

# Linden House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY103054

**Inspection date**

08/11/2010

**Inspector**

Gillian Charlesworth

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## **Description of the setting**

Linden House Nursery is a privately-owned day care provision that registered in 2002. It operates from three rooms and a conservatory in an Edwardian house close to the centre of Dunstable, Bedfordshire. Children share access to a terraced outside play area to the rear of the property with steps to access. There is steep access to the front of the property with 10 steps to reach the front door, therefore the building is not fully accessible.

The setting is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6:30pm, for 51 weeks of the year. It offers a variety of sessions including some part-time places. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 36 children may attend at any one time with no more than 18 under two years of age. There are currently 58 children aged from nought to five years on role who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, some in part-time places. One child receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two years, and a further six children receive funding for three-year-olds. The setting currently supports children with English as an additional language and a minority of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Linden House Nursery is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

Linden House Nursery employs 13 staff. Of these, 10 including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Five members of staff are working towards a qualification and the manager has an Early Years Foundation Degree and is working towards a B.A. Honours in Child and Adolescent's Studies alongside Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from the local authority early years team. There is a regular school-run to and from Dunstable Icknield Lower School.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

There is a strong commitment to self-evaluation which is developing well: identifying many valuable priorities for development and responding well to users' needs. Children are making good progress in learning and development in a supportive and stimulating environment overall, that meets their needs well. Policies and procedures to safeguard children are generally strong and most staff have a well-developed knowledge of each child with a keen commitment to individualised learning and promoting children's welfare needs. Partnerships with parents and other agencies are strong overall and enable the setting to tailor support to provide continuity of care and meet individual needs.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that all members of staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedure, with particular regard to the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff/manager (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 06/12/2010
- ensure that a full risk assessment is carried out for each type of outing including at least one person on outings who has a current paediatric first aid certificate (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 06/12/2010

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure parents have regular opportunities to share and add to records and extend the short-term planning, using the analysis of observations to plan 'what next' for individual children and to target interactions to support each child's learning and development.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Overall, children are safeguarded and protected well and safeguarding children is mostly prioritised. There are secure systems to ensure that all staff undergo criminal record checks and, overall, recruitment procedures are robust for staff and students working at the setting. Safeguarding regulations and duties are generally met in relation to child protection and staff have a genuine commitment and clear understanding of procedures to be followed to protect children because training is prioritised. However, the policy to be followed in the event of an allegation against the manager is not always fully understood. There are a wide range of policies and procedures to support the safe management of the setting. These have been thoughtfully devised and are effective; including strong procedures to risk assess the premises and keep children safe. However, while risk assessments are strong overall, one regular outing taking children to-and-from school is not fully risk assessed. Consequently, although a large proportion of staff are trained in paediatric first aid, this outing does not always have a first aider present thereby limiting responses to fully safeguard children. Staff are vigilant and help children to develop a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe and become safety conscious, for example, they learn to use scissors. The environment is child-centred and, overall, good quality resources are well organised, accessible, and used well to support children's inclusive and independent learning and development. Staff know the children well, are very respectful and thoughtful deployment, especially at lunchtime, ensures that children always have plenty of support and interactions that mostly challenge children. The diverse and well-trained staff team use incidental opportunities to successfully help children appreciate people's different abilities and be sensitive towards others differences. There is a developing commitment to sustainability.

The manager and staff are enthusiastic and there is a strong commitment to drive the setting forward and seek further improvement. The team meets regularly to monitor many aspects of the provision. Procedures to assess the progress of children's learning are becoming well established to narrow the achievement gap. The educational programmes and planning are mostly working well with priority given to planning for children's interests and individualised learning. There is a methodical approach to tackling key areas of weakness and building on areas of strengths, thereby leading to many valuable improvements. For example, systematically tracking children's progress towards the early learning goals. Overall, self-evaluation is providing an accurate diagnosis of the strengths. It includes well chosen areas for development such as the development of a library of information to support special needs and the improvement of information-sharing during settling-in.

Parent feedback is positive and their views are actively sought and acted on. For example, responses to questionnaires are monitored and a spy-hole has been fitted to the front door to improve security. New procedures are in place to actively encourage parents to share what they know about their child when they first attend. For example, the settling-in procedure encompasses a discussion about children's individual needs and starting points, which enables staff to provide individualised routines. There are good channels of communication including a suggestion box, notices and daily verbal feedback. Parents have opportunities to be involved in children's learning, for example, they are informed of activities to try at home through monthly newsletters. However, although there are opportunities to attend annual parent meetings to review children's progress, strategies are not yet fully developed to encourage parents to make contributions to the learning and development records and regularly share children's progress. Partnerships with other provider organisations and services are utilised well and are beneficial in supporting children's individual needs.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

The quality of children's learning is good therefore they are achieving well overall. Children enjoy their learning, are settling well and eager to take part in the wide range of activities while following their play preferences. For example, babies are mostly well supported and enjoy seeing themselves in a mirror as they develop an awareness of themselves. Toddlers show curiosity as they enjoy looking for treasure in the shredded paper and pre-school children show sustained concentration when choosing to make collages and learning how to use scissors. Good systems throughout the nursery have recently been introduced to observe and assess children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The short-term planning is excellent at focusing on children's needs and interests for personalised learning. However, sometimes interactions from part-time staff provide less challenge because planning is not specifically linking to children's individual assessments and identifying the next steps in each child's learning for all staff to follow.

Children are making good progress in communicating, literacy, numeracy and

information communication technology (ICT). Children work alongside one another successfully, play well independently and are curious and inquisitive learners. Babies are developing early communication skills as staff tune in to their gestures and babble, warmly interpreting the messages these young babies attempt to convey. Consequently, babies are offered toys that interest them such as chalks and, with encouragement, learn to make marks on an accessible blackboard. All children take pleasure learning simple action rhymes and reading books. They engage in meaningful conversations with staff at mealtimes. Children smile as staff use familiar words in their home language, thereby finding comfort in shared communication. Children are adept at solving problems when constructing with octagon shapes. They enjoy ICT resources and show competence and excitement when operating an interactive bug to move it in different directions.

Children demonstrate a clear understanding of issues relating to safety which helps them to feel safe in the setting. As pre-school children excitedly begin an interactive exercise session after lunch in a relatively small space, they have learnt to look around to make sure there is no danger to others when swinging their arms and legs. Babies who are new to the setting demonstrate their trust as they snuggle into key workers, gaining effective support and reassurance which enables them to settle. Toddlers with additional needs are well supported as they explore their environment and become increasingly mobile; warmly supervised as they stand and walk independently.

Children show good understanding of hygiene practices and roll up their sleeves in readiness to wash their hands before lunch. Mobile children have free flow access to the outside for part of the day in fine weather. They enjoy group activities outside in the rain for example, jumping hopping and skipping with delight as they exercise and develop coordination and balance. They talk about why they are thirsty or why they are tired, for example, during the weekly health-related exercise sessions. Healthy eating displays reinforce healthy diets and, on occasions, a dentist offers free dental checks and visits with puppets to help children learn the importance of cleaning their teeth.

Children have positive attitudes towards learning, are confident, behave well, and are making good relationships. They enthusiastically join in group sessions such as music and movement after lunch and can follow their play preferences as they make choices and engage in the vibrant atmosphere. Children show a good awareness of responsibility within the setting, as many help tidy toys away before lunch or access their own labelled drawers and coat pegs. Through purposeful or incidental activities, children successfully learn to respect people's differences. Planned activities help children learn about the wider local community, for example, through craft activities celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met