

# Inspection of Ladybirds Nursery

Birch Centre, Hill End Lane, St. Albans, Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

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Inspection date: 22 February 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children arrive at the nursery extremely happy. Young children knock on the glass doors and wave as they see familiar staff approach. As older children arrive, they enthusiastically tell staff all about the storm damage that they have seen on the way to nursery. Children build incredibly strong bonds with staff, for whom they show genuine affection. Babies beam with delight as they take their first steps between staff, who hold out their arms for encouragement. Older children spontaneously cuddle staff and sit on their laps as they tenderly read stories to them.

Children's exemplary behaviour and enthusiasm for learning show that they feel extremely happy, safe and secure. They engage in purposeful play and are curious, inquisitive learners. Children learn to link previous knowledge when they discuss the effects liquids have had on their cookie dough. They confidently problem-solve when working out what they need to do when the dough becomes too wet. Staff's excellent use of questioning helps even younger children to predict how the ingredients will feel when making pizza dough. Children demonstrate their knowledge of weight and capacity as they fill up socks in the sand, telling adults that it gets heavier the more they fill them up. They compare, with their friends, who has the most and who has the least sand in their socks.

## **What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?**

- Children are confident communicators from an early age. Staff role model and extend children's language effectively. For example, when babies use single words, staff repeat these back, adding extra words into the sentence. This helps very young children to develop their understanding of how words link together to make a sentence. Older children competently recognise their names and are starting to recognise the sounds that letters make.
- Staff have an extensive range of qualifications and skills and are dedicated in their roles. They use ongoing professional development opportunities to continually improve their already excellent teaching skills. Staff readily share their new knowledge across the whole staffing team to further improve the quality of teaching for all children. For example, they use their new knowledge from attending training to support children's positive behaviour and self-esteem. Staff implement positive behaviour character cards throughout the nursery to celebrate key moments. When children show new independence skills, they become 'independent iguanas' and have their photographs put on the achievement board.
- Staff promote children's positive behaviour and attitudes extremely well. Children have a clear understanding of right and wrong and how their behaviour affects the feelings of their friends. For example, when children comment how

nice their friend's artwork is, they are rewarded with the 'kind koala' behaviour card. They proudly watch their photograph placed next to the card on the board for all their friends to see. These consistent strategies to support children's early understanding of expected behaviour and social interaction are successful and, as a result, children are kind and courteous to all their friends.

- The managers have high expectations for what children can achieve, through working very closely with their staff team. They are exceptionally reflective and continually work with staff, parents and children to improve practice and meet children's needs. They plan and implement an ambitious curriculum that focuses on children's early development and learning. As a result, all children, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make exceptional progress.
- Children enjoy regular time exploring outside. Staff further encourage their independence skills when changing into outdoor waterproofs and wellington boots to attend the forest school session. Children explore the local park and learn to manage risks when climbing trees with support. This helps them to learn about the natural world around them.
- Partnerships with parents are particularly strong. Parents know what their children are learning and appreciate the support they receive to help further their children's learning at home. Information is shared with parents through an online platform. Parents speak of the excellent progress their children have made and how well prepared they are for their future learning. They state that their children are 'taught to navigate friendships, play, and disagreements in a very special way'.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team has robust systems in place to ensure all children are safeguarded. There are procedures in place to check staff's initial and ongoing suitability to work with children. Managers consistently test staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures during staff meetings. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of how to keep children safe from harm and how to identify if a child may be at risk of harm from extreme views and beliefs. They know where to report any concerns they may have about a child in their care or if they have concerns about members of staff. This promotes children's safety and welfare.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY240007
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10127349
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	61
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	85
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Ladybirds Nursery Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP523417
<b>Telephone number</b>	01727 730783
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 February 2016

## Information about this early years setting

Ladybirds Nursery registered in 2003 and is situated in the Birch Centre in the Highfield Park area of St Albans, Hertfordshire. It operates from four base rooms and there are enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 21 members of staff. The two owners hold degrees and qualified teacher status. One also has early years professional status. Ten members of staff hold early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round, with the exception of public holidays. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Shelly McDougall

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents during the inspection and took account of written testimonials.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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