

Ladybirds Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY240007
Inspection date 19/01/2011
Inspector Jane Mount

Setting address Birch Centre, Hill End Lane, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4
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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

Ladybirds Nursery registered in 2003 and is situated in the Birch Centre on the Highfield Park estate in St Albans, Hertfordshire. It has sole use of the premises and has nearby parking. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm all year round, excluding bank holidays. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm, term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 61 children. There are currently 92 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group and of these, 35 children receive government funding for early years education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

Ladybirds Nursery is owned and managed by two early years teachers who employ 21 members of staff to work with the children. The majority of the staff team hold early years qualifications to level three or above.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in a child-centred environment where the nursery recognises the uniqueness of each child. Their needs are met because highly effective partnerships between the nursery, parents and others positively contributes to the settings knowledge of individual children. A committed staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their welfare is fully protected. Children's learning is fully promoted and they are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Strong leadership, rigorous monitoring of practice and effective self-evaluation mean that plans are well targeted and improvements continue to be made where they have the greatest impact on children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continuing to use a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend highly effective practice, to ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust with rigorous recruitment and vetting processes in place. All staff have an excellent understanding of how to protect children and safeguard their welfare. Staff are inducted in child protection procedures when they start at the nursery and then regularly update their knowledge through attending safeguarding training. A highly informative safeguarding policy, along with staff who fully understand their roles and responsibilities if they did have a concern, ensures children's welfare is protected. Children's safety is paramount and staff are vigilant and have effective measures to keep children safe. Systematic and highly effective risk assessments, including daily checks and assessments for outings, ensures the environment remains safe at all times with any potential hazards identified and minimised immediately. The security of the premises ensures no unauthorised person can gain access and that children cannot leave unsupervised.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are used effectively by staff to protect children, promote their well-being and to support all to develop to their full potential. All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place, is informative and well-organised. The setting is committed to fully implementing the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is reflected in their outstanding practice. Staff are guided by a strong management team who strive to provide a high quality service. High levels of support are in place for staff and this raises the commitment and dedication of the staff team and creates a happy, secure environment for staff, parents and children. Continuous professional development is positively encouraged and staff undertake extensive and varied training, attending both external and in-house early years courses and workshops to ensure they are well-informed practitioners. The staff team are reflective in their practice and the nursery closely monitors itself to assess the quality of the provision. It has previously participated in the Herts Quality Standards accreditation scheme and plans to undertake it again as they have found it to be a useful tool for establishing and maintaining high standards throughout. They are also proactive in seeking feedback from parents through the use of questionnaires and the views of others, including children, staff and early years consultants. A rigorous self-evaluation system is used to systematically identify the setting's strengths and areas they wish to develop further. The setting aims to actively use this as a way of ensuring continuous improvement.

Exceptionally good use of space, resources and effective staff deployment ensure that the nursery provides an enabling environment that is safe and fully inclusive. All children and their families are valued and included. Excellent partnerships with parents significantly contributes to children's well-being and ensure their care and learning needs are fully supported. Parents receive a wealth of good quality information about the nursery. Staff are forthcoming in exchanging information with parents and children quickly settle in the nursery environment as their individual needs are met. A key person system and daily verbal and written communication with parents ensure children receive continuity in their care and

learning. The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and works with parents and others to support and meet the needs of individual children. Rigorous systems for working with parents and other agencies ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are closely monitored and given valuable support to enable them to participate and achieve. The nursery liaises with other early years providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and have established highly positive links with some of the local schools to ensure continuity and to promote the full integration of care and learning.

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

The nursery has a highly welcoming, child-centred environment that enables children to become independent and enthusiastic learners. Staff are successful at motivating children to capture their interest and arouse their curiosity because they are enthusiastic themselves. The daily routine has a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities to cover the six areas of learning. Children's progress is closely monitored through highly effective observation and assessment systems and the information gained from these is used to plan the next steps in a child's learning. Staff enrich the experiences for all children with well-planned activities and play experiences that take account of individual children's interests and developmental stages. Consequently, all children's learning needs are identified and catered for and they are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Children quickly become engrossed in a range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate resources and activities which provide high levels of stimulation and challenge. They have extensive opportunities to express themselves creatively. Babies enjoy the sensory experience of feeling the consistency of paint on their hands and bodies when painting while older children delight in making patterns when painting with vegetables. Children's independence is encouraged with rooms organised to achieve maximum child independence. Older children are confident making choices and a free-flow system enables them to freely move between the indoor and outdoor environments. A rolling snack-time also enables children to choose for themselves when they wish to have their snack. Younger children's self-help skills are fully promoted with staff encouraging them to try things for themselves and supporting them while they try to succeed. A picture wall has recently been introduced to enable very young children to make independent choices in their play.

Children use their imaginations to express themselves and confidently share ideas and thoughts. They regularly experience music and listen and respond with great excitement when looking at books and listening to stories. Writing and drawing materials are easily accessible and children have regular opportunities to become familiar with the written word. They have many opportunities to make connections and relationships with numbers, shapes and measures. Children confidently match and sort objects, learn about volume through filling containers when playing with sand or water and enjoy singing songs which incorporate the use of numbers. Children learn about the wider world and about other cultures and religions and

staff promote a positive awareness of diversity through discussion and many activities. Children have extensive opportunities to talk about their families and home life and to learn about the local community. They have had visits from a variety of people who work in the community including the police, a paramedic and a bus driver. Children learn about the environment through activities, such as planting and growing vegetables or nature walks and talking about the weather and seasons.

Staff are proactive in implementing highly effective strategies to promote and safeguard children's health and well-being. Nappy changing arrangements reflect excellent hygiene policies and procedures and a no-shoe policy is strictly adhered to in the baby room which helps to prevent infections and keeps the area clean for less mobile children. The routines in each room help promote healthy habits and children from a young age learn to take responsibility for washing their hands, flushing toilets or wiping their noses and disposing of tissues appropriately. Good hygiene practice is reinforced through cooking activities when children are encouraged to reflect on why they must wash their hands and wear aprons. Visitors who promote healthy living are welcomed into the nursery and close links with a dental surgery has enabled children and their families to learn about the importance of good oral hygiene. Healthy eating is promoted and children make healthy choices at snack time. Parents provide children's lunch and tea and the nursery works in close partnership with parents to ensure children receive a balanced, nutritious diet. Children have extensive opportunities to learn about healthy eating and enjoyed visiting a greengrocer's shop to buy vegetables which they used in a variety of ways. Younger children made a pizza with a healthy vegetable topping and older children delighted in making a vegetable risotto. Children develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they participate in a variety of physical play activities on a daily basis. Also, the outdoor environment is used to its full potential to promote children's health and physical development.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. Positive relationships between staff, children, parents and carers enable children to feel secure. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe in the nursery as they explain and practise simple procedures such as not running when indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children keenly participate in regular fire drills and therefore learn how to stay safe in an emergency. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff are excellent role models and empower children to take responsibility for themselves as they learn to listen to others, share and take turns. Staff are skilled at knowing when to intervene and when to stand back and let the play develop. Praise and encouragement ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem. Children are highly valued as individuals and in turn are learning to respect each other's differences and feelings and to manage their own behaviour.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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