



# Little Learners Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY305665  
**Inspection date** 13 January 2006  
**Inspector** Jima Fotopoulou

**Setting Address** Takeley Silver Jubilee Hall, Brewers End, Takeley, Essex,  
CM22 6QJ

**Telephone number**

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Little Learners Pre-School

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Learners Pre-school opened in 2005. It operates from the main hall within the Takeley Silver Jubilee Hall in Brewers End, Takeley.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Monday and Wednesday from 09:30 to 13:30 and from 13:30 to 15:30 and Friday from 09:30 to 13:30 term-time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently nine children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these seven children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents/carers travel to work on or around the area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three staff who work with the children. Two members of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of the staff is working towards a recognised early year's qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where good hygiene practices are always maintained. They learn how to keep themselves clean and healthy by following established routines such as washing their hands before meals and after using the toilet. Visual clues in the toilets remind younger children to wash their hands and help them develop their observational skills. Practitioners are aware of current hygiene procedures. Health related policies and procedures are in place in order to support staff in their practice and ensure that children's health is maintained.

Staff ensure children are well nourished providing them with a wide variety of fresh fruit, milk and water. They use snack times to reinforce children's understanding of keeping themselves healthy through discussions about why some foods are better for them than others. However, children's access to drinking water during the session is limited. Children are able to have quiet time and relax according to their needs. Practitioners work closely with parents to ensure children's individual health and dietary requirements are met. Children with allergies are protected by systems which include named placemats with information about food to be avoided.

All children have opportunities to engage in physical play. They have access to a good range of outdoor play equipment such as slides, balance bridge and climbing frame which supports their physical development and co-ordination. Children enjoy physical activities indoors, for example, playing bat and ball or travelling through a tunnel which help them develop their hand and eye co-ordination and their gross motor skills. Children use a variety of tools and equipment with competence, for example, painting with paintbrushes and sponges.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting has acceptable measures in place to ensure that all risks to children both indoors and outdoors are identified and minimised. Practitioners carry out informal daily risk assessments in order to ensure children's safety. Children are protected by

staff who have secure systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of children for example, the front door is kept locked at all times to ensure that children cannot leave unsupervised and a member of staff is always present by the door when children and their parents arrive or depart from the setting.

Children move around freely in a spacious and welcoming environment. Practitioners have a good understanding of how to organise and use the available space so children can play and learn in safety. For example, children are aware that physical and energetic play takes place within a designated area. Practitioners raise children's awareness of keeping safe as they practice fire evacuation procedures helping everyone to know what to do in an emergency. Children help to tidy away their toys after playing to prevent tripping hazards and make space for their next game.

Children benefit from using toys and equipment which are well maintained and checked daily for safety. They are able to choose their play materials from the resources that have been put out for them which are appropriate for their ages and stages of development.

Practitioners have a clear understanding of child protection issues and they are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect. The setting has a child protection policy in place which all members of staff are aware of. However, the setting needs to obtain the government booklet "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" in order to ensure that they follow current procedures and meet legislative requirements. Children are protected from unvetted people. The setting has adequate procedures in place such as maintaining records of all visitors and releasing children only to their parents or people nominated by them. The setting operates a password system as an extra security measure.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the setting. Warm and comfortable relationships are developed by the staff enabling children to feel secure building on their self-esteem. Children are confident and able to achieve due to the staff's adequate knowledge of child development and learning through play. Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they use this to support the assessment records of younger children.

Children respond well to approachable, sensitive staff. Children's confidence is promoted through a child-centred approach which enables them to move freely and choose from a range of toys and resources available. Staff use plenty of praise and encouragement, focusing on positive aspects and promote an atmosphere where children can join in, without fear of failure.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are keen to support children and extend their learning. However, practitioners' understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum requires further development in order to support children and help

them learn through quality play based activities. Key-worker assessment records are in place but these are not used consistently to meet their individual needs and to ensure that children are challenged appropriately. Although staff make observations, the information gained is not used effectively to identify children's next steps for learning or to differentiate between the more or less able children to inform planning.

Children explore capacity and quantity using mathematical language during sand or water play. They are beginning to link numbers to the correct symbols and count confidently to nine. Children share books with adults and each-other holding them correctly and using the pictures as clues to the story line. However, opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose such as making lists or recording messages in the role play area are limited. Children join in music and movement, laughing spontaneously as they "row their boats down the river to avoid the crocodile". Staff provide resources and artefacts to support topics which help children explore other cultures, for example, children enjoyed activities such as dressing up in traditional Indian costumes and tasting papadoms.

Children have plenty of opportunities to join in creative activities using a variety of media creating collages, paintings and wall displays. They explore different textures of play dough, paint, sand and water. Children extend their imaginative ideas as they play in the home corner or engage in small world play, for example, driving their cars through muddy fields and using the pretend hose pipe to make them clean again. Children use a variety of construction materials to create tall towers, volcanoes, and towns.

Staff work closely as a team praising and encouraging children to develop their personal independence and confidence. Overall, children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals given their capabilities and starting points.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are treated with respect and are made to feel welcome in the setting which helps them to feel good about themselves. They have access to a range of resources which promote inclusion and equal opportunity. Children become aware of their needs and the needs of others as they make room for each other at activities inviting their friends to join them. They are cared for by staff who work closely with the parents in order to meet their individual needs and ensure that all children are included in the life of the setting.

Children are well behaved. Staff have a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour which helps them to understand what is expected. Staff use positive praise and encouragement when promoting good behaviour. They use age appropriate techniques such as discussion and re-direction when dealing with challenging behaviour. Children actively explore the activities that were set out for them.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are valued and respected and open communication is encouraged. Relationships are positive and staff share relevant information with parents helping to provide continuity of care for all children. Notice

boards and newsletters provide sufficient information for parents regarding aspects of the day-to-day running of the pre-school and the curriculums offered. Parents are invited to come to open mornings where they have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress.

Children explore other cultures and festivals. Positive images and resources provide an inclusive environment which encourages children to explore their ideas and views. All children have access to toys and resources which support their personal progress and ensures their spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff maintain documentation appropriately and all policies and procedures are in place. However, the arrival and departure times of children and staff are not recorded in the daily register to ensure children's safety. Robust vetting procedures ensure that children are protected.

Children are cared for by staff who have knowledge and understanding of child development. The majority of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Staff induction and monitoring systems are in place to help and support new members of staff. Generally policies and procedures are implemented in practice to promote positive outcomes for children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The provider and manager are responsive to the needs of children and parents. Regular staff meetings take place to support practice and help new members of staff through the induction programme. Staff appraisals ensure continuous professional development.

Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not Applicable

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

## **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children have access to drinking water throughout the session
- obtain the DfES booklet "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused"
- ensure that arrival and departure times of children and staff are recorded in the register.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose and making their own marks such as putting their names on their creations or making lists in the role play area
- develop children's records of assessment based on observations of what children can do and use these to ensure planning reflects clearly what children's next steps for learning are and use differentiation to show how older and more able children will be challenged appropriately and how activities will be adapted to meet the individual needs of the younger or less able children
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and different teaching methods in order to help them extend children's learning through quality play based activities.

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