

Little Explorers

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Suzette Butcher

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Little Explorers nursery was registered in 2008. It is owned and managed by a committee from Aigburth Training Opportunities. The nursery operates from a converted room within Aigburth Training Opportunities which is near Liverpool city centre. It provides nursery facilities for families within the wider community and support for the students attending courses within the premises. The nursery is on the ground floor of the premises and is fully accessible for people with disabilities. Children have access to a secure, enclosed area for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 16 children under eight years at any one time. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. There are currently 10 children on roll who are all within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting supports children with English as an additional language. There are six staff employed, of whom, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Management strive towards improvement but they have not yet established effective monitoring systems to support this process. Children's welfare is safeguarded through effective procedures and well organised documentation and a healthy lifestyle is actively encouraged. A well-organised enabling environment provides accessible stimulating opportunities for every child. Inclusive practice is strongly promoted in principle but aspects are not put into practice and create two key areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve self-evaluation and quality improvement processes to assess the provision against robust and challenging quality criteria
- provide appropriate support in line with Special Educational Needs Code of Practice to ensure that additional needs are recognised at an early stage and staff are aware of their role in supporting children
- value linguistic diversity more highly and provide more opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Management are committed towards providing high quality care and education for children. Firm foundations for improvement have been established and steady progress has been made since registration. Regular staff meetings are held with

the whole team to review practice and discuss plans for the future, such as developing the outdoor play environment. Advice is sought and taken from other professionals, such as Sure Start. However, self-evaluation and quality improvement processes have not been introduced to clearly identify the setting's strengths and weaknesses and prioritise areas for development. Robust induction, recruitment and selection procedures are followed to ensure that all staff are suitable. Effective appraisal systems monitor staff's ongoing suitability and support their continuous professional development. Staff attend appropriate training on a regular basis to further develop their knowledge and understanding. For example, they attend safeguarding courses to establish clear procedures to protect children's welfare. Links within the provider's training centre in the same premises provide good opportunities for staff development and practical experiences in childcare for students in the centre. Nevertheless, key staff have not attended appropriate training on how to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in line with Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. This has a negative impact on children's well-being and development and on the overall quality of the inclusive environment.

The organisation of records, policies and procedures required to fully safeguard children and to ensure that the needs of all children are met are effectively managed. The confidential handling of personal information is given a high priority and documentation is reviewed on a regular basis. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed for all required aspects of the premises and outings and appropriate actions are taken to manage or eliminate risks on a daily basis. Policies promote a fully inclusive practice and the setting warmly welcomes children from a wide variety of family backgrounds with different ethnicities, cultures, religions and languages. Diversity is celebrated and children's individual needs are identified and respected. However, good examples, such as learning basic words in children's own language, that are described in policies are not carried out in practice in the nursery. Consequently, staff are not providing enough opportunities to promote and value children's linguistic diversity. An effective partnership is maintained with parents and carers. They receive information about the setting in policy documents, newsletters and on notice boards around the room. Written and verbal feedback at the end of the session keep parents fully informed about their children's routines and how they have spent their day. Systems to share information and provide continuity of care and education when they have children who attend other provisions within Early Years Foundation Stage are in their early stages.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Key staff members have a secure understanding of the underlying principles of early years care and education and this provides a strong foundation for children's learning and development. Staff are currently developing their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and familiarising themselves with the early learning goals through in-house training. They regularly evaluate activities and review the effectiveness of their procedures in meeting children's individual needs. High staff ratios and effective key worker systems provide a lot of individual support to encourage children to make steady progress towards the

early learning goals. Children's individual learning journey is recorded and tracked in personal profiles through written observations, photographs and work examples. This information is available to share with parents and any other providers within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff observe children as they play and review this information to identify next steps in learning for individual children. This informs future planning and ensures that activities are based on children's needs and interests. For example, children's interest in Egypt leads to a visit to the nearby museum to look at hieroglyphics and artefacts. Outings in the local environment and the celebration of cultural festivals give children a balanced view of the wider world and help them to value different aspects of their own and other people's lives.

The attractive and very inviting indoor nursery environment is a key strength of the setting. Good quality resources and equipment provide appropriate experiences for children across the age ranges. Areas of continuous provision are clearly labelled and provide stimulating play and learning opportunities in all the areas of learning. Any safety issues, such as screening the quieter sleep and rest area, have been addressed and consequently, children move about freely and safely within the enabling environment as they decide where they want to play next. This encourages children to develop confidence, independence as they learn to make their own choices and decisions. For example, children have fun exploring and investigating different sensory experiences in low-level sand trays, painting easels or with treasure baskets full of interesting materials and everyday objects. They confidently make sounds with instruments and enjoy experimenting with a wide range of mark making materials and creative resources. Many opportunities extend to the outdoor play environment where children benefit from daily exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. A balance of adult directed and child led activities are provided. Children explore imaginative role play opportunities such as playing in a wig-wam next to small deckchairs and parasols. Children are offered time to practise and consolidate their learning as they play. Informal learning opportunities are maximised and contribute towards children's future economic well-being. For example, they acquire reading skills, identify colours, problem solve and develop technology skills. Language and communication skills are strongly promoted as children eagerly share their interest with staff through signs, sounds, gestures and facial expressions. Children share warm relationships with staff and learn to follow the staff's calm, consistent and respectful example. Minor disagreements are skilfully dealt with in a way that is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development.

The premises are safe, secure and a camera effectively monitors access to the building. Snacks are well balanced and nutritious. Parents provide packed lunches for their child and are encouraged to follow healthy option principles. Staff sit and eat with the children and meal times are relaxed social occasions, which children clearly enjoy. Babies are actively included at mealtimes when they sit in their chair at the same level as everyone else. Fire drills are practised with the children on a regular basis. This encourages them to recognise potential risks and dangers and learn how to respond. Hand washing is incorporated into the daily routines and younger children's routines are recognised and followed, providing an environment consistent with home.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.