

Littlesteps Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY385725
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Inspector Georgina Walker

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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 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).

Description of the setting

Littlesteps Pre-School opened originally in 1987 and was registered in new premises in 2009. The Pre-School is now owned by the staff who operate as a co-operative. The facility operates from a purpose built playroom and has access to other rooms in the Methodist Church, Littleover, Derby. The main playrooms are on the ground floor. There are no steps into the premises and there is a lift to access rooms on the first floor. There is a secure outdoor play area. The Pre-School serves families from the local and surrounding area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to care for 26 children and admit children from the term in which the child is three years of age to five years and there are currently 36 children on roll. This includes children who receive funding for early education. The setting does share and/or seek information in partnership with other early years settings the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) age group attend. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The Pre-School opens five days a week, term-time only and sessions are from 09:15 until 12:00. There are two full-time and three part-time members of staff, plus two relief members of staff who work with the children. All of the staff hold appropriate early years or teaching qualifications. The setting has obtained the 'Steps to Quality in Derby' award and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. An absorbing range of experiences are provided for children and the planning and assessment of learning and development is comprehensive. However, there is inconsistent access to resources which promote understanding and use of skills required for the future. A safe and stimulating environment is created and children are happy and thrive during their time in the setting and the inclusion of all children is given high priority. The comprehensive risk assessments assist in safeguarding children. Positive relationships with parents ensures the sharing of children's progress, discussions about next steps are worthwhile and links are formed with EYFS settings the children will attend. Self-evaluation is ongoing and an extensive range of well-written policies are shared with parents and procedures are generally followed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase children's access to resources which assist in developing skills, some of which are required for their future economic well-being
- ensure policies which are required for the safe and efficient management of

the provision consistently contain reference to current legislation and procedures are appropriately followed to assist in safeguarding the children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The forming of the co-operative and move to permanent premises as well as staff attendance at training and weekly staff meetings has led to the development of a committed team whose focus is to increase knowledge and support the children. Staff are effectively and efficiently deployed and appropriately qualified part-time staff are available to cover absences, to ensure ratios are maintained by persons the children know. A comprehensive folder of policies and procedures are available for staff and parents, however some aspects require minor modification to reflect legislation and assist in safeguarding children. All staff are familiar with the child protection procedures and promote children's well-being, although there is limited detail in some records of injuries incurred on site. The procedures for recording significant injuries children arrive with are to be implemented effectively and signed by parents. There are detailed risk assessments and programmed use of the rear car park area to ensure children's safety. The risk of cross-infection is minimal as staff effectively promote the use of tissues and handwashing in the toilet facility adjacent to the main playroom, which assists in promoting children's independence.

The environment is decorated with a wide variety of children's craft work which contributes to ensuring the premises are bright and cheerful, warm and welcoming. Resources in some low-level storage units enable children to access them which leads to greater independence and making choices. Inclusion of all children has been appropriately considered, activities adapted, relevant words sought from parents when English is a second language and sign languages used with all children which promotes an understanding of the needs of others. Effective partnerships with other agencies have been formed to meet the individual needs of children and their carers. Parents and carers are encouraged to share what they know about their child by completing comprehensive information sheets on admittance entitled 'The Voice of the Child' and 'The Voice of the Parent'. Through consistent discussions, sharing of written information on request by parents and formal sharing of the developmental progress records at open evenings, a very effective partnership is formed. Parents and carers are invited to share their experiences and expertise in the promotion of children's knowledge and understanding of the world by bringing in food and artefacts relating to festivals and culture. The setting has made considerable attempts to liaise with other pre-school settings and the local schools children in the EYFS age range attend or will attend.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

A key person for each child develops extensive knowledge of their care and learning needs. Observation and assessments are substantial to ensure that children achieve in relation to the initial information provided by parents and ongoing progression and capabilities. Outdoor play is accessed by the children four

days a week and physical activities presented indoors in the sports hall or lower hall create a healthy lifestyle and develop a wide range of skills. They particularly enjoy the opportunity to extend indoor themes, such as 'P for Pirates', outdoors and respond with 'wow' when told there is a pirate ship with a plank to walk on set up outside. There is planned, purposeful play and exploration, with a balance of adult-led and child-led activities. A range of themes and celebrations of festivals, some resources with positive images of diversity, all provide a successful link to the areas of learning and enhance children's awareness of the wider world.

Children develop a positive awareness of themselves and their needs through the good role models of the staff who consistently use praise and encouragement. The children are well behaved and respond positively to staff who remind them not to run to activities indoors. Children make decisions regarding their thirst needs and are developing a knowledge of healthy eating as they enjoy fruit, or crackers and cheese, for snack and grow some carrots in pots outdoors to eat later in the year. Children are eager to mark-make and many competently copy their name from their self-registration name labels. Staff have on their 'wish list' a trolley for stationery tools to promote children's free access to a wider range of resources at the writing table. Staff ask open-ended questions and children are confident and share their knowledge or ask questions to extend it. They recall events and confidently talk about their life outside of the group. All children choose books from the extensive range as a group activity which promotes the correct use of books and safety as children sit down to use the books as staff clear some resources away before group time at the end of the session.

Children are supported to develop problem solving and other numeracy skills during well planned or spontaneous activities, such as comparing the size of shells in the sand tray or discussing the value of coins in the mark-making and coin rubbing activity. They use tools and building materials with dexterity as they develop imaginary play, such as small-world figures in the fort or set up a train with chairs outside and pretend they are going on long journeys with 'real' tickets. They develop a sense of caring for others as they fundraise for 'Red Nose Day' and include new children in their play who are of different ages or abilities. They use a small range of battery operated toys and are learning to use the new computer to enhance their learning experiences for the future, although access to such resources is not programmed daily. Children are encouraged to be active and they pedal wheeled toys skilfully. A range of various sized climbing, sliding and balancing equipment and smaller resources, such as hoops, balls and beanbags ensures each child can develop an extensive range of skills. Children use a wide variety of textures to create pictures or models during an exciting range of craft activities, including free choice paintings or making 'treasure chests'. They eagerly engage in role play, dressing up as pirates or princesses and use puppets with good imaginations and different voices as they act out scenes. They sing and sign with enthusiasm to songs played on the guitar.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
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?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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