

Little Gems

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

Julie Firth

Setting address

Christ Church Vicarage, Pendlebury Road, Swinton,
MANCHESTER, M27 4BF

Telephone number

01617286036

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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.

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Description of the setting

Little Gems opened in 2008 and is privately owned. The nursery serves the local area and children attend on a variety of placements. It operates from a fully converted two storey residential house which is situated in Swinton a suburb of Salford. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round except for Bank Holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year.

The children have access to playrooms on two floors, a secure outdoor play area and associated facilities. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 48 children at any one time. There are currently 71 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The nursery is registered by Ofsted on both parts of the Childcare Register to allow them to care for older children. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There is a qualified manager and 15 members of staff who work with the children, of these, eight hold a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 and five hold a National Vocational Qualification at level 2. Some staff are undertaking a level 2 and the manager is undertaking a level 4. The setting receives support from an early years advisory teacher in Salford.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The staff have a secure awareness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children make good progress in their learning. The children are happily engaged and occupied in a stimulating range of play activities and experiences. Their welfare needs are well met. There is a good working relationship with parents and others involved in the children's care. They are fully consulted, involved and kept highly informed of their child's daily routines, care and learning. The nursery demonstrates a strong capacity for continuous improvement and is aware of key areas for further redevelopment in some of the areas of learning. However, self-evaluation is not fully effective across the nursery.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more opportunities for pre-school children to make marks and attempt to write letters and words
- use the self-evaluation effectively with all staff to monitor practice in the nursery.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Clear procedures are in place for the recruitment, selection, and induction of staff, ensuring that children are cared for by suitable people. Staff questioned at the inspection have a clear understanding of the indicators of abuse and procedures to be followed should they be concerned about a child's welfare. Detailed risk assessments of the premises have been compiled and daily visual checks are carried out to ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment. The entrance to the building is effectively monitored and official identification documents are thoroughly checked before any person not known at the setting is allowed to enter. Effective staff deployment ensures that children are well supervised at all times. All the required documentation and consents relating to the welfare of the children are in place.

Both the manager and the owner work very well together to motivate staff and to drive improvement. As a result, there is a strong staff team who are well supported to access training to support their ongoing professional development. The nursery has experience of working closely with parents and outside agencies to promote an inclusive and welcoming environment for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Future plans are well targeted and managers are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the staff. However, procedures for self-evaluation are in the early stages and not fully effective across all the staff in the nursery.

The setting strives to provide an inclusive service for both children and their families. Good information is sought prior to admission, helping staff to recognise the uniqueness of each child. As a result new children settle well, with the support of a good key worker system. Parents receive a brochure which details policies and procedures, giving them an appreciation of how the service works in practice. Planning is clearly displayed and parents are actively encouraged to contribute to their child's assessment records. They are well informed about current events through notice boards and newsletters. Parents are very happy with the care afforded to their children. Links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage that children attend, such as the local school, contribute to a smooth transition for children.

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

Staff have a good awareness of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of the importance of learning through play. The children are becoming active learners because staff work hard to make the learning environment accessible and appealing to them. They move around their immediate environment with confidence and have freedom of movement between the indoor and outdoor play environments. A good range of resources, that reflects the children's interests, are set out each day into clearly defined areas of continuous provision. The staff provide a good variety of activities across the six

areas of learning. They have good organisational skills and this enables the children to thrive, learn and play. Furthermore, they observe children at play and use this information to plan their next steps of learning. Assessments are used to track the children's development across all areas of their learning. The children have their own individual files which clearly indicate they are making very good progress from the baby room through to pre-school.

The children develop very good communication skills as staff engage with them, ask open-ended questions and listen intently to what they have to say. This encourages children to become independent learners and develop skills for the future. Staff share warm relationships with them and babies receive lots of hugs and cuddles. New and interesting words are introduced to help develop the children's language skills. The children thoroughly enjoy listening to a story as part of a group or reading on their own for pleasure. However, there are few opportunities for pre-school children to make marks on their work or attempt to write letters. This results in children not always being stretched in this area of learning. Self-help skills are developing well, as children are encouraged to serve their own drinks at snack time, tidy toys away and hang their coats on the rail. However, very young children's independence skills are not stretched enough at meal times. The children are encouraged to identify shapes as they build models and to name colours as they paint. They learn to count, recognise numbers and the concepts of weight and size. Furthermore, children enjoy counting money in the home corner.

Many opportunities are made available to children to help develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They grow their own vegetables, melt ice, look at the weather and observe mini beasts. The children talk about their families and enjoy singing their favourite rhymes, dancing and making sounds with musical instruments. There is a good emphasis on creative play. The children are involved in a wealth of arts and crafts and babies are given opportunities to, play in gloop, pasta, and jelly, enhancing their sensory development. They have lots of experiences to promote their heuristic play and dress up, access small world and use persona dolls and puppets to describe feelings of others. The children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend outside, developing many aspects of their learning as they engage in imaginative role play and explore the varying textures of sand, water and soil. The outdoor area is very well resourced and children balance on the fixed equipment and ride on wheeled toys. Babies reach out and attempt to walk around their room. A good range of planned activities and resources ensures that children learn about the cultures and beliefs of others.

The premises are well maintained, warm and clean. Good hygiene routines are followed and children openly talk about the importance of washing their hands to 'get rid of germs'. Meals provided are well balanced and the nursery works with parents to ensure any dietary needs are met. The nursery employs a cook who works alongside the owner offering children a varied menu, including vegetarian options. This is clearly displayed in the entrance of the nursery. Good manners are promoted and staff act as good role models with a consistent, positive approach. As a result, children are beginning to manage their own behaviour, for example, by learning to take turns and to share resources. The children know what to do in the event of a fire and emergency evacuation procedures are practised with the them.

To further promote the children's safety, they are made aware of the potential dangers of the roads through planned activities in the nursery.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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