

Little Caterpillars

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 Caterpillars is an after school provision which was registered in 2009. It is located at Poplar Primary School in Morden, Surrey. The local authority is Merton. The after school club is solely for the children who attend the school and it is open every weekday from 3.15pm to 6pm during term time only. The club is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The club offers a maximum of 24 places for children aged four to under eight years of age and all may be in the early years age range. The setting welcomes children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. There are currently 36 children on roll, nine of whom are in the early years age group. Children aged eight to 11 years of age may also attend. The provider has one other out of school provision. There were 22 children present at the time of this inspection aged four to 11 years and five of these were in the early years age range.

The provider manages the setting and she has a level 4 qualification and one member of staff has a level 3 qualification. In addition there are two members of staff who are working towards relevant level 3 qualifications. An unqualified playworker and two students provide additional support. Children are cared for in a hall on school premises. They also have access to the information technology suite, a quiet room, an enclosed courtyard garden and designated parts of the enclosed school playground.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The after school club staff are kind and attentive and they demonstrate a good understanding of children's needs. Children are safe and secure and they enjoy relaxing and playing together after a busy day in school. They are making good progress given their age and starting points. Partnerships with parents, carers, school staff and local authority advisors are good and this helps the staff to meet the individual needs of the children. The provider evaluates her service to children effectively overall and she makes sure that priorities for staff training and professional development are identified and taken forward for the benefit of the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the range of multi-cultural activities to include some that reflect the background of the children attending
- consolidate the current system of observation and record keeping to feed in to planning for future activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given a high priority in the after school club. The provider and some of the staff have attended relevant training and they share their knowledge with the team so that all are aware of safeguarding issues. Daily checks of the premises, toilet areas and equipment ensure that children are cared for in clean, safe surroundings. School staff conduct children to the after school club so they cannot stray and the children are kept indoors until the playground is made secure after the end of the school day. Fire evacuation routines are frequently practised and logged so that the children will know what to do in an emergency situation. The provider ensures that staff and volunteers are checked for suitability to work with children.

The provider has conducted her own careful evaluation of the provision and most areas for development have been accurately identified. She actively encourages staff to pursue their professional development. Parents are invited to comment on their perceptions of the after school club and the provider takes heed of their requests. An example of parental feedback concerned the lack of coat hooks for children which is to be put right in the near future when coat hooks will be fitted. The provider shares her ambitions for the setting with her staff who work well as a team to provide the good standards of care for the children that she is striving to achieve.

Children benefit from having access to the IT suite in the school, a large, pleasant outdoor space in which to play and a clean, bright hall for indoor activities. Staff are deployed with care so that all areas are supervised and children are kept safe and staff use walkie-talkies to keep in touch with one another. The after school club uses school furniture which is robust and in good condition. Children have access to a wide range of good quality toys, books and resources. Staff make sure that the individual needs of the children in the early years age range are well met. They supervise them with care and ensure that each child is happy and can access toys and activities of their own choosing.

The provider has established good working partnerships with school staff who complete a 'Working together' document for each child in the early years age range. They identify areas of special interest and areas of learning that children can develop further. The after school club staff ensure that the activities and play opportunities that they provide complement what children do in class. The provider takes part in meetings held between school staff and advisors from the local authority so that the children receive continuity of care and support in the after school club.

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

Children show that they feel safe in the after school club environment in the relaxed way that they play. They talk to the staff confidently and they select toys

and activities independently. Staff set clear boundaries for behaviour which the children understand. They involve children in setting the club rules which they happily follow and behaviour in the group is good. Children know that their views are respected which raises their self-esteem. They write hopeful requests on paper fish which are displayed on a 'Fish Wish' board and staff do their best to grant their wishes. A good example of a wish granted is the request for buggies for the dolls which have been supplied. Children's requests for an outing to a pizza restaurant could not be met because of costs but children made their own pizza at the club which they agree was a good replacement.

Staff have begun to observe the children in the early years age range to assess their progress and they are compiling files of notes and photographs to inform future planning and to share with parents. The information is useful but the system is still at an early stage. Staff plan activities that appeal to the children. They consolidate what children learn in school through discussions over play which include counting, sorting and matching as children thread beads to make bracelets and necklaces. Early writing is promoted successfully through the provision of papers and writing materials which the children access and use enthusiastically. They sit close to staff to share books and stories in the reading area which is well stocked. Children make good use of battery operated remote control cars and they sometimes use a digital camera to record special moments and happy events, such as the recent water fight which was held with parental permission. They also access the IT suite in the school and show considerable skill in the use of drawing programmes. These activities help to develop their skills for the future.

Children learn about nature in the school outdoor areas. They make stick men using fallen branches and have opportunities to observe the changes in the natural world as the seasons progress. They have good opportunities for energetic play in the playground which includes a large pirate ship for climbing and imaginative play. Enjoyable activities are planned to promote understanding and respect for a range of cultures. Children celebrate special events which include Holi, Easter, Father's Day and Saint Patrick's Day. However, these activities, although beneficial, do not include celebrations associated with the background of every child who attends.

Children learn to adopt healthy lifestyles through being offered healthy snacks which include cereal and milk or fresh fruit, crackers and cheese. They can take a drink at any time and tasty, savoury meals are provided for those who stay late. They enjoy their food and behave politely at the table.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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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