

# Thriplow Ladybird Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	221909
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jo Rowley
<b>Setting Address</b>	Thriplow C of E Primary School, School Lane, Thriplow, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7RH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0781 4524760
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Thriplow Ladybird Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Thriplow Ladybird Playgroup opened many years ago and has operated in its present premises since 2000. Sessions take place in a mobile building in the grounds of Thriplow Primary School, Thriplow, on the border of Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. The group serves the local community and surrounding areas. The group opens five days a week during term time only and sessions are from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm with a lunch club operating on a Monday and Tuesday from 12:00 until 13:00.

There are currently 16 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 10 funded 3- and 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those children who speak English as an additional language.

Three full-time staff work with the children of which two have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently studying to gain a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care partnership (EYDCP).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn to be healthy through their daily routines, they know about good practice, such as washing their hands before having their snack and lunch. Staff regularly talk to the children about healthy eating and they share information about what is good for them, for example, 'has anybody chosen milk today to help their bones to stay strong' asks a member of staff, children respond with 'yes I have'. During snack time children talk about their favourite fruit, one child says 'I love these', pointing to the raisins being offered at snack time, 'that's great, fruit is very good for you, it helps you to stay healthy' says a member of staff. 'I'm having water because that's healthy' says another child. Staff follow well established health and safety policies to ensure that the well-being of the children is promoted. Children have their nutritional needs met as they enjoy a wide range of healthy mid morning snacks which they often help to prepare and give out as 'daily helpers', promoting their independence. Some staff have attended food hygiene training whilst all staff adhere closely to the setting's procedures in order to protect children's health.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities both inside and outside. In the outside area they have strong opportunities to develop their physical skills with a wide range of outdoor equipment that is available to them, such as a climbing frame, basketball nets, bats, balls, hoops and wheeled toys. Children move freely around the outside area negotiating and taking turns on the wheeled toys. They are competent in these skills and show an awareness of taking care and not bumping into each other. Inside, children take part in regular singing and movement activities such as 'five little dinosaurs' action rhyme. Older children enjoy regular opportunities to take part in PE sessions where their skills are developed, these include balancing, throwing and catching as well as the necessary dressing and undressing. Children's well-being is consistently maintained by the recording of appropriate information which ensures that their health is monitored and their personal needs are met at all times.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where there are creative displays of their own work which are clearly labelled. Resources are clearly labelled with words and pictures, meeting the needs of younger and more able children. They are well organised to ensure that children can self-select, promoting their independence. Their safety is well protected because staff are aware of potential hazards and monitor these to reduce the risks to children. For example, children enter the playgroup through one door and leave through another whilst staff supervise these areas. This avoids congestion in the setting as well as limiting the opportunity for children to leave unsupervised. The daily implementation of practical policies and procedures ensure that staff are able to effectively promote children's safety. The emergency evacuation procedure is clearly displayed and regularly practised with the whole school, therefore, staff, parent helpers and children are sufficiently familiar with the procedure.

Children are developing an understanding of taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe. They are consistently given gentle clear explanations by staff to help them understand the relevance of safety rules. For example, they understand why it is important not to run inside the playgroup, so that they don't bump into anyone and get hurt. Children use bright and stimulating toys and resources that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development

which staff regularly check to ensure that they are clean and safe. Children's welfare is generally promoted because staff have attended additional child protection training and have a good knowledge of the child protection procedures to be followed. However, the current child protection policy is not in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) documentation. This does not fully promote children's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children spend their time purposefully. They are keen to participate in the activities and play opportunities provided and they are confident in their relationships with each other and staff. Their personal development and self-esteem are promoted through encouragement and good levels of support from the well established staff team. Children's actual work is displayed, helping them to feel valued, secure and confident within the setting. They show their developing independence as they carry out self-care skills, such as hand washing and choosing their own activities confidently. They interact well with staff who are skilled at letting the children develop their own interests and games. For example, a group of children are playing their own made up game of dinosaurs. They use small dinosaur figures as they pretend to fly them around the room whilst other children with larger dinosaurs are chasing them. Staff promote children's learning through opportunities to enjoy these made up games and ensure that children have time to develop their imaginations effectively.

