

The Ladybird Pre School (Cottenham)

King Georges Playing Field, Lambs Lane, Cottenham, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB24 8TB

Inspection date	19/06/2013
Previous inspection date	06/12/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children's language develops superbly as practitioners engage with them in frequent conversations, give them time to think and respond and ask them open questions. This develops children's vocabulary and they become exceptionally competent communicators.
- Children develop a superb understanding of the natural world. They participate in exciting activities that challenge and inspire them as they visit an allotment to see how food grows, talk to experienced gardeners and plant their own fruit and vegetables.
- Leadership and management of the pre-school is inspirational and practitioners receive first class support, parents speak in praise of the manager and children make rapid progress as a result.
- Children are considered unique and their learning is aligned to their individual needs. This means that children's learning is highly relevant and they develop as highly confident, independent learners.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to help children to learn about different cultures and differences.
- The new process for evaluating accidents is not yet embedded.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playrooms and outdoor area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the pre-school and spoke to children's key persons as appropriate during the inspection.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the pre-school, the provider's self-evaluation evidence and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of one parent spoken to on the day, as well as written feedback provided from parents.

Inspector

Deborah Hunt

Full Report

Information about the setting

Ladybird Pre school (Cottenham) was registered in 1994 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a single storey building in Cottenham, Cambridgeshire. Children attend from the local area and surrounding villages. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school employs 18 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 and above, except for one who holds a level 2 qualification. The manager holds a BA (Honours) degree in Childhood and Youth Studies.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday from 9am until 3pm, term time only. Flexible sessions mean that children may attend from 9am and through the lunchtime period, according to parental need. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 120 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education places for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children, who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and are completing Reflecting on Quality accreditation process with them. They receive support from the local authority and have undertaken the local authority quality assurance scheme.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop further ways of helping children learn about cultures and differences.
- review regularly the effectiveness of the monitoring of accidents and any action taken as a result.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make outstanding progress at this innovative pre-school through practitioners, who show an impressive understanding of how to promote their learning. The excellent observation, tracking and monitoring of children means that practitioners are keenly aware of what they need next in their learning. Activities are planned as a result, which challenge

and stimulate children and consequently, they make impressive gains across all areas of learning. Practitioners are highly skilled and know exactly how to support children. They show an innate ability to know when to allow children space and time to work problems out for themselves and when to intervene. Interaction with children is sensitively handled and has a positive effect on their learning. For example, two children spend time exploring a set of circular, brightly coloured gift boxes which range in size from large to small. The practitioner engages with the children to encourage them to experiment with the way they use them. Children begin to suggest alternative play ideas. They create imaginary Christmas presents and exchange them with the practitioner and one another. The practitioner suggests they could stack the gift boxes, which they do from largest to smallest. They then stack them smallest to largest asking the practitioner to help. They do so using 'magic hands', which means that they do not actually touch the tower at all, but this gives the children confidence to continue. They squeal with joy when they succeed and the practitioner tells them they have made an 'ice-cream cone'. Children show pride in their achievement and stand back to admire it. Throughout the activity, children are absorbed in their learning and display concentration and enthusiasm. This helps them make excellent progress in their learning.

Practitioners offer children an environment that is rich in print, which supports their early literacy skills. The wonderful sufficiency of resources offers children frequent opportunities to explore this aspect of learning. Children take their learning into the outdoor area as they 'write' on the wall mounted blackboards and draw pictures with their friends. They discuss the colour of the chalks they use and share with each other, which is their favourite one. Children make good use of a varied selection of decorating brushes to 'paint' with water and tell their friends they are 'making stripes'. Their physical development is exceptionally well catered for. Of particular note is the work that has been done to improve risk and challenge for children and to look at play for boys in the outdoors. Children use crates and building blocks, which offer them endless possibilities, as they line the crates up and cover them with material, pretending they are on a roller coaster. Tractor tyres donated by a local company are a particular favourite with many children. The skill of a practitioner, who is with them, enables children to improve their learning across many areas. They stack the tyres higher and are encouraged to 'be brave and jump off' them. Children learn positional language and their vocabulary develops as they hear the practitioner encouraging them to 'jump over', 'land on' and 'duck under' the tyres. They beam with pride as the practitioner tells them what 'a pretty dress' they are wearing and a child engages in conversation about the monster she notices on their tee shirt. Children develop an awareness of their senses as they smell the tyres and learn that they smell this way because the sun is hot. They enjoy appearing out of the top of the stacked tyres like a 'jack-in-the-box'. The activity engages them for a lengthy period and they enjoy each other's company and laugh as they clamber over the tyres to repeat the process over and over again. Children play in the house and others compete with one another to construct the tallest tower out of their rubber bricks. They practise their 'road crossing skills' as they wait at the zebra crossing until the children on their one and two person trikes have gone past and it is safe to cross. These exciting activities involve the children throughout the session and enable them to demonstrate their exceptional physical skills.

