



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 219245

DfES Number: 521146

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 02/03/2005
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

Ladybirds Pre-School is a committee run group. It opened in September 1991 and operates from the Bunyan Meeting Place in the village of Elstow. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open four days a week (not Thursdays) from 09:15 until 11:45 for 38 weeks of the year. They also open 12:30 until 15:00 on a Monday only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 24 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these 17 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area which include surrounding villages and towns. The group have systems in place to support children with special needs and currently support three children for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school employ three staff. The pre-school leader holds an appropriate early years 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 Pre School Learning Alliance.

How good is the Day Care?

Ladybirds Pre-School provides satisfactory care overall for young children.

Staff have developed their knowledge and understanding of their registration requirements through guidance from external advisors and access to training. A newly appointed committee supports the staff team in their working roles. Committee personnel are available to assist in daily sessions covering additional responsibilities such as the preparation of snacks. This allows effective deployment of staff and purposeful engagement with the children.

The group have developed their written procedures. An operational file is now in place. Documentation remains an area of development as some policies require review in addition to records effectively being implemented in practice such as risk

assessments.

The group have systems in place to check the suitability of the premises but these are not always maintained. Staff have limited understanding of risk assessments. They have yet to complete a formal report on all areas of practice. The premises remain secure and children are closely monitored whilst in attendance. There are appropriate systems to record accidents, incidents and medication administered. The group promote a varied and balanced snack programme. There are systems in place to support children with additional needs.

The group provide an adequate range of stimulating play based activities to enhance children's learning. Play is co-operative and purposeful, however, children do lose interest and become confused when staff change the pattern of events within the daily routine. For example, at the start of the session, registration is not always undertaken. Children therefore become confused with the boundaries and expectations of adults.

Parents have access to a varied range of communication aids to support the exchange of information. They are welcomed to participate in daily sessions and to become a member of the committee.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Ladybirds Pre-school had significant action required following their last inspection. This included 29 actions and four compliance notices.

Three actions were set in relation to suitability and vetting of adults. All staff and committee members are now suitably vetted and staff have developed their skills through training.

Five actions were set in relation to organisation. Staff have reviewed their procedures, incorporating a key worker system, operational plan, action plan for staff development and details of staff on site.

One action was raised in relation to planning and activities provided. Planning now supports the development of learning through practical activities linked to the stepping stones.

Two actions were raised about the environment. The premises is now closely monitored for appropriate temperatures and a mobile phone is in place for emergency contact.

Six actions were set in relation to safety, five of the six actions have been met. Children remain well supervised and the premises are secure, access is monitored and adherence to fire safety is complied with.

One action was raised regarding medication. The group now have a policy in place.

One action was raised regarding drinking water being accessible at all times. This is now in place.

Two actions were raised on Equal opportunities; individual records of information are now in place and the group have sought guidance from the inclusion officer in addition to purchasing further resources.

Two actions were raised about special needs. Staff have reviewed their policy and accessed training.

Two actions were raised about partnership with parents, complaints details are now in place and parents have access to all written policies.

Three actions were raised about Child Protection; staff have reviewed their policy and attended training.

One action was raised about accessibility of records. The group now maintain all required documentation on site.

What is being done well?

- Staff have continued to develop and improve their practice. Good links with development advisers and access to training has supported the group and staff team in progressing their knowledge base and practical skills. Staff interaction and engagement with the children was extremely productive, with staff giving valued direction to encourage children in their experimenting and learning through play.
- The food programme is exceptionally well planned. Children gain a varied and balanced diet with the emphasis towards healthy eating. Children sit in key groups with staff which allows the opportunity for an integrated social experience. Staff also use the time effectively to extend children's language and observations of differences. This was observed when children were given a chance to look at the inside of the fruits they had observed unopened in the morning at registration. Children discovered seeds inside and looked closely at the differences of colour, texture and formation.
- The group have good systems in place to support the exchange of information between setting and home. The newly implemented office area ensures all required documentation is easily accessible in addition to providing a parental notice board in the foyer. Staff make themselves available at the beginning and end of each session to share and discuss concerns or achievements with individual carers.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of the daily routine to ensure consistency of adults expectations of children.
- the systems for monitoring the suitability of the premises, equipment and activities in order to ensure children's safety and welfare.
- the development of the operational plan as a self evaluative document reflective of the setting in addition to the review of some policies.

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

Satisfactory

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
6	Develop procedures for the maintenance and implementation of effective systems to ensure children's welfare, this refers to risk assessments.	31/03/2005

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

Std	Recommendation
2	ensure the consistent implementation of familiar daily routines so that children gain a clear understanding of the setting's boundaries.
14	further develop the operational plan, to create a more detailed, evaluative document, which reflects practice. Review policies in order that they comply with the National Standards, this refers to behaviour, complaints and Child Protection.

