

Ladybird Pre School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Ladybirds Pre-school Playgroup is run by a voluntary management committee. It opened in 2005 at its present premises. It operates from two main rooms in a purpose-built building in the grounds of Russell Lower School, in Ampthill, Bedfordshire. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday from 8.55am to 11.55am and 12.20pm to 3.30pm during term time. The pre-school runs a holiday club three times a year. The pre-school also runs a lunch club from 11.30am to 12.20pm. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area.

There are currently 68 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 39 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 14 staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The leader has gained Early Years Professional Status, two members of staff hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 4 and seven more hold NVQs at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school provides children with a good learning environment in which they enjoy the many activities provided for them. It meets the needs of the children well and they make good progress towards the early learning goals. There are outstanding features in the way staff evaluate the success of their work with parents and carers, and pupils, as well as their own assessments. In addition, they engage exceptionally well with parents and carers and this supports the promotion of a good capacity for continuous improvements. The pre-school is fully inclusive and promotes children's understanding and respect for others well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the layout of the outdoor spaces, especially the garden
- ensure staff do not miss opportunities to extend children's learning, especially in problem solving, reasoning and number work.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting benefits from staff who are experienced and knowledgeable practitioners but who are also very enthusiastic about working with young children. This is evident in the genuinely interested ways staff interact with children and their parents and carers. Because of this, children feel secure, settle quickly and become quickly and excitedly involved in their learning. Regular professional development is evident and staff are always looking to try new ideas and develop their practice further. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and thorough and have improved since the last inspection. Staff knowledge of their roles and responsibilities regarding children's safety is good and regularly updated. Internal doors are more secure and snack times help develop children's understanding of hygiene and healthy eating well. Documentation is detailed and regularly reviewed, and is in line with Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidance. Good checks regarding recruitment are made and all staff vetting procedures are carried out robustly. In addition, the policies for the use of new technology are appropriate and effective. Regular risk assessments are carried out and twice daily checks ensure the outdoor area and resources are safe and ready for use. Supervision is good, both indoors and outside, throughout the sessions.

Activities are well planned by the staff and often based on individual children's next steps following assessments made of their learning. Staff plan activities that develop children's interests as well as addressing the expected areas of learning. A recent change to the tracking of assessments made and observations of children's learning is intended to identify more closely any underachievement. It has not yet had time to become fully embedded in order that staff can ensure any gaps in coverage for some areas of learning are addressed. For example, not enough activities support children's learning in problem solving, reasoning and number. However, the school has good partnerships and these support some good framework developments. For example, discussions with the local lower schools have helped in creating an appropriate plan to help children's early reading skills.

The overall themes or topics are shared with parents so they can support their children's learning. This is part of the outstanding engagement with parents and carers that is evident in all aspects of the pre-school's work. Parents are invited to 'stay and play' regularly and also to comment on what they have done and seen in feedback to the setting. This is a small but important part of the exceptionally detailed self-evaluation that staff undertake. All staff have regular opportunities to discuss and comment on their practice. In addition, parents and carers, and children are regularly surveyed for their feelings about the provision and the things they like and don't like about particular activities. Good partnerships, particularly with local authority staff, have also supported the pre-school's development as a good and improving setting. The pre-school cares very effectively for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff demonstrate a good ability to recognise issues early and support the parents in seeking support and providing appropriate learning, based on individual education plans.

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

The good range of activities provided by staff encourages and promotes good learning experiences for all children. During the inspection the caring and thoughtful use of an African Land snail caught the interest of many children, and they learned about how it needed to be looked after and fed. These types of opportunities are used well by staff to promote different outcomes. In this case, hygiene had a high profile as hands needed to be carefully washed. This was also true at the snack time and lunchtime. Children sat very maturely as they shared snacks and drinks in a way that helped develop good social skills as well as a positive understanding of healthy living.

The pre-school benefits from good accommodation and a good outdoor area. This currently has a good sized space that is underused and which there are plans to develop into a quiet area for more imaginative activities such as storytelling. Good use is made of the garden to grow vegetables, fruits and flowers. In addition, children's physical development is well-encouraged through a range of resources including a very good pirate ship and other climbing, wheeled and building resources. The pre-school also has use of the school's facilities for outdoor play on the playground and also of the school hall for activities such as Christmas bazaars or concerts. Staff interact well with pupils, asking questions and encouraging their play to develop. This happened, for example, when staff joined children in making building block towers and comparing heights. However, in some activities opportunities to develop the learning further are missed, such as in encouraging the use of vocabulary of colour or for counting activities.

Children have good opportunities to access books and a good quiet indoor area in which to sit and read. Stories are often very well read in a lively and interesting manner by the staff. A focus of the pre-school's vision is to develop children's independence so resources are accessible for children and they have many opportunities to make decisions about what they want to play or learn. The use of information and communication technology is at an early stage. However, it provides a new and interesting extension to other learning activities. Overall, children make good progress and significant gains in their learning in this lively setting.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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