Children learn about nature and become aware of how to grow their own fruit and

vegetables as they help practitioners re-site and build their pre-school garden. They transport soil from one side of the outdoor area to a little used area on the other side of the building. New raised beds are constructed with children's help and they paint symbols to show what they have planted and learn that these beds will help children, who find it difficult to garden at ground level. A local nursery donates fruit trees and shrubs, which the children help to water and tend. The bug hotel behind the beds is constructed by a parent, who came in to demonstrate how to do this with the children recently. Children help a practitioner put together a book telling the story of their new garden and another is created to explain what needs to happen month by month in the garden. The pre-school takes children to a local allotment to see other crops growing and to speak to experienced gardeners. They are delighted when they return with produce they can cook with or eat for their snack. Through such activities and experiences, children learn about the food cycle and the area in which they live and learn to value the experience and expertise older members of the community can offer.

Children's developing understanding of number and simple mathematical concepts is skilfully fostered by practitioners as part of other activities, as well as during focused activities. For example, children count during action rhymes and as they become one of five 'currant buns in the baker's shop'. They learn the meaning of 'one less' as they enjoy this action rhyme and confidently hold the salt dough 'currant buns' they have made. Children use a range of resources to support their developing awareness, such as, abacuses, compare bears, calculators, mathematics programmes on the computer and tape measures. The exceptional range of resources in the 'Blue Room' caters superbly for children in this respect and to help them learn about construction.

Particular attention is paid to children, who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school go to exceptional lengths to offer children an inclusive experience and work incredibly hard to meet their individual and specific needs. Children speaking additional languages see their home language on display in the setting and practitioners use a number of especially developed strategies to ensure they feel valued and welcome. For example, they use talking albums where practitioners record phrases in English and parents record it in their home language. A bi-linguist volunteer supports the setting and ensure that initiatives undertaken to help children are relevant and appropriate. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive similarly outstanding support. The pre-school promotes the concept of the 'unique child' and believes every child is special in their own way. The Principal believes that it is this quality that makes the child who they are. They, therefore, work to help all children make the best possible progress. They strive to make the environment 'accessible, challenging but achievable to all' and adapt resources and the environment to meet each child's needs. Makaton is being introduced to help children communicate more easily and visual timetables are also used. Additionally, they employ practitioners to work on a one-to-one basis with children to ensure they receive the best possible care and learning.

Children are particularly friendly and sociable towards one another. The pre-school places great emphasis on their role in forging links with the local community and wider area. Children reflect this sense of community in their actions. They show care and affection for each other and older children are protective and supportive of younger ones. Children are

very confident to express their opinions emphatically and to make their own choices in their play and learning. Practitioners, who understand the importance of embedding the prime areas of learning, encourage their growing independence and offer them regular praise. Children are motivated, inquisitive learners, who soak up the stimulating learning opportunities they are offered and make rapid progress in their learning as a result. This means that they successfully acquire the skills they will need to support them in their future learning.

The pre-school places exceptional importance on the role of parents and the home learning environment in helping children make progress. When parents request it, or if practitioners feel that children will settle more easily because of it, the pre-school carry out home visits. This enables the pre-school to capture much learning information and plan for children's early progress. Parents are encouraged to use their children's learning journals to record information from home and to share children's achievements with the child's key person. Newsletters and e-mails further support the sharing of information to ensure children make progress. Summary reports are written for parent consultations three times a year. Also parents can additionally meet informally with the pre-school at any other time they request. The progress check for children at age two years is firmly embedded in practice and parents are involved. Parents are invited into the pre-school to offer children demonstrations or to show them something of interest. For example, children watch entranced as a parent comes in and shows them how to bath a new born baby. This helps children learn about differences and how to take care of others. They excitedly recreate this as they bath their 'babies' and gently wrap them in towels to dry them. This close working and effective sharing of information offers children continuity in their learning and enhances the progress they make.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Practitioners build exceptionally close and effective relationships with children. The key person arrangements have been subject to much scrutiny as the pre-school has sought to meet children's needs. A high standard has been achieved for this sessional group, where all staff and children attend part-time with the exception of the Principal. For this reason, a key person 'buddy system' is in operation. In this way, children always know they will be greeted by one of two practitioners. Children each have a base room and there is a mixed age group in each room. This enables 'peer-on-peer' learning to take place and the pre-school see this as highly beneficial. These carefully considered arrangements help children settle easily. Practitioners show children warmth, care and affection and in return children are affectionate and caring towards their companions. For example, a child cuddles their friend as they discuss the number and picture on their beakers at snack time and tell the inspector they are 'best friends like everyone here'. This ethos creates a positive and relaxed environment where children behave very well and settle quickly. Practitioners encourage children to share and take turns and children do this easily and willingly. They demonstrate a keen awareness of safety and how to measure risk. For example, they test the wooden blocks when they have become wet to see how slippery they are before running across them.

