

Loddon Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 254159 |
| Inspection date | 01/06/2011 |
| Inspector | Lindsey Cullum |

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| Setting address | The Hollies Classroom, High Street, LODDON, Norfolk, NR14 6AH |
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| Email | info@loddonnurseryschool.co.uk |
| 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Loddon Nursery School opened in 1993. The nursery is privately owned and operates from a self-contained unit in The Hollies Classroom, in Loddon, Norfolk. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Children and families who attend travel from the village and surrounding rural area. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children between the ages of two years and eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 47 children within the Early Years Foundation Stage on roll and the nursery is in receipt of government funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, all year round except for bank holidays and two weeks at Christmas. Overnight care is not provided.

The nursery employs 10 childcare staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is part of the Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children blossom and thoroughly enjoy their time at this welcoming and vibrant setting. The strong leadership from the proprietor, alongside knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff, helps to create an effective team that is pro-active in ensuring children are happy, confident and thriving in their learning and development. Most of the documentation which supports children's learning and welfare is in place. Staff continually review their practice and demonstrate a positive attitude and firm commitment towards sustained and continuous improvement. Excellent partnerships with parents and other professionals have been firmly established, ensuring children's needs are fully supported. The setting offers an inclusive service where the uniqueness of each child is recognised and celebrated.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop appraisal systems further to review the ongoing suitability of staff
- review and develop further the system for early observation of new children so that starting points are clearly identified.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well protected because staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures and know when to take action to safeguard children in their care. Staff regularly update their training and follow detailed policies and procedures which are easily accessible throughout the nursery. Rigorous checks ensure that staff are vetted prior to employment and are suitable to work with children. Appraisals are carried out annually which enable staff to plan for their professional development however, the current system does not include a full review of their ongoing suitability which may compromise children's safety. Induction procedures for all new staff and students ensure they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. Detailed risk assessments are completed and cover all aspects of the learning environment and any outings. Furthermore, staff are extremely vigilant and carry out checks on a daily basis to ensure any hazards are quickly identified and appropriate action is taken. Staff routinely verify the identity of all visitors and are vigilant about the safe arrival and collection of children, ensuring they are fully safeguarded. The indoor and outdoor environment is very well designed to support children's learning and independence. Attractive displays featuring photographs of children enjoying activities, thoughtfully presented artwork and displays on specific topics ensure the environment is attractive to children and they experience a strong sense of belonging. Routines are flexible to meet the needs of children and their parents.

The proprietor, manager and all staff demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for their work and have a clear vision for the future. They work closely as a team and are committed to continuing their own professional development, regularly attending courses which develop their knowledge and skills. Information and ideas from training are tried out and implemented if they prove successful, such as creating communication friendly spaces. The continuous evaluation of their daily practice enables staff to obtain a clear overview of the nursery and to prioritise changes that improve the outcomes for children. Parents and children are frequently asked for their views and staff respond pro-actively by taking these into account. Significant improvement has been sustained since the last inspection. For example, the enhancement of the outdoor area has led to this becoming an inviting and interesting area for children to play and learn. Consequently, children now choose to spend a great deal of time outdoors. The setting strives and succeeds in providing an inclusive facility where all children, regardless of age or ability are actively encouraged to take part in the rich experiences on offer to them at the nursery. Weekly room meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to discuss children's interests and progress and use information to identify their next steps.

Partnerships with parents and others are excellent. The setting actively sets out to engage all those connected with the children in making sure their needs are met and securing their learning. Parents are warmly welcomed by staff and clearly feel very comfortable within the nursery. Staff dedicate time getting to know children and their families, fostering excellent relationships and helping to ensure children feel safe and secure. A wealth of information is easily accessible to parents which reassures parents that their children's welfare and learning is given high priority by

the setting. Parents are very complimentary about the setting, stating that staff are 'professional and approachable', and their children are eager to attend. Parents are kept very well informed about their child's care and are aware that they can speak to their child's key person at any time. The daily exchange of information ensures that children's changing needs are consistently met. Strong links are forged between home and nursery life. Children eagerly take home 'bags for families' or 'visiting bear' and, with their parents, contribute photographs and written notes about their experiences with these resources, such as imaginative play or outings to the zoo. Staff work closely, and have excellent links with many agencies so that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make very good progress, which also supports their families. The staff adapt their practice to help individual children and develop individual learning plans which show the specific steps staff will take to ensure that the children succeed. The nursery provides excellent support as children move on to their primary schools. Transition meetings, visits from teachers and to the schools plus items such as school uniform in the role play area and picture books created by the schools in the book corner, help children to prepare for moving to a new environment.

