

Laurel Farm

17 Carlingcott, Peasedown St. John, BATH, BA2 8AN

Inspection date	07/01/2014
Previous inspection date	04/05/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	3
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		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children are settled in the environment and respond to the routine and structure of the session with enthusiasm and vigour.
- Parents speak highly about the communication they receive and the information that is exchanged about their children's development, they are invited to share the experiences their children are having and carry on that learning at home.
- Children's ideas and curiosity are encouraged consistently and they respond with ideas for future projects and learning, their interests are followed, welcomed and celebrated.
- Children talk enthusiastically about what they learn and their projects. They remember and reflect on their learning which illustrates that they can retain, remember, reminisce and feel a sense of pride and achievement in the process.
- The teaching is consistent and has a huge impact on the children; children are given a language rich environment where conversation is encouraged, celebrated and used as a highly effective learning tool.

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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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children in both the indoors and outdoors environment
- The inspector spoke to children and adults at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector took into account parents' views spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector sampled documentation including policies and children's individual profiles.

Inspector

Shirelle Norris

Full report

Information about the setting

Laurel Farm Kindergarten has been registered since December 2010. The kindergarten is run under a registered charity, which is led by a board of parent trustees and operates from a separate building within the grounds of Laurel Farm, which is a sustainable educational centre situated in Carlingcott, Peasedown St John, near Bath.

Children have use of a main kindergarten room, entrance area with cooking facilities and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor play area at the side of the premises and the farm grounds are also used for outdoor activities. The kindergarten follows a Steiner-Waldorf based approach to education. The kindergarten is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are nine children on roll, of whom five are in the early years age group. The kindergarten is in receipt of government funding to provide nursery education for three and four-year-old children. The kindergarten supports children with English as an additional language.

The kindergarten is open term time only on Mondays to Thursdays from 9.30am - 2.00pm and on Wednesday afternoons from 2.00pm - 4.30pm. The trustees employ two members staff who are qualified in childcare and early years education, both of whom also study for Steiner qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider the different age ranges of the children in a session and respond to individual children that may benefit from shorter stories and the length of time seated at the end of a session.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching at the kindergarten is exceptional and inspirational. The Steiner approach to learning links with the Early Years Foundation Stage and children thrive in this calm, nurturing environment.

Children excitedly enter into the welcoming surroundings of an incredibly well-resourced room where there are natural resources in abundance, to which children have free access.

The teaching is motivational and the children are excited to role-play and use their

imaginations as soon as they arrive: they pretend to cook tea, make dens and make pretend fires, and the adults energise the activities with positive support. The non-gender based toys allow children to invent and create without stereotypical roles. Children make 'stew' from sticks and serve it in wooden bowls, saying, "I've made stew would you like some?" as they offer the 'stew' to the teacher to try.

Throughout a session, the teacher stimulates conversation and language development and this results in an exceptional environment where communication is of real importance. The children are taught to learn from each other as they chat politely with compassion and empathy.

Children are encouraged to contribute their ideas during a session and this stimulates excitement for future projects as well as informing the teachers about the children's individual preferences. Observations of the children as they play illustrate that teachers are able to gauge where the children are in their development. Staff respond effectively to help children reach their potential.

The setting has some exemptions from the learning and development requirements in relation to the early learning goals. However, children are making excellent progress in learning and development.

Children bring in vegetables to make their soup for lunch and they make bread rolls and talk as they 'work.' The atmosphere is quiet and calm, yet busy. Children participate with excitement and commitment. They are encouraged to be independent in using tools, such as knives for cutting and spades for digging.

The plethora of resources reflects the different ages of children, supports learning and extends children's development. The experiences that children have whilst making their lunch show that children's learning is valued and that the benefits of a healthy lifestyle are promoted at every opportunity. "Vegetables will make us strong" comments a child. "We will all be very healthy because we know how good vegetables are for our body's to grow strong", the teacher confirms.

The teacher plans baking sessions strategically and carefully, so that children experience a wide range of learning situations and have many opportunities to be independent. There are carefully planned experiences for the children to cover all areas of learning.

Planned opportunities for children to count and use mathematical language are abundant. For example, as children collect tools, they talk about how big, how small and how many tools there are. At lunchtime, they talk about how much soup they want and what size bowl they will choose. Children of different ages complement each other in their play; teaching encourages older children to show the younger children how to put their aprons on and compassion is evident and reciprocal.

If children show unacceptable behaviour, a subtle intervention from the teacher demonstrates that the children are quick to respond and apologise. They show significant respect to the teacher.

The children are able to visit the local farm to see the sheep sheared. They learn how to clean and dye the wool to make crafts. Being part of this whole process allows the children to participate in a continuous learning journey. Consequently, the children talk enthusiastically and excitedly about the processes and projects they have taken part in.

Cultural awareness is offered to the children through storytelling. Traditional stories create opportunities to talk about other countries and traditions, Russia for example, through the story of Babushka. Spanish and Polish words are used in both songs and stories and children try to say the words and learn the language, which provides huge potential for language development and an understanding of a multi-cultural society.

The teacher sings to indicate changes in the routine and the children respond calmly and willingly, which illustrates their familiarity with their rhythm and structure. Because routines are built up over time with continuity and consistency, the children know what to expect, and what is expected of them, and this makes them feel secure and happy at the kindergarten.

