

Little Scholars

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Susan Ivermee

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Little Scholars opened in 1999. It operates from a single room on the premises of Abbey Meads Community Primary School, in Swindon. It is linked with the Blunsdon Nursery School, which is also in the local area. A maximum of 22 children may attend the provision at any one time. The group opens five days a week for 38 weeks a year. Sessions are from 9.00am until 11.30am and 12.00pm until 2.30pm. Children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 53 children aged from three to under five years on roll. Of these, 52 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The provision currently supports children with special educational needs and /or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The provision employs 13 members of staff across the two settings. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and five are working towards a qualification. One holds a BA, one an NNEB, four are National Vocational Qualifications at level 3, three are National Vocational Qualifications at level 2, three are working towards National Vocational Qualifications at level 2 and one is to be signed up for National Vocational Qualification at level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children are happy and confident and thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting. Planning ensures a balance of child and adult led activities. Learning opportunities help children to develop in all areas and they are enthusiastic and actively engaged. The partnership with parents is valued. Parents are informed termly about their child's individual capabilities. They are confident about the quality of care and support their children receive as shown in one comment by a parent, 'My child is really happy at Little Scholars she now knows her numbers and letters'. The setting is well resourced and has a good capacity to improve further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- Develop the quality of short term planning by consistently detailing what children are to learn and the intended learning outcome across the areas of learning.
- Develop further the use of information from observation and assessment to plan activities that are tailored to the needs and abilities of all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leaders and managers communicate high expectations to staff. Outcomes for individual children are good in relation to their starting points. Planning for improvement is founded on robust evidence to tackle areas of weakness. Since the last inspection, the setting has developed opportunities for free flow both inside and out with resource trolleys supporting independence and creativity. Children make choices about what they need to support their learning, with a high level of independence. All children are supported in their learning, and information collated by the key worker is used to determine next steps in learning for individual children. Dedicated staff spend time getting to know each child's individual needs. This means they promote all aspects of children's welfare and learning with success.

A strong leadership and management team places high importance on continual evaluation across the setting. Consequently, strengths are recognised and areas for improvement identified and prioritised on an ongoing basis, continuing to promote successful outcomes for those who access the provision.

The children are taught to be safe in an environment that allows the children to take risks and explore. The environment is well organised and safe. Staff undertake a daily sweep to risk assess any potential hazards. Parents provide all the required written permissions, for example, to administer medicines for their children. The accident policy requires all accidents, including minor ones, to be recorded. Staff have attended training on safeguarding, they are aware of policy and procedures for health and safety and child protection. There is a robust staff recruitment procedure ensuring children are cared for by suitable staff.

Partnerships with parents are good. They are given a broad range of written information, including an outline of the areas of learning that will be focused upon in a two week period. Planning takes into account the needs, cultures and background of all children. Information is gathered before each child joins the setting from the family. An initial child profile completed with parents forms the basis for the observation and assessment record. These are shared with parents at Stay and Play sessions throughout the child's time in the setting. Key people collate observations and make suggestions about where children need help to develop or what motivates and interests them. The SENCO is developing individual play plans in conjunction with outside agencies and parents to ensure all staff are aware of an individual's needs.

The staff team work well together as they know and understand their roles. Every staff member actively contributes to the discussion at their staff meetings and the plans for activities. The provider ensures that effective procedures are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children play in an inclusive environment. There are clear systems to support children who speak English as an additional language, including staff learning phrases in Punjabi to support a child. Children learn the value of a diverse society and are encouraged to acknowledge each other's differences. As a result, children develop a positive attitude towards diversity. Children's comments and questions are listened to. For example, as they discussed how the doll might be feeling. This makes children feel valued and promotes their self-esteem.

Leaders have accurately highlighted the need to improve the quality of planning

as the main priority for facilitating further improvement. To build on existing assessment practice the setting is planning to introduce Learning Journals to capture information about each child. The deputy manager has a clear view of the actions she will take to inform improvement and is committed to improving the outcomes for children through refining the planning process in partnership with staff.

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

Little Scholars, provides a wide range of interesting activities, which keeps the children purposefully engaged. For example, children concentrated for extended periods of time as they enjoyed making gloop from cornflower and water, cutting and sticking and playing table top games. Subsequently, children are happy and confident, which was evident as they described growing potatoes and making cheesy mash to eat. They happily undertake discussions about their completed work. For example, one child states, 'I have put the dinosaur wings here.' The illustrative displays of children's work develop children's pride in their work. Examples of creative work included displays about insects, butterflies and dinosaurs linked to learning themes. Regular circle time sessions during which children sing are assisting them to explore simple number operations. Letter of the week engages parents as they support their child to bring an object to the interest table. The children confidently approach staff and respond positively to them. Active involvement by staff and lively demonstrations make learning meaningful. Subsequently, children are making good progress towards achievement of the early learning goals. For example, one child was able to count and recognise numbers up to 10.

Snack times are an enjoyable social event with children demonstrating increasing levels of independence. The enthusiastic staff team constantly interact with children, extending vocabulary and supporting their learning. They engage themselves in role play scenarios helping children to extend their creative and imaginative skills. Highly effective daily routines ensure children wash their hands automatically after visiting the toilet and undertaking messy play, which helps them understand the need for good personal hygiene. The proprietor ensures that first aid training is undertaken to enable staff to give appropriate care to children if required.

Children engage in a range of purposeful activities, which are planned to support individual learning. Children have daily access to physical play both indoors and outside. They self-select from a wide range of toys and activities promoting different experiences. They participate in a range of activities which will contribute towards their future economic well-being, such as selecting books to 'read' to each other. Effective behaviour management strategies help children manage their own behaviour, share toys and take turns.

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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