



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 219245

DfES Number: 521146

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 21/06/2004  
Inspector Name Paula Durrant

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Ladybirds Pre School  
Setting Address Bunyan Meeting Rooms  
High Street Elstow  
Bedford  
Bedfordshire  
MK42 9XP

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Elstow Ladybirds Pre School

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Elstow Ladybirds Pre School  
Address Bunyan Meeting Place  
Elstow  
Bedford  
Bedfordshire  
MK42 9XP

## 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

Elstow Pre-school, The Ladybirds first opened in September 1991. The group operate from the Bunyan Meeting Place in the village of Elstow on the outskirts of Bedford. The group serves the village of Elstow and local surrounding areas such as Cauldwell.

The pre-school is registered for 20 children aged two to five years. There are currently 35 children on roll. This includes 15 funded three year olds and 8 funded four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are no children with special educational needs and 2 children with English as an additional language.

The group is open four days of the week term time only. Sessions are available Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between the hours of 09:15 until 11:45 and 12.45 until 15:15. The group also provide a session on a Friday morning between the hours of 09:15 to 11:45.

Three staff work with the children, one of whom holds an appropriate childcare qualification. Two staff are currently pursuing training programmes. The setting receives support from the Early Years and Childcare Partnership. They are also members of the PSLA.

### How good is the Day Care?

Ladybirds Pre-School provides an unsatisfactory standard of care for children.

The staff team do not work well together to provide a well prepared environment for children. Documentation does not meet the National Standards and the staff make insufficient use of the newly adopted policies and procedures to guide their practice effectively. The staff generally use the available space to provide an adequate range of activities for the children. The staff make limited use of the resources and equipment available and some items are well worn and in poor condition.

Formal risk assessments are not in place and are not recorded. Staff do not always

have a practical awareness of health and safety issues. The pre-school has poor procedures to promote the good health of children. The nursery supports equal opportunity for all children, including those with special needs and English as an additional language. However, the individual needs of children are not always being met.

The staff do their best to plan a suitable range of indoor activities and play opportunities which promotes children's learning and development. However, they lack the skills and knowledge to draw the learning from play and this adversely affects the quality of learning for children. Staff develop generally positive relationships with the children but the quality of their interaction is highly variable. The children mostly behave well but instances of challenging behaviour do not always prompt a consistent response from staff.

The pre-school has satisfactory relationships with parents. Information is shared informally at delivery and collection times to help support the needs of the children.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Elstow Ladybirds committee had 24 actions to address following their last inspection. The setting has demonstrated some positive improvement in moving forward. These include ensuring committee members are appropriately checked; reviewing security; ensuring appropriate insurance cover is in place; providing access for children to gain a drink; implementing individual records for all children in attendance; providing a statement to be followed for children with special educational needs; revising the complaints procedure to include the regulatory authorities details; making policies accessible to parents and developing staff's knowledge of the local area child protection procedures.

There are 14 actions that have not been met following the last inspection.

#### **What is being done well?**

- The staff are caring and friendly towards the children.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- the procedures for checking that staff are suitably qualified and/or experienced to work with children
- the staff recruitment and induction procedures, including the designation of a named deputy
- the emergency contact details for all staff
- the procedure for lost children
- the procedures for recording the arrival and departure of children and adults
- the quality of activities for children

- the assessment records, to monitor progress and achievement
- the quality of staff interaction with children
- the learning environment
- the quality and range of resources and equipment
- the risk assessments
- the procedures for recording accidents, incidents, and medication
- the implementation of policies and procedures with regard to equal opportunities, special
- educational needs, behaviour, child protection
- the standard of documentation in relation to the National Standards.

### Outcome of the inspection

Unsatisfactory

### 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 must take the following actions by the date shown

Std	Action	Date
1	Ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitably qualified and/or experienced to work with children.	28/07/2004
2	Ensure that the operational procedures are implemented effectively and that management monitor the overall provision to ensure compliance to the National Standards.	01/09/2004
2	Develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met. Ensure a named deputy is appointed.	28/07/2004
3	Devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children, which is appropriate for their stage of development; based on their individual needs and purposeful in relation to	01/09/2004

	children having sufficient time for completion of tasks.	
6	Ensure a Fire Evacuation procedure is displayed.	28/07/2004
7	Ensure there are procedures to be followed in relation to the administration of medication.	28/07/2004
9	Ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.	01/09/2004

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

Std	Recommendation
1	Revise current recruitment procedures inclusive of staff induction.
2	Ensure that emergency contact details are in place for all employees.
3	Ensure that staff maintain appropriate assessment records for all children to monitor progress and achievements.
3	Ensure that management monitor staff interaction and support and mentor staff in engaging effectively with young children.
4	Ensure that there is a policy in place stating procedures to be followed when away from the main indoor area, which clearly relates to risk assessments.
7	Ensure that parental signatures are gained for all accidents that are documented.
10	Ensure that staff develop their understanding of special educational needs.
12	Provide opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their children's progress.
13	Ensure all staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and procedures. Review the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

