

# Little Learners Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY216941  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 18 September 2007   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Anne Drinkwater   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Barclays Community Centre, Cook Street, Winton, Eccles, M30 8QG |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 07814 577300  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Little Learners   |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Full day care, Out of School 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Learners Pre-School which is managed by an organisation registered in 2002. It is situated in the Eccles area of Salford.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for a maximum of 26 children, aged two years to five years and currently has 31 on roll, this includes two funded children. The provision also provides holiday care for 26 children aged three to eight years.

The playgroup is opened on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 09.30 to 13.30 term time only. The holiday care provision opens Monday to Friday 10.00 to 14.00 in the holiday periods.

Nine staff work in the playgroup and holiday care of which five staff hold appropriate qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained setting where they are learning the importance of good personal care. Detailed information is discussed with parents and is recorded to ensure that children's individual care needs are met. Children take part in healthy daily exercise outside in the front and rear grounds. They are routinely reminded to wash their hands in the low level sink at appropriate times of the day, such as before meals, after visiting the toilet and when coming in from outdoor play. Pictures above the sinks show them how to wash their hands properly. Appropriate nappy changing procedures minimise the risk of cross infection and staff have access to protective clothing when required. The administration of medication is well documented, as are all accidents. Staff also obtain written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for children. This means that children can receive appropriate care and ensures their well-being in the event of an accident or emergency.

Information is obtained from parents about children's individual dietary needs. Children benefit because staff are aware of healthy eating programmes. Children are learning about healthy foods through choices from the menus, they are offered fruits, cheese, pasta, rice, savoury and low sugar snacks. The children have access to their own drinks bottles throughout the session.

Children are learning about healthy exercise through daily opportunities for outdoor play.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a warm, friendly and welcoming environment. The playroom is organised into different activity areas so that children can move around freely and safely. The environment is bright, busy and cheerful for children and parents. The children have free access to a good range of suitable toys and equipment, which is appropriate for children of all ages and stages of development. The low level storage enables children to choose what they wish to play with, and low level furniture positively contributes to their independence. This boosts children's confidence and helps them to feel a strong sense of belonging in the setting.

Children are secure in their environment. Safety is a priority and good security ensures that children cannot leave the premises unattended. Risk assessments ensure the general safety of all the indoor play areas, emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and drills are practised monthly on a regular basis, which means that most hazards are minimised. However, the outdoor play surfaces contain holes which pose a hazard to children's safety.

Children are protected because staff are well aware of signs and symptoms of abuse. The policy is displayed for parent's to ensure that they are fully aware of the role of the staff with regard to child protection. However, the procedures is not in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy themselves and show interest in their environment. They willingly take part in the activities available and concentrate well. Children gain a good awareness of diversity and

the world around them as resources and topics such as Chinese New Year, World Awareness Day and the Barnardo's sponsored toddle promote positive images and an understanding of the world around them.

Children are happy and well cared for in the pre-school. The established children form good relationships with the staff and each other. Children play well together in small or large group situations. Staff provide a programme of activities, which provide children with spontaneous play opportunities and choices.

Children are familiar with the routines and feel secure. They clearly understand instructions and join activities with enthusiasm. Children take turns on the bikes and scooters, they are reminded to share the pink bike as it is a particular favourite. They enjoy creative play opportunities, where they can use materials independently and take part in an imaginative activity, such as wearing the builder's hat when constructing their building.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have an understanding of how children develop, they extend children's learning and thinking as they ask questions or talk about what the children are doing which make children think. The staff plan activities which reinforce children's understanding as they play. Staff provide support to the children and make some limited observations on their progress, however, assessments and observations are not used as a guide to teaching and future planning for the individual are not routinely shared with parents.

Children are happy and sociable in the setting. They are interested and eager to participate in the different activities. Children are confident communicators, they interact well and contribute their thoughts and ideas. They use expressive and descriptive language as they play, for example, when handling the african snails they describe them as slimy and they know the weather is cold, windy and rainy when they go out. They are developing good language and listening skills, which are encouraged by the staff throughout the session.

Children recognise that print has meaning and are beginning to link sounds to letters. There is an abundance of signage and words on the playroom walls, at each activity table, in the home corner and in the computer area. Children have access to mark making materials in some of the play areas, however, opportunities for children to develop mark making are limited and unimaginative.

