persist with challenging tasks e.g. clothes fastenings. Children are independent in their self-care and will confidently select resources although the layout of the room limits this. Children are confident to stand up for themselves but are not always well-supported in this by staff.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff encourage children to develop good listening skills by giving them regular opportunities to follow verbal instructions. They also take opportunities to help children to notice initial letter sounds. Children enjoy group stories and predict and recall the tale confidently although they infrequently access books for personal pleasure. A range of mark-making tools are available and children write for a purpose in role-play, but they have insufficient encouragement to recognise their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children count forwards with confidence and can recognise written numerals. They can sort by shape, size and colour, and they use positional and comparative language in context during play e.g. taller and shorter. Older and more able children can recreate simple patterns. Staff miss opportunities within the daily routine, however, to encourage children to problem-solve, or to explore the concept of more and less, as practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Staff are giving children a sense of time and place through activities which explore the local environment and the people who work in it. Children are learning about the wider world by exploring the festivals of their own and diverse cultures. They are developing design and construction skills using different methods of joining and discovering that I.T. can support learning. There are insufficient opportunities, however, for children to satisfy curiosity by exploring or seeing how things work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Staff provide daily opportunities for children to exercise outdoors. They ensure equipment is available for children to develop skills in pedalling, steering balancing and ball-skills, and they plan activities for children to stop, go and change direction, including observations of changes in the body after exercise. Children are using a variety of tools with increasing skill and they can transport objects safely and pour accurately showing a clear preference for their right or left hand.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's imagination is being well-developed through role-play which staff facilitate well, allowing it to develop at the children's own pace. Planned activities encourage children to explore a wide variety of media and materials and mould them into their own shapes, pictures or collages. Staff encourage children to use all senses and to find words to describe what they feel, see or smell. Children show enjoyment of singing and can distinguish between loud and soft sounds.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- improve assessment to ensure it is used effectively to plan the next steps of learning for individual children
- develop the programme for mathematical development to include using everyday opportunities to encourage children to problem-solve and explore the concepts of more and less as practical activities
- develop the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world to include opportunities for children to use their natural curiosity to explore and to discover how things work.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.