

Little Smarties Academy

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY152795

Inspection date

17/11/2009

Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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 Smarties Academy opened in 2002. It operates from a converted and extended semi-detached house in the Great Barr area of Birmingham. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas. The whole of the ground floor of the premises are used and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. Access to the front entrance is via a ramp.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children under five years at any one time. There are currently 25 children from one to five years on roll. Children attend on a full-time and part-time basis. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 8.00am until 6.00pm. Flexi-sessions are also offered from 9.30am to 4.00pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is in receipt of funding for nursery education and currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven staff employed to work directly with the children, six of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification and one member of staff is working toward a recognised childcare qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and have formed good relationships with each other and staff. They have access to a good range of age-appropriate toys and resources which help them to make positive progress in their learning and development. Staff offer an inclusive and welcoming service, supporting all children to actively participate in activities which meet their individual interests and developmental needs. Documentation is regularly reviewed and mostly in place and stored confidentially. All staff are included in the self-evaluation process and demonstrate a positive attitude towards continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure accident records include children's full names (Documentation) 08/12/2009

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

- ensure staff are aware to the need for confidentiality with regard to

displaying children's personal details.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children and are vigilant and aware of signs and symptoms of possible abuse. They know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child and ensure that written procedures are shared with parents. There is a named person responsible for ensuring that any child protection concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Robust vetting procedures are in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable people and all staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues. Children are secure because staff group them effectively, using key workers. This promotes consistency and allows lots of discussion between staff and children. The small groups enable staff to build effective relationships and to get to know individual children well and help ensure children feel secure and confident.

Staff work well together as a motivated team and are committed to providing the best possible start to children and their families. The majority of staff hold an appropriate early years qualification and have completed a range of training to ensure their knowledge and skills are updated. There is a variety of clear and concise policies and practices in place to fully support the running of the nursery and to ensure children's welfare and safety is effectively promoted. However, children's health is not fully protected because some accident records do not include children's full names. Staff assess potential risks to children and put practices in place to minimise hazards. They have a good awareness of security and ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. High handles are fitted to internal doors and an access control system is installed on the entrance to the building to further protect children's safety.

The manager and staff are fully committed to improve their practice, consistently reflecting and evaluating the quality and standards at the nursery. Regular staff meetings and appraisals provide valuable opportunities for staff to share good practice and to identify their training needs, which are prioritised by the manager. Staff receive support from the local authority Early Years Advisory team and work closely with the other support workers to ensure the children's welfare is effectively promoted. The nursery actively promotes equality of opportunity, serving a diverse community. Children have access to a variety of resources, play opportunities and activities which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. A positive equality and diversity policy outlines a commitment to promoting inclusive practice at the nursery, ensuring all children can achieve as well as they can regardless of their background.

Staff have established positive links with the local schools and pre-schools that children attend to ensure children's individual needs are effectively met. The staff dedicate time to getting to know children and their families, fostering strong relationships with parents and helping to ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure. Staff welcome parents input, encouraging a two-way exchange of

information through daily discussions. Parents have clear information about the nursery and their child's progress through, for example, a prospectus, regular newsletters, children's individual learning folders and written policies and procedures. However, children's privacy is not fully protected because some written information relating to their dietary requirements is freely displayed within the nursery. Questionnaires are often used to gain feedback and suggestion from parents and any comments are acted on if necessary. Parents speak highly of the staff and feel well informed regarding their children's care and learning.

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

Children clearly enjoy their time spent at the nursery and are happy and well-settled. They have access to a variety of age-appropriate toys, resources and activities inside and outside, which enables them to make good progress in their learning and development. Staff demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to promote children's learning and development. They effectively acquire children's starting points at registration which enables them to value and build upon children's existing skills. Staff plan purposeful activities, which reflect a range of learning opportunities, covering all six areas of learning and children benefit from a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The daily routine is flexible to allow children to pursue their own interests, as a result children are motivated and interested to learn. The ongoing two-way exchange of information between nursery and home has a positive impact upon children's welfare. Parents and carers are welcomed into the nursery by friendly, approachable staff and information is shared readily on a daily basis to ensure they are fully informed of their child's progress and development.

Staff are intuitive of children's individual learning needs and routinely undertake sensitive observational assessment to identify children's learning priorities which they then act on the information gathered to ensure children move forward in their learning and development. As a result, all learning experiences are relevant and match children's stages of development. Staff demonstrate a positive approach to supporting children's learning needs and to enriching the quality of education provided. They manage children's behaviour well and in a manner that is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. Praise is given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem. There are lots of opportunities for children to play alongside each other and staff introduce situations to encourage good behaviour, for example, respecting their environment, each other, taking turns and sharing of resources.

Children are helped to consider and value diversity and cultural differences through a range of toys, resources and planned topics. They have tasted various foods from around the world including pizza, sweet and sour food, pasta and curry. The nursery promotes inclusion for all children and all children are able to participate fully because activities are carefully adapted to meet their needs. Staff are strongly committed to inclusion and enthusiastic about undertaking training to ensure each and every child is appropriately supported. Staff work closely with parents and liaises with other professionals to ensure that each child's needs are fully met.

Children are keen to join in the activities, for example, they develop their physical and co-ordination skills as they shake, roll, pull and push musical instruments and attempt to tap out the beat to familiar nursery rhymes. They develop their natural curiosity as they look at leaves and other items of interest through magnifying glasses. Great fun is had when the children eagerly join in a game using a large parachute which staff combine with learning about simple mathematical concepts such as over, under, middle, in front and behind. Older children confidently use the outdoor climbing equipment with gusto and have good control over their bodies. Younger children develop good language skills as staff constantly talk to them about what they are doing and children concentrate well when listening to favourite stories.

The learning environment is bright, welcoming and child friendly. Older children have free-flow access to toilet facilities which fosters their ability to manage their personal care needs and develop their independent skills. Children are provided with their own beaker and toothbrush and are helped to understand that washing their hands before eating and brushing their teeth after meals helps to keep them healthy. Children are developing an understanding of how to stay safe and learn about what is dangerous. For example, children learn about fire safety and know the procedure for evacuation in an emergency, which the staff ensures is regularly practised with them. The premises are clean and staff operate a 'clean as you go' policy throughout the day to ensure children's health is protected. Staff take effective steps to prevent the spread of infection by wearing gloves and aprons when changing nappies and providing separate bedding for children. Through topics such as 'healthy eating' children are helped to understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. Mealtimes are relaxed social occasions when children and staff sit together to enjoy their food and each others company.

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	2
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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