Children's learning is further promoted because staff make effective use of open questions and suggestions to encourage children to think further. An example of this is at story time. The children listen attentively to 'Harry and the dinosaurs' as they hold their individual soft ladybirds, to help their concentration skills and discourage them from playing with other things whilst they are listening. After the story the children are asked questions about the story and they discuss with staff what happened in the story, this encourages them to think further and develop their recollection skills. Careful planning of activities for all age groups ensures that children's learning is well balanced and activities are linked to their individual needs and capabilities.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is linked to the planning of activities, therefore, staff are developing younger children's learning. Children are encouraged to use their imagination and staff take an active role in their play. Children's behaviour is very good and staff are regularly encouraging the children to be aware of each others needs. Staff remind children in a gentle way about how we share and take turns with the resources. An example of this is when children are playing with the farm. One child doesn't want to play with the other children. Staff are skilled at talking to the children, explaining to them how playing together can sometimes be more fun and as staff participate too children start to laugh and enjoy the resources together.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas and their overall development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, planning and adapting activities appropriately. Children's progress in all areas is well balanced as staff use methods for assessing their development. However, children's starting points are not known to the staff and children's development records are not completed consistently. Therefore, it is unclear as to what progress is being made initially. Information gained from the observations and development files are used to highlight areas to determine future planned activities. Using this information enables

staff to highlight potential areas of concern and monitor individual children's progress. Staff plan with reference to the Foundation Stage to ensure that children are offered a range of relevant topics and experiences. The planning of activities is completed by all staff, it is practical and effective and staff monitor this to ensure that all areas of learning are covered.

Children are secure and demonstrate a sense of trust as they confidently initiate conversations with staff and turn to them for help in sorting out any problems. They are clearly aware of the expected codes of behaviour, using manners appropriately, for example, a member of staff is sitting at the home corner table as a child tries to get in to the home corner. 'Excuse me, can I get past please' the child says. The children are beginning to make firm friends and are learning to care for each other. For example, a child is asked if he has any best friends at playgroup, he says 'everyone is my friend, I love everyone here'. All children are regularly praised by staff who promote positive behaviour with verbal rewards, such as 'well done, that was excellent sharing' and 'you are very kind'.

Children's language and literacy skills are promoted, including developing their listening skills. They attentively listen to stories which are enthusiastically told by staff members. They have independent access to a range of books and this promotes their ability to understand the meaning of print. Children are confident to initiate conversation and listen well to instruction. They are developing their skills in prediction, such as when they are counting objects. Children have access to mark making resources and they are encouraged, by staff, to choose activities for themselves by looking at the named resource boxes. The boxes have the name of the resource and the corresponding picture, promoting all children's ability to self-select effectively.

Children use mathematical language confidently and there are sufficient resources, including number ordering and weighing activities as well as problem solving activities to enable this. They learn about growth in different situations, such as the current theme of dinosaurs. During this theme children are learning about how big the dinosaurs once grew and they use dinosaur figures for counting games, promoting children's mathematical understanding. There are regular opportunities for children to develop their calculation skills and understanding of time. For example, children count together at registration time and during singing time. If there are lots of children who want to use the same resources staff use sand timers to show them how long they might need to wait before it is their turn, promoting their understanding of time.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted. For example, staff encourage children to learn about dinosaurs. They are learning about carnivores and herbivores and children are aware of which dinosaurs ate which foods. Children take part in activities that promote their understanding of other ways of life and their wider society through visits to the local church and they have been learning about the Divali and Ramadan festivals. Children benefit from a range of different teaching methods to keep them motivated and on task, ranging from group activities to one to one sessions on the computer where they demonstrate their skills confidently.

Children have good opportunities for developing their physical skills through their participation in daily activities, they have regular access to a well resourced outside area further promoting their physical exercise. They learn about spatial awareness and the different ways in which they can move, such as climbing, running and peddling. During outside activities children use bats, balls, climbing frames and wheeled bikes, promoting their physical development. Children have opportunities to develop their fine motor skills as they use different tools such as scissors and rolling pins and they learn about the importance of keeping healthy as they are encouraged to talk about why they wash their hands.