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

Children are enthusiastic and show great enjoyment in what they do. The environment is planned carefully to allow them to choose from a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities which cover all areas of learning. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that result in children being active learners. Children interact extremely positively with their peers and are keen to share their ideas with their friends and staff. All children are valued and treated with equal concern, and any specific requirements are sensitively catered for through discussion with parents and other professionals. Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and interests as they observe children, listen carefully to what they say and record information on a daily basis. Information is evaluated and used successfully to inform future planning. All children have detailed learning journeys which contain written and photographic information of their learning and achievements. These folders are freely available to parents who frequently contribute to them. Detailed discussion with parents and settling visits help staff to gain information about children's starting points, however, a system for the early observation of new children is not fully in place to ensure a firm foundation is established for future learning. Wonderful 'all about me' books, developed by staff and parents, are accessible to the children in the book area and children thoroughly enjoy looking through these and showing them to their friends.

Children play with a wide range of resources and toys which help their development, for example in problem solving. A strong emphasis is placed on enabling children to become independent, use their initiative and make decisions. They develop their own ideas, such as making a train with junk materials, seeking appropriate resources from the wealth which is freely accessible in the creative play area. They concentrate well and are extremely proud of their achievements. Staff fully value this, taking photographs for their assessment record and storing

items safely so they may be admired by parents when children are collected. Children's confidence and self-esteem is significantly enhanced. Staff are caring, affectionate and responsive to children's individual needs, building trusting relationships and encouraging children to be confident, curious and to explore. With this support, children are eager to try new experiences and successfully achieve new skills such as climbing to the top of the climbing frame. Children's mark-making skills are fostered successfully and they have excellent opportunities to draw, paint, chalk and practise emergent writing during role play. Children talk and communicate with exceptional ability. All children develop their early letter sound recognition skills through games and activities with staff. Children thoroughly enjoy stories and frequently request a story, cuddled up in the large cosy basket in the quiet area. Children take great pleasure in exploring a range of materials both indoors and outside. They fill containers with dried pulses comparing weight and capacity and then observe as they pour these through wheels, delighting at the sounds made. Outdoors children create their own imaginative role play. They set up a barbeque using a combination of soil, dried pulses and water to make burgers. This generates lots of discussion and sharing of ideas as children successfully play together.

A good proportion of the day is spent outdoors. Staff plan outdoor activities which promote children's physical development as they balance and manoeuvre themselves around the obstacle course. They enjoy planting and growing activities and are involved in tending the seedlings, accessing collected rainwater from the water butt. A quiet area has been developed with small tepees so children can sit and enjoy looking through a book or drawing. The nursery makes good use of natural resources such as re-using the wood from the felled tree in the garden to create small seats, or a log pile for insects.

Children's exemplary behaviour contributes significantly to the happy atmosphere of activity. Children use tools and equipment sensibly as staff provide gentle reminders when necessary, for example, walking with scissors. Children know what to do when they hear the fire alarm and understand about road safety because they learn, through play, about safe road crossing. Children are considerate to one another and to adults and spontaneously help. For example, one child is happy to go inside to request a drinking straw for a friend. Snack and meal times are social occasions when children and staff sit together. Children are learning about healthy eating as they eagerly eat balanced, nutritious meals which include their five pieces of fruit or vegetables a day. They are successfully encouraged to develop their own hygiene skills, such as automatically washing their hands before eating. Children are extremely active, enjoying fresh air daily. They are fully aware of the need to dress appropriately for the weather, helping to apply their suncream and finding their hats before going outdoors in sunny weather. Children frequently help themselves to drinking water aware of the need to drink plenty during warm weather and exercise. Children are developing a positive understanding of the wider world as they access a range of resources that are representative of diversity and also celebrate cultural festivals throughout the year. Parents and other family members come in to read, play music or to share the work they do in the community with the children. Overall, children demonstrate that they are acquiring very good skills that will help them in the future and prepare them for their transition in to school.

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

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| How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement | 1 |

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding | 2 |
| 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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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning | 2 |
| 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

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