Children use mathematical language, they count to 10 and sometimes beyond, they understand the value of the numbers and recognise number sequences.

Children's fine motor skills are developing as they use tools, pencils and paint brushes with increasing control and confidence. They have ample opportunities to explore colour and texture.

Children benefit from activities which develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They take an interest in nature as they observe changes in the weather. Children have appropriate opportunities to use information, communication and technology equipment, for instance, they have access to a computer. They show a sense of time as they recall events and follow the daily routines.

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

The provision is good.

The children and parents are welcomed into the setting. The staff become aware of the children's individual needs through discussion with parents, during the gradual admission process. Children become aware of diversity through access to resources and activities that promote positive images, such as posters, books, jigsaw puzzles, dolls and small world people. They are involved in projects and their local community through a variety of events, such as the Barnardo's sponsored walk, our world day and Chinese New Year. Photographic evidence confirms that children's learning is further extended through the use of books, activities and dressing up clothes for role play.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The gradual settling in procedure helps both the parents and the children settle confidently into the setting. Information is available in the form of written policies, posters and signage in the entrance hall, invitations to join in sponsored events links the pre-school with home. Parents are welcome to stay with their child as often as they wish to settle them and to help in the setting. Staff keep parents informed of their children's day and progress in the form of daily verbal communication. Parents give positive written feedback about the staff, setting and the children's learning.

Children behave well in the setting because they receive meaningful praise and encouragement. The staff have high expectations of their behaviour and they operate a consistent approach. They use positive techniques to distract, explain, redirect and encourage children. They present themselves as good role models and the children respond to their good examples. The children have good self-esteem and they behave well in the setting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a positive and supportive environment, which effectively promotes their individual needs. The setting offers a warm and welcoming atmosphere where children can progress at their own pace. Clearly defined areas separate the different activities and all staff work directly with the children. Children are encouraged to make choices, think for themselves and they are helped to achieve.

Staff are suitably experienced to care for children, the setting maintains above average staffing qualifications, they are very clear about their role within the setting and they also know each others role. They are encouraged to support each other and they work very well as a team to provide appropriately for the individual needs of the children in their care. The staff show a strong commitment to developing their childcare practice and regularly attend weekend training.

All the required policies and procedures are available and recording books are satisfactorily completed. However, the staff files are incomplete and do not contain all the required staff details.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager and staff work well together as a team to ensure the setting runs smoothly, which promotes positive outcomes for children. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of childcare and education. However, the manager has not developed procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching,

assessments, observations and recording. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection four recommendations were made to: review the induction procedure to enable staff to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and know what is expected of them; review play plans; observe and record what children do to ensure that the individual needs of children are considered and help to bring them onto their next steps for their play, learning and development; to review procedures to ensure that children do not have access to restricted areas and to ensure staff are fully aware about and implement health and safety requirements and to revise the organisation of meal times, enabling the staff to interact more fully with the children.

All staff have inductions which prepares them well for their roles, children do not enter restricted areas and all staff have undertaken health and safety training and children are accompanied by their key workers at snack and lunch times which enable the staff to interact fully with the children. These improvements enhance children's overall safety and well-being.

At the last Nursery Education inspection four recommendations were made to: review recording and assessment methods making sure these inform planning and enable clear links to be made between what children can do and their next steps along the stepping stones; review the programme for mathematics ensuring sufficient opportunities are provided for children to develop an awareness of shape, space, measure using developing mathematical ideas and methods, to solve practical problems; review the programme for physical development, ensuring children are able to develop large gross motor skills in poor weather and monitor the overall effectiveness of staff time and deployment, ensure an appropriate balance in adult directed activities, and evaluate behaviour management techniques to ensure consistency.

Children now have regular opportunities planned to explore mathematical problems, the outdoor play area has been furnished with an all weather safety surface which enables children to have daily activities in physical play, the behaviour management policy is age appropriate and staff act consistently in following procedures. These improvements enhance children's overall safety and well-being.

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

Since the last inspection 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 complaint 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

## 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):

- update the child protection procedure in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards procedures
- ensure staff files contain all the relevant information regarding recruitment, selection and vetting procedures
- ensure daily risk assessment are carried out in the outdoor areas to ensure the grounds are safe and free from hazards.

### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop mark making
- develop the use of initial assessments and observations to plan the next steps for children's learning and share these with parents
- develop procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, planning and observations.

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)