Children are involved in a range of creative activities, such as free drawing, cutting, painting and role play. They learn about mixing colours as they create their own paintings. Some activities are linked to the current theme, while others are self initiated. At the start of each session staff ensure that children know that there are empty tables out for them to make their own choices about what they would like to play with. Children choose resources that they can play alone or those that can be played together. For example, a group of children decide that they want to play with the coloured shapes. With staff interaction the children use the shapes to build different designs, promoting their creative development. Children have good opportunities to use their imaginations through a wide range of media including musical instruments and dressing up clothes.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children and parents receive a very warm welcome from staff as they arrive, children separate from their carers easily and settle quickly at an activity of their choice. Children's experiences are shared with parents verbally on a daily basis and staff ensure that parents are kept informed of how their children are progressing through daily sheets and regular parent consultations. Children are enthusiastic as they take part in the planned activities or make independent choices for free play. Their confidence and sense of belonging is established as they record their own attendance with daily name cards. Children have named coat peg and choose which drink they would like for their snack. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Children are learning to respect others, they are kind to each other and use appropriate manners throughout the setting, for example, children say excuse me when if somebody is in their way and they say please and thank you with only occasional reminders needed from staff. Staff demonstrate a good awareness for meeting the needs of individual children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a designated person who ensures that all staff have a knowledge and understanding of the settings special needs policy, in order to promote children's welfare. Children with English as an additional language are supported because staff are aware of their individual backgrounds and adapt activities to ensure that all children are able to take part and enjoy all that is offered within the playgroup setting.

Children take turns and show a good understanding of each other's needs. They are able to access a range of resources and planned activities that promotes equality of opportunity and develops their understanding of the wider world. For example, children have been introduced to different festivals, such as Ramadan and Hanukkah. Children make special welcome mats and eat different foods as they learn about the different cultures as staff are keen to show a respectful awareness of different events in the lives of children and their families. Children's behaviour is good, they are encouraged to share and be kind to each other and they show that they are aware of the settings 'ground rules' when asked by a member of staff. For example, children say 'we don't push our friends' and 'we don't run or throw the toys'. Staff use praise consistently and regularly throughout the session and children respond well to this. There are suitable strategies in place for dealing with inappropriate behaviour if required, such as 'time out'.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. All parents are warmly welcomed in to the setting and are aware of the daily activities offered. They are kept well informed of themes and topics through regular newsletters and information displayed on the parent's notice board. Parent evenings ensure that they have the opportunity to see how their children's skills are

developing through discussion with the staff, the written assessments and examples of their children's work. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage and the education opportunities that are provided by the playgroup. They are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and regularly participate in fundraising activities. During discussion with parents they speak very highly of the staff and say that they are very happy with the care that staff provide for their children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, the needs of all children are met. Their well-being is monitored and maintained as effective systems are in place to ensure that the staff working with the children are qualified to do so. Children's individual needs are recognised and met with appropriate documentation and policies that comply with regulation. Children's attendance is recorded and all documentation is reviewed and updated regularly, promoting children's welfare. Staff have a commitment to training and they have regular access to information which enables them to continue to develop their understanding of children's care and learning. Staff meetings are held and appraisals are completed to ensure that staff are happy in their role and this is reflected in the good moral of the team.

Children benefit from well motivated staff who are good role models. They take responsibility as a team for planning and ensure that resources are appropriate as well as interesting. Staff are involved in all aspects of the children's learning, consistently encouraging them and extending their language, they prompt discussion and ask the children appropriate questions to ensure that they are progressing in their learning. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and take time to make sure that children are encouraged to join in and enjoy new experiences. As a team they ease the children's transition from home to playgroup through effective settling in procedures and their warm and caring approach towards the children and parents.

The leadership and management is good. The well established staff team work very well together, there are monitoring strategies in place to evaluate the plans which identifies strengths and areas for improvement. The curriculum planning is reviewed by all staff and appropriate changes are made if necessary. There is a strong commitment to developing all areas of the setting and to promote staff development, a clear staff induction process and regular appraisals ensure that the playgroup policies and procedures are understood by all staff and that these are consistently applied. The leader has a clear vision for the playgroup, she is committed and dedicated to her role enabling her and the staff team to provide quality care and education for children. The leader ensures that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in extending the children's learning and that they are committed to ensuring that all children make progress towards the early learning goals. Plans and observations continue to be reviewed to ensure that activities and themes extend and develop the children's learning in all areas.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the staff agreed to develop an effective procedure for managing access to the premises. Parents and children now use separate doors for entering and leaving from the setting, protecting children's safety. They agreed to ensure that all staff have a consistent approach to behaviour management. Staff have been on additional training and all follow the playgroup behaviour management policy to ensure that they are consistent in their approach. The staff agreed to improve documentation with regard to developing a lost child policy, seeking emergency permission for emergency treatment or advice and clarify the complaints policy for

parents. All this documentation has since been updated and reviewed to ensure that children's safety and well-being is promoted. The staff also agreed to organise large activities and story time to ensure that the needs of all children are met. When children are participating in large group activities including story time, there is more staff support, ensuring that children's needs are effectively met.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children's assessment records are consistently completed
- ensure that children's starting points are known in order to promote their development.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)