The teacher and assistant know the children exceptionally well and this is because there are robust settling in procedures in place. Children and their families are given home visits and there is ongoing communication via newsletters and a communication book that offers a substantial exchange of information.

All children, including those children who are learning English as an additional language, make excellent progress. Staff make a continual, concentrated effort to engage all children and to support them in contributing to the sessions and they prioritise the individual, specific learning requirements of every child.

Regular parents' evenings, invitations to festivals, craft nights and camping weekends have created a strong sense of community with families and the staff at the kindergarten. Parents express their gratitude in being able to receive vast amounts of information about their children's development. Their views are taken into account and are recognised as a crucial part of the success of the kindergarten. Staff encourage learning to be continued at home so as to reinforce continuity, especially with regard to safety and respect.

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

Children have strong bonds with the adults at the kindergarten because the information received prior to start ensures that they are already familiar with the teacher. There is an incredible warmth and family feel when the children enter, and at the end of the session when they leave.

The teacher is the key person for all of the children but works very closely with the assistant. Meetings at the end of the session ensure that vital information about each child is shared, discussed and consequently used to progress development. There are extremely effective methods of evaluation and assessment for each child that reflect the adults' knowledge of the children's learning and development. They are dedicated to providing a

secure and stable environment for the children.

The teaching promotes children's independence and they thrive and are empowered with this trust given to them. They have a real sense of purpose and ownership at the setting. Using tools and taking risks promotes their physical skills and gives them pride when they complete a task.

The children's reflection and connection with activities demonstrate that their learning is being retained, for example, outside picking beetroot, the children refer to a previous story time, "They pulled and they pulled until the beetroot came out," and they laugh as they re-enact the story and make connections.

At tidy up time all the children respond to the teacher's gentle song and there is a distinct sense of respect and love for their room. The children take great care in making the room look tidy, and they use dustpans and cloths to prepare the room for the next stage of learning. They smile as they 'work' and teamwork is in abundance as children of different ages take on the tasks that are appropriate to their ability.

Every child contributes to the smooth running of the day at the kindergarten which illustrates their confidence and stability, and reflects their positive energy. Their enthusiasm is infectious.

The teaching challenges children in their thinking and gives them valuable opportunities to manage their own risks inside and outside. Children use the outdoor area in all weathers, with raincoats and wellies provided when it is wet so children are able to splash and enjoy the rain. They also plant vegetables, feed the ducks and chickens and play rough and tumble in the ample space. The teacher makes extremely good use of the space the kindergarten has to maximise the learning.

Disruptive or challenging behaviour is not evident and children appear skilled at sorting out their own dilemmas or minor disagreements. As children learn and develop within the setting, they build up exemplary skills for the future.

Risk assessments and safety of the children are paramount and children are taught how to stick to boundaries through repetitive and consistent communications; for example, they sing a song about boundaries, which affirms their knowledge. Outside, the children talk about how to be safe near the ponds and state that, "No children can go near the water without a grown up." It is routine for the children to reiterate their safety rules and talk to each other about them, showing they have a clear understanding of the boundaries set; they automatically whisper when they approach the beehives, so as not to disturb them.

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

Leadership is highly effective and inspirational. The teacher and the assistant are very well qualified, they are enthusiastic and motivated to do a good job because they are

passionate about what they do and how they do it.

The teacher has strong bonds with the children at the kindergarten and because of this, plans are made to meet each child's need and progress their development. Individual information obtained from parents and home visits ensure that the children are secure and have a sense of ownership.

Children flourish in the respectful, calm atmosphere and learning environment that the teacher creates; they are happy and play an active part in their learning because of the interesting and enjoyable activities and projects that she plans.

Acute assessment and observation makes sure that the teacher and the assistant work together to offer exceptional provision for each child. Children's progress is closely monitored, with parents input being an essential element for the kindergarten. It is recognised as an integral and important part of the process to achieve a shared attitude, with continuity of care emphasised.

The teacher's planned projects are continuous and carried on at home and this gives the teacher, with parent information, a true picture of a child's progression of development. Staff value children's ideas and children make suggestions about activities, for example, dressing-up day, "I'm going to be a superhero," or "I'm going to be a cow."

The teacher is highly effective in pursuing the children's interests and curiosity; all spontaneous and planned events that happen stimulate, excite and enthuse learning.

Safeguarding is paramount at the Kindergarten and policies, procedures and training are a high priority. The trustees support this element in the successful running of the setting.

Risk assessments are routinely carried out with support from the local authority, so that safety systems and strategies are paramount regarding the vast space and ponds that are available to the children. Children are fully aware of the boundaries and the rules as the teacher has established a firm, robust system that marks out boundaries to keep the children safe; children discuss these rules during their play outside.

Self-evaluation is recognised as a vital tool to help the kindergarten thrive. The teacher and trustees ensure that a rigorous programme of reflection informs and drives continuous improvement. Local authority advisors visit to support the teacher and external professional support is used to provide appropriate care for the children who attend.

The staff are able to offer excellent provision at the kindergarten because of their continual development through professional training. They work together to ensure each child is given the best start to their education.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

Met

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY410554
Local authority	Bath & NE Somerset
Inspection number	816355
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	3 - 7
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	9
Name of provider	Laurel Farm Kindergarten Committee
Date of previous inspection	04/05/2011
Telephone number	01761420204

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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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