

Ladybird Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 508724
Inspection date 18/01/2011
Inspector Sarah Williams

Setting address Little Warley & Childerditch Village Hall, Magpie Lane, Little Warley, BRENTWOOD, Essex, CM13 3DZ

Telephone number 01277 212288

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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 Kindergarten is privately owned and managed. It opened 1993 and is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. It operates from a village hall in Warley, near Brentwood, Essex. A secure enclosed outdoor area is used for outdoor play activities.

A maximum of 24 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 35 children on roll. The setting is open from 9.15am to 12.15pm on Mondays to Fridays during term time. There is also an optional lunch club on some days.

There are 6 members of staff, including the owner who manages the early years provision. Four of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and one staff member, the deputy, is qualified to Early Years Professional status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Some specific legal requirements are not being met as insufficient regard is given to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's safety and well-being are compromised as some of the setting's established systems, such as arrangements for safeguarding, are not fully effective. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision is not rigorous enough and does not identify action required to improve documentation and foresee improvements necessary to the functioning of the setting. However, staff recognise the uniqueness of each child and provide a variety of activities to help them to learn through play and to make satisfactory progress towards their Early Years Foundation Stage goals. Partnerships with parents and carers are seen as key to ensure appropriate support for children's welfare, care and learning.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that the safeguarding children policy includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and ensure that all staff understand the policy (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 18/02/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- use the evaluation system to identify key areas for improvement so that actions can be focused and targeted to bring about positive changes for children
- refine and simplify the assessment system so that children's records are up to date and easily accessible to enable parents to comment on and contribute to children's learning and development plans
- carry out regular staff appraisals for all staff to identify training needs and gaps in knowledge and put in place a training programme to meet these needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by staff who have been checked and vetted to ensure their suitability, however, ongoing systems for appraisal to ensure staff's continuing suitability is inconsistent, with the result that some staff are insecure in their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures. Additionally, the safeguarding policy is missing vital elements which mean that it does not meet legal requirements. Children's safety is therefore compromised and immediate action is required to improve this situation.

The quality of self-evaluation is inadequate and those in charge have too little impact to motivate staff to bring about the improvements needed. For example, to raise standards by focusing on how to improve the outcomes for children. However, recent appointments have included a deputy, qualified to Early Years Professional status, with promising early results in terms of changes made to routines and planning. Resources are generally well used to provide children with positive and worthwhile activities to help them work towards the early learning goals and staff are well deployed to offer support to children as they play and work. Although, in some cases staff have insufficient knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn, therefore their impact on learning and development is limited. All children are included and support for children with additional needs is thorough and effective.

Partnerships with parents and carers are valued and communication is good with regard to information about the setting and what children have been doing. Parents views are sought by means of a questionnaire and their views considered. Currently, children's development profiles are not consistently able to give a good overview of achievements and next steps in learning, as some are incomplete. Partnerships with some of the feeder schools are sound and aid transitions for older children, however, links with other settings attended by children have not been developed, thereby potentially risking a lack of continuity of care.

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

Children enjoy their time at the setting and engage in a variety of activities designed to promote their all round development. Children are mostly settled and contented. New children are supported to quickly learn routines and are able to become independent in terms of choices of activity, as well as in personal care. Children are developing a sense of how to stay safe within the setting by following rules about how to move around and how to use tools and equipment. Behaviour is generally very good and children respond to the simple rules and boundaries laid down by staff to maintain a harmonious and productive atmosphere.

Children learn about why some foods are good for them and are offered healthy choices at snack time. Posters and wall charts help their understanding by showing examples of healthy choices. Hand washing and hygiene is taught to children so that they understand about the spread of germs. They are supported in the early stages but those who are competent are encouraged to use the bathroom independently. Children routinely engage in a range of physical activities, both indoors and outside, where they can move freely and develop skills using the bikes and wheeled toys as well as balls and other small equipment. Frequent walks in the surrounding countryside are factored into the planning, so that children can observe nature and seasonal changes at first hand.

Children display a strong sense of belonging and direct their own learning during free play times. They competently select and use equipment and toys to support their imaginative play and mathematical and literacy development. Future skills, such as technology and computers, are supported well and a digital camera is used to capture images of activities and achievements. Music and movement sessions use a CD player and children are able to select a favourite song or music.

Children with additional needs or who may speak English as an additional language are supported well as staff liaise with parents and other professionals to ensure that plans are targeted to bring about progress. Strategies include pictorial cues and questioning techniques to help children develop and gain from their time at the setting.

Children's development is recorded in a Learning Journey, however, these are not up to date in some cases as they are not completed regularly and do not include enough detail or show the next steps in learning clearly enough to show progress. Parents are invited to see the development profiles and although some show interest, few include any comments or suggestions.

Overall, educational provision is satisfactory and has positive outcomes for children. Activities reflect children's lives and interests and introduce the local community and wider world within themes and projects. For example, children enjoyed participating in a group project to create a den for hibernating animals and provided bedding of shredded paper, causing much hilarity and fun as it became snow. An annual picnic is a favourite activity during the summer months, by kind permission of a local landowner.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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