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

How effective is the nursery education?

Ladybirds Pre-school provides good-quality nursery education overall which enables children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals. Provision for Mathematics is particularly well planned and they make very good progress in this area.

Teaching is generally good. Staff have developed their knowledge and confidence in the Foundation Stage. They have gained support and advice from external practitioners in order to implement an educational programme that is practical and user friendly. Planning remains an area for development in order to ensure balance across all areas of learning. Short term plans are detailed, but poor emphasis is given to the value of long and medium term aims. Staff achieve worthwhile standards of interaction, asking questions to make children think and responding sensitively to their individual needs.

They appropriately plan a wide range of interesting and stimulating play based activities, enabling satisfactory challenges for all children. However, there are limited planned opportunities for developing a sense of community, forming correct letter formation, IT, sense of time and place, cultures and beliefs, movement, and sense of space. This inhibits children from accessing the full curriculum. Children are generally well behaved and respond positively to the expectations of adults. There are adequate resources that are thoughtfully presented. Children are keen to learn and play is productive. An assessment system is in place. Assessments are informed from regular on going observations and are used to set future targets.

Leadership and management is generally good. The staff work well as a team, sharing roles and responsibilities.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are welcomed into the group and are involved with the activities and routines. They are kept well informed about the group's topics and current events, and are given literature explaining the curriculum and their child's progress.

What is being done well?

- The programme for mathematics is exceptional. Staff have thoroughly revised their practice and thought hard about how to teach children basic mathematical concepts in practical situations. Good use is made of regular daily activities, such as registration when children count how many children in attendance. They also gain invaluable opportunities to measure and calculate when cooking and making play dough as a craft based, adult focused activity.

What needs to be improved?

- the monitoring and maintenance of a balanced curriculum programme.
- the adoption of activities in order to sustain interest and challenge the older child.
- the programme for Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Ladybirds Pre-School has made good progress since their last inspection. They were required to improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Staff have attended training and have also received guidance and support from the early years advisory service. They were required to review their planning systems to ensure a cohesive planning cycle. Planning remains an area for development as medium and long term plans are yet to be drawn up. Short term plans are detailed and give clear direction for the learning intention and outcome. Assessment records are maintained and used to set future targets. Significant improvements have been made in relation to the quality of the education programme. However, monitoring and reviewing of the curriculum programme is yet to become affective.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy attending this group. They separate well from their main carer and are keen to participate in the activities provided. They sit quietly and listen attentively during registration, and respond with delight and anticipation as they hear about the activities available. They show care and concern to others as they share and take turns with equipment. Children are adept at meeting their self care needs but gain little opportunity to extend their knowledge of their local environment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children interact, talk and negotiate clearly with others and demonstrate a sensitive awareness of the listener. They enjoy sharing their views and ideas and use speech skilfully to explore real and imagined experiences. There are plentiful opportunities to handle books and to develop language for thinking. Children are introduced to phonetic links. They mark make for a purpose in role play but limited emphasis is given to supporting children in developing correct letter formation when writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are very competent at counting and recognising numerals. They use number in structured activities and general play. Staff give plentiful opportunities to problem solve in practical situations. This was observed in practice as children measured quantities of ingredients for the play dough activity. They followed a recipe and calculated how many cups and spoonfuls were required. Children recreate simple patterns effectively as they insert pegs into the board and thread beads on string.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children have limited opportunities to explore and investigate living things and objects within their environment. They are adequate resources to support children in their design and making skills. Children are spontaneously creative and adept at building complex structures. Poor provision is made for IT. Children gain little experience of finding out how and why things work. The curriculum does not support the development of a sense of time and place or cultures and beliefs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children are confident and move freely within their environment. They access activities independently and use a range of tools and materials to develop their fine motor skills. Children have access to an outside play area, but this is restricted in poor weather. Use of adapted provision for large motor activities are given little emphasis. Children gain limited opportunities to exert their energy or use equipment to develop their larger muscles.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
------------	----------------

Children gain plentiful opportunities to explore a range of media and materials in two and three dimensions. They learn to experiment with colour as they mix paints and identify changes when two colours are combined. Children have regular opportunities to sing familiar songs and rhymes but limited emphasis is given for children to use their imagination when moving to music. Children communicate their feelings and ideas through art work, stories and role play.

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

- Ensure that the curriculum reflects equality and is balanced across all areas of learning, and mechanisms are put in place to monitor and sustain the quality of the educational programme.
- Ensure that older children are suitably challenged and planning supports the differentiation of activities.
- Improve the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world.

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.