

# LEADING STRINGS PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

135311

**Inspection date**

13/10/2011

**Inspector**

Catherine Greene

**Setting address**

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH HALL, BOURNE HILL, PALMERS  
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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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**

Leading Strings Pre-School registered in 1996. It operates from St John's Church Hall in Palmers Green, London. The nursery is registered on the Early Years and both parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 71 children in the early years age group on roll. It is open each weekday from 9am to 3pm with the option of sessions from 9am to 12 noon or 12 noon to 3pm. The nursery operates for 44 weeks of the year. The nursery cares for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs seven staff. All staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery has made exceptional improvements since the last inspection and children are very happy and highly secure. They make excellent progress in their learning and development. Partnerships with parents are excellent overall, and they accredit the clear vision and continuous improvement to the drive of the highly motivated manager and staff team. Staff maintain consistently high standards of practice they have fully embraced the ethos of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. They implement a broad range of policies successfully. Systems to evaluate and assess children's progress in their welfare, learning and development are highly effective.

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

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

- developing systems to enable parents to contribute to their child's learning and development record

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

The nursery has developed excellent and effective procedures for safeguarding children's welfare. The designated person with responsibility for child protection takes her role seriously. Procedures are routinely shared with parents to ensure they have a very clear understanding of the nursery's priorities for safeguarding children. The manager and staff are highly committed to providing a safe environment for children and have devised secure risk assessments for the hall,

outdoor space and for individual outings. Consequently, children's safety is very well supported. The environment is highly effectively resourced to fully promote children's learning and development and all equipment and resources are rotated weekly to provide challenge and maintain children's interest.

A key strength is the way that staff support and engage with the children and their families. Not only do they support and help those families with specific needs, they make outstanding links with other partners and services in the community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the nursery. They particularly appreciate the flexible hours offered. They state 'Staff are always there for you; whenever you call, nothing is too much trouble'. The manager and all staff are not complacent about their provision; they continuously strive to support all children and their families. Staff make a real difference to families in times of transition, working in partnership with the local authority and providing workshop sessions that give practical advice such as 'choosing a school for your child'. This has a highly positive effect in helping parents make the best decisions for children's next steps in their education.

The manager and her staff constantly review what is provided, and vary and adapt what they do in order to meet changing needs. They demonstrate an outstanding commitment to supporting and extending children's development. The local authority's 'Quality Assurance Programme' fully supports the nursery's review systems. The close and successful links created between the early years development officer, local early years providers and the manager and staff, extensively supports and enhances the work of the nursery. The nursery aims to meet the diverse needs of families in the community, this is extremely well coordinated, from within the nursery and in partnership with the local authority, other local providers and schools.

Staff are highly committed to continuous improvement and make excellent use of self-evaluation to help enrich outcomes for children. Staff regularly update their childcare knowledge through training. Secure partnerships have developed with parents. They receive regular opportunities to provide feedback. Parents benefit from placements at the nursery when they are completing educational courses, such as a recognised course in childcare and education. The nursery, in conjunction with the local library, has its own 'mobile' library where parents can borrow books on a weekly basis. This is very popular as it means that parents can broaden their children's range of reading material from the convenience of the nursery. It is having a positive effect on developing children's early love of books.

This is a highly inclusive nursery. Shared information about children's individual backgrounds helps to support their individual needs. Details of children's home languages are noted from the outset and key words help children feel acknowledged and settled. The diverse staff team provide excellent positive role models. One staff member speaks other languages and is able to provide children with further opportunities to hear their home languages spoken and respected.

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

Children benefit from warm, friendly, and highly secure relationships with staff. Their individual needs are understood and met extremely well. Their confidence and sense of belonging is strong because staff show genuine interest in their home lives and talk about special events children have enjoyed at weekends with their families. Children's progress in their learning is observed and assessed by staff who have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Children enjoy a secure balance of adult-initiated and child-led activities, which help them make exceptional progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points. Staff use children's learning profiles to record achievements and identify next steps in learning for each child. These records effectively inform weekly planning and successfully support children's individual learning styles. Parents are encouraged to provide useful information about their children's interests at home. However, this is not always included in the learning journey profile to help parents become fully involved in their child's learning. Children are developing essential social skills through their positive interactions with other children and staff. They are extremely well behaved, showing care and concern for others and understand why this is important.

Children thoroughly enjoy opportunities for developing their language skills as they sing their favourite songs. They become good role models for younger children as they happily teach them the songs and rhymes. Children choose freely from an interesting selection of toys, materials and equipment to support their learning through play. Shelving and storage boxes, labelled clearly with photographs and printed words, help children make independent choices and support their emerging reading skills. Children recognise their own names and sometimes those of friends as they self-register on arrival. Children enjoy picking out letters they know on the computer keyboard, spelling out their name and sounding out the letters. Visits from the fire brigade, police and post office staff help children learn about the wider world community. Photographs show children's great delight as they help to operate the hoses and wear fire officers' hats. Children use their emerging number skills in everyday activities. For example, counting cones as they ride around an obstacle course and talk about the position of train tracks in construction play. They are encouraged to recognise numbers and as a result, they enjoy pointing these out to the staff whenever they see them. Children learn about their own safety through fun, practical activities. They learn how to cross the road safely using the zebra crossing in the garden, for example. They understand how to leave the premises quickly and safely through practising the fire drill.

Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is developing in many positive ways. They fully understand good hygiene routines and regularly wash their hands. Children help themselves to drinking water and a range of healthy snacks. Snack-time is available throughout the session so children can eat when they need to and enjoy uninterrupted play as a result. Harvesting vegetables provides excellent opportunities for children to learn about healthy eating in a meaningful way. The promotion of healthy lifestyles and the support given to the emotional well-being of children and their families is central to this nursery's aims. Staff are able to

signpost parents to a range of local services when required demonstrating a significant commitment to providing extra support for families using the nursery.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### 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>	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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