Children are given choices in their play and are offered the opportunity to express their opinions. Practitioners listen to them carefully, showing them consideration and respect. This helps children to become confident, independent learners, who control the direction of their play and learning. The superb range of resources is within their reach in child accessible units and the space is used dynamically to meet children's changing needs. The wonderful spaces the building affords the pre-school has enabled them to provide restful areas and communication friendly spaces. These offer children respite from the busy, active environment when they need a quiet space. Children show competence beyond their years in managing personal care routines. They discuss safety in the sun and know they need to wear sun cream and a sun hat. Children also realise they need to drink water as it is 'such a hot day'. They enjoy taking their play and learning outdoors and love all kinds of weather, except fog. The pre-school facilitates their use in less clement weather with all-weather suits and umbrellas. This encourages children to develop a positive attitude towards exercise.

Snacks provided at the pre-school are healthy and nutritious and as importantly, help children to learn the importance a healthy diet plays as part of a healthy lifestyle. In addition, they eat the produce they grow and learn about where their food comes from. Practitioners are aware of children's specific dietary needs and operate a 'nut free zone'. Wherever necessary, children's individual dietary needs are met. Healthy eating is also encouraged through leaflets sent home to inform the provision of suitable lunch box content for children staying at dinner time. Exercise is given serious consideration to ensure children grow healthy and strong. A professional football coach comes in to help children learn football skills and they enjoy a game at the end of the session. As part of this activity, children feel their heart beat and discuss the effect of exercise has on their bodies and why this is beneficial to their health.

Parents share important information about their children with key persons and the Principal. This enables the setting to safeguard their well-being and meet their individual care needs. Highly effective relationships exist with the local schools, especially the school next door to the pre-school and early years settings that children attend. This offers children excellent consistency in their early years experience and supports them to make smooth transitions as they move into school.

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

The pre-school has an excellent awareness of issues relating to children's safety. Daily assessment of the premises is carried out by designated personnel within the team. This enables them to identify and minimise or eliminate any identified risks. Children are, therefore, able to explore and investigate their environment and they experience well supervised risk and challenge in their time at the pre-school. The inspection took place following a notification to Ofsted, that a child broke their arm when they fell from the wooden blocks in the indoor area. The inspection found that the setting had used safety mats on the day in question and supervision levels were good. All necessary steps for treatment were taken and parents were informed. The incident happened in April 2013

and Ofsted was not informed until June 2013. The notification to Ofsted was not made within the fourteen day period required, which is an offence. The Principal carried out a full review following the incident and as a result, has moved the indoor blocks outside. Since the incident, a new system for reviewing the accident record and risk assessment has been introduced, so that it is reviewed at the end of each term. As this is a new system, the effectiveness is yet to be assessed on a long term basis.

Practitioners have a superb understanding of child protection as they undertake regular update training and there are also three practitioners, who are designated person trained. This enables all practitioners to know what they need to do should they have concerns. The setting is exceptionally careful to safeguard children in terms of the risk mobile devices and cameras may pose and visitors are asked to leave them at reception. Practitioners are not permitted to use mobile telephones in the pre-school. Photography is used securely within the pre-school with prior written consent from parents.

Monitoring of practitioners is considered exceptionally important by the Principal and management team. Observation of practitioners takes place regularly and through well-embedded supervision procedures, constructive feedback is offered. Initiatives to promote professional development are offered. For example, the Principal and other practitioners exchange roles for three days to develop their appreciation of what each role involves. This helps the Principal embed the exacting standards she expects from the pre-school team. Her clear and supportive approach helps ensure the smooth running of the pre-school and practitioners respect the leadership she provides. The exceptionally professional committee underpins the running of the pre-school and provides much appreciated support to the management team. A large team of support staff surround the pre-school practitioners and the role each performs enhances the experience the pre-school is able to offer children. All involved strive for excellence in every aspect of provision's practice. The purposeful improvement plan has successfully identified the minor weaknesses and the pre-school accurately identifies and builds on their strengths. The current list of improvements reflects the high ambitions of the pre-school and is proof of the very high standards they aspire to.

Monitoring of the educational programme is rigorous. The pre-school is a dynamic setting and always seeks to offer children an improved experience. Practitioners are exploring use of the Mosaic approach and are beginning to introduce this within their practice. Through the progressive and professional, approach adopted children are offered experiences, which enable them to make superb progress. Practitioners work with a number of external agencies, such as speech and language therapists and Portage and Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators. Children are monitored and any difficulties are identified early, which results in children making excellent progress in relation to their age and stage of development. Excellent relationships exist with other settings children attend, which ensure a continuous experience in children's early years experience.

The pre-school views parents as intrinsic to what they do and as children's first and enduring educators. They seek to include them as often as they can in as many ways as possible. Parents come in to share their job roles with children and to impart traditions, festivals and recipes to them. Parent consultations are held throughout the year and much information is shared through regular newsletters, the website and through use of e-mails.

Parents spoken to were enthusiastic in their praise of the pre-school describing the pre-school as a 'fantastic place' where children enjoy 'wonderfully enriching experiences'.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	221886
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	924050
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	120
Name of provider	The Ladybird Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	06/12/2010
Telephone number	01954 250891

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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