## 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 Ladybirds Pre-School is unacceptable. Children are making acceptable progress in personal, social and emotional development but poor progress towards the early learning goals in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is poor. Although relationships with the children are friendly, and staff listen and talk to the children, there is insufficient questioning and stimulation. This limits children's curiosity and desire to learn. Staff have an insecure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and do not understand how to plan an educational programme to support progress in learning. This affects the quality of experiences offered to the children and hinders their progress. Daily plans do not give clear and effective guidance to staff. Although the staff provide an adequate range of play activities, these are not developed into an integrated learning experience and some staff do not draw potential learning from the play. Too little attention is given to promoting the understanding and skills of the more able children. Children become restless in whole group sessions and staff lack consistency when they respond to occasional instances of deteriorating behaviour. Present systems for the assessment of children's learning are not consistently completed. Therefore, although a few entries are made against the stepping stones, the records cannot usefully inform planning.

Leadership and management are poor. The group has made little progress since the last inspection of nursery education. The playleader has yet to fully develop her role in evaluating, monitoring and reviewing practice.

The partnership with parents and carers has significant weaknesses. Parents are encouraged to bring their child into the provision but information on the educational provision is basic. Parents appear to be happy with the provision.

### What is being done well?

- Staff are beginning to progress children's learning by showing an interest in children's activities and listening and talking to them.

### What needs to be improved?

- staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the Early Learning Goals
- the quality of staff interaction to improve children's learning across all areas of the curriculum
- the planning, to show what children are expected to learn from an activity,

how it may be adapted to suit children who learn more quickly or more slowly, and the assessment opportunities presented by the activity.

- the assessment system, to track children's progress against the stepping stones and the early learning goals and to help staff to decide what children need to learn next
- systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

There has been limited improvement since the last inspection of funded nursery education.

In March 2002, the setting was required to improve the quality of planning to provide breadth, balance and progression in all areas of learning; to improve the quality of staff interactions to extend children's learning and to encourage them to explain their thinking; and to find ways to manage and improve children's behaviour. Although the setting has a satisfactory behaviour management policy and children's behaviour is acceptable, some inconsistencies in the staff implementation of the policy lead to occasional instances of challenging behaviour. Planning, assessment and the quality of staff interaction are all issues which remain to be appropriately addressed following this inspection.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Relationships are generally good and staff try to give positive praise and encouragement in response to children's achievements. Children have few choices in learning but develop acceptable levels of independence in self care skills. Behaviour is acceptable but staff are inconsistent in their expectations and do not develop a sense of community. Children are not always motivated to learn and some drift between uninviting activities, although using nit combs on the dolls hair was popular.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Poor

Children talk to and engage with staff during activities. However, children receive little encouragement to use new vocabulary, or respond through questioning, song, rhyme or story. Children are given scant encouragement to use books and the environment is poorly labelled to promote their interest in print. Children are given no support for writing at the mark making table or sufficient encouragement to attempt writing for a variety of purposes. Role play opportunities are of low quality.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Poor

Children have some opportunities to count within the daily session as they line up to go outside or sing 'Five currant buns'. They complete jigsaw puzzles and build towers with wooden blocks. However, there are few chances to recognise numerals, solve problems in practical ways or calculate. There are incidental opportunities to find out about capacity as they play with sand or water but staff rarely intervene or plan specific activities to promote an understanding of weight, height and length.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Poor

Children are competent designers and builders as they play with construction sets and recycled materials for modelling. However, staff fail to respond appropriately to develop children's ideas. Children talk about their families but little use is made of the local area to help children learn about where they live. There are few opportunities for children to explore and investigate beyond free play with water and sand, to use information technology or to learn about other cultures and beliefs.



### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Poor

Outside play is noted daily on the plans but there are no guidelines to enable staff to develop children's physical skills in a progressive way. Plans show poor indoor provision. Children enjoy circle games with staff such as 'The farmer's in his den' but there is no coherent strategy to ensure that children experience a range of large and small equipment. Children use a limited range of small tools with increasing control. Health awareness is given little emphasis in practice or on plans.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Poor

Children experience an adequate range of media but staff do not always encourage children to express their own ideas. Staff do not intervene appropriately to support role play and the organisation of resources restricts development. Children learn to sing some songs but music based activities are given little apparent emphasis. Children have too few opportunities to respond using their senses and to use their imagination in art and design, dance, role play and stories.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is not fostered appropriately.**

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is unacceptable. Children are making poor progress towards the early learning goals.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- Improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the Early Learning Goals.
- Further develop plans to ensure that they underpin progression in children's learning. Include sufficient detail on the short term plans to show what children are intended to learn and to guide staff in their delivery of the educational programme.
- Develop assessment records to enable staff to track children's progress against the stepping stones and the early learning goals. Use these to show what children need to learn next.
- Devise systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 20 working days showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. A copy of the action plan must be sent to the local education authority. The Department for Education and Skills will write to the provider asking for a copy of the action plan. The Secretary for Education and Skills will then decide whether to withdraw the provider's entitlement to receive funding for 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.*