

# Little Sparks Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** EY389477  
**Inspection date** 15/09/2009  
**Inspector** Rachel Ayo

**Setting address** 5 Super Street, Clayton le Moors, ACCRINGTON,  
Lancashire, BB5 5ST  
**Telephone number** 01254 399266  
**Email** cjo.oxford@btinternet.com  
**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009

## 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).

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Little Sparks Limited was registered in 2009. It is a privately owned day nursery that operates from two converted houses in the Clayton Le Moors area of Lancashire. Children have access to two floors and there are three enclosed adjoining outdoor areas. Children under two years are accommodated on the first floor, accessed via stairs only, and children from two years upwards are situated on the ground floor. An out of school provision is provided for the siblings of children attending the setting and these children are accommodated in the ground floor rooms before and after school and during the holidays. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They may care for a maximum of 42 children under eight years, of whom, 35 may be in the early years age group. There are currently 40 children on roll aged from six months to nine years, some in part-time places, and the setting receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four.

There are eight staff employed at the setting, of whom, five hold an appropriate early years qualification including the manager. The remaining staff are working towards gaining a qualification. The setting receives support from their local authority and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association. The setting was awarded Lead Practitioner status in 2009.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

A well developed knowledge of each child's needs and generally suitable policies and procedures means that staff are successful in promoting most aspects of children's welfare and learning. However, some regulatory documentation, safety practices and staffing arrangements are not fully in place. Partnerships with parents are a key strength of the setting and are significant in making sure that the needs of all children are met, ensuring inclusion. Systems for planning and individualised observational assessment are developing suitably overall to ensure that children are supported in making steady progress in relation to their age, ability and starting points. There are adequate systems for self-evaluation. All adults within the setting share a clear vision for the setting's continuous improvement demonstrating plans for the future in order to improve outcomes for children.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- review the organisation of staff to ensure that

29/09/2009

minimum qualification requirements are adhered to at all times (Qualifications, training, knowledge and skills)

- ensure that risk assessments include more detail, are updated regularly and identify and minimise all risks effectively in relation to open ground floor windows, low-level aerosol spray and the wood in the outdoor area (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 29/09/2009
- ensure that accident records consistently include first aid treatment and include advice in consents to seek emergency medical treatment (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 29/09/2009

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

- further improve hygiene practices in relation to hand washing before meals and after wiping noses and the arrangements for sleeping children over two years of age
- improve the systems for completing the daily record of attendance
- further develop children's profiles by matching observations to the expectations of the early learning goals so that learning priorities and any gaps in children's learning can be identified more effectively.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Most aspects of safeguarding are promoted suitably with some good aspects. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that children are protected and designated staff fully understand their responsibilities with regards to child protection. The indoor and outdoor environment are subject to risk assessments with some good safety practice, such as displayed safety signs, inaccessibility to the windows in the baby room and coded keypads which prevent ready access to the nursery rooms. However, not all risks have been identified and minimised effectively in order to fully promote children's safety and the record of risk assessments does not include who it was completed by or the date of review.

There are very good development opportunities for staff, through an effective appraisal system and training plans. This ensures that they keep up to date with changes and learn new skills. The nursery employs a sufficient number of qualified staff, however, on-site qualification requirements are not always met. Although record keeping systems are generally used appropriately in order to promote the efficient and safe management of the setting, accident records do not always include first aid treatment and consents to seek emergency medical treatment do not include advice.

Although there are no formal systems for self-evaluation at present, the provider demonstrates a clear sense of purpose and positive attitude towards continuous improvement which permeates throughout the setting to the newly formed staff

team. Room leaders set actions to improve the provision in their rooms and there are plans to enhance the outdoor area through the successful application of a grant. The setting has made strides since registration, for example, attaining funding status. Parents' views about the setting are actively sought through both verbal and written communication and parents express extreme happiness about the care of their children.

The effective engagement with parents and carers and positive partnership working means that children's sense of security is well fostered. There is good information provided about the provision, such as through the information pack and open house evenings, and detailed registration forms and good settling-in arrangements mean that staff can meet children's individual needs, actively promoting equality of opportunity. Successful ongoing communication is achieved, for example, via noticeboards, emails, text messages, day books and newsletters. Parents are actively encouraged to share what they know about their child, for example, by adding to planning and observation sheets and bringing items in from home to contribute to topics.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Staff have an overall secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and consider children's individual likes and interests when planning for their next steps in order for their learning to be supported. A range of evidence is gathered to enable staff to observe what children do, although the systems for assessing this information is not fully effective in order for learning priorities and gaps in children's learning to be fully identified. The learning environment both indoors and outdoors is organised adequately in order to support children's learning. For example, children are able to make choices because resources are organised at low-level and bright posters and displays adorn the walls to create welcoming areas. Staff questioning, interaction and balance of adult-led and child-led activities is suitable in fostering active learning.

Children, a lot of whom are new to the setting, enjoy their time in the nursery, for example, as they engage in filling and pouring in the sand and water or talk about cooking a chicken whilst playing imaginatively with their peers in the home corner role play area. They confidently approach the inspector to look at the laptop and talk about the scales on the dinosaur as they view these through a magnifying glass. All age groups are provided with opportunities to make marks. Toddlers draw with crayons and children aged two and three years make patterns using chalk in the outdoor area and enthusiastically paint; they clearly know that an apron is required for this activity as they attempt to put one on with adult support. Children take part in interesting outings, which helps them to learn about the wider world, for example, hunting for bugs, and opportunities to take photographs with their own camera, and using a laptop to help them learn about information, communication and technology. Staff explain that they talk about different cultures and provide a suitable range of resources and positive images to adequately encourage children to learn and value aspects of the diverse society in which they live.

Staff have loving and caring relationships with children. Very young children, new to the setting and a little upset, are warmly comforted with a cuddle and kind words. Staff are fully apprised of home routines and encourage parents to provide their child's favourite comfort items. They set out a favourite activity or resource that the children enjoy, such as a music DVD in order to distract them and help them to settle and feel safe and secure. Very young children's developing confidence is observed as they explore their environment, for example, to negotiate the small climbing apparatus.

Gentle reminders from staff, for example, to sit on chairs correctly, helps children gain a suitable understanding of the issues relating to safety. They are developing an adequate awareness of the rules and boundaries of the setting, for example, sitting down at lunchtime and staff use suitable strategies in order to support them. Freshly prepared nutritious meals, some of which are sourced from the local butcher, such as pork and apple burgers, encourage children to make good choices about what they eat, and they play in carrot peelings and explore fruit and vegetables in order to further learn about a healthy lifestyle. Children over two years have ready access to a water fountain and all age groups take part in daily outdoor play in order to benefit from fresh air and exercise. The nursery is fitted with an air filtration system and hygiene routines, for example, around nappy changing and preparing and serving food are very good. However, some practices are not fully effective in minimising cross infection in relation to hand washing and the provision of individual bedding for children who wish to rest.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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](http://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