

Little Scholars (Littleover)

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

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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).

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 Scholars (Littleover) is one of two nurseries run by Little Scholars Limited. It opened in 1997 and operates from a converted building in Littleover, Derby. A maximum of 69 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6pm, except for Bank Holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 130 children on roll. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Two members of staff have a degree, one of whom also has the Early Years Professional Status and the other is working towards this. Of the remaining staff, seven have a recognised early years qualification to Level 3 and the remaining member of staff has a Level 2 and is working towards a Level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are provided with a warm and welcoming environment. Resources are easily accessible enabling them to make choices about their play. Staff interact effectively with parents and other early years settings to glean and share information. This enables staff to plan routines and activities that are consistent and meet children's individual needs. The setting carries out a robust self-evaluation of their practices in order to continually identify areas for development and improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase further the range of large outdoor play equipment so that it offers challenges to children at different levels of development
- provide positive images that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, special educational needs and/or disabilities
- review adult-led activities, particularly 'circle time', to ensure that the particular aspect of learning identified is delivered to support children's development towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures in order to protect children in their care. They are aware of whom to contact should they have any concerns using the robust policies and procedures in place. These are shared with parents and carers so that everyone involved with children is aware of their responsibilities to ensure children are protected from harm at all times. Child safety is a priority and the environment indoors and outside is subject to thorough and rigorous risk assessments to minimise any hazards to children. A range of policies and procedures are effectively implemented, ensuring children's safety at all times. Rigorous vetting procedures include thorough checks on the suitability of new staff and adults are never left alone with children until all checks have been satisfactorily completed. Effective steps are taken to ensure that their ongoing suitability is assessed at each appraisal. Concerns and complaints are dealt with appropriately and any concerns logged. All policies and procedures for the safe management of the setting are shared with parents.

The management team regularly review what they do and are very keen to plan for improvement. They value their staff highly and welcome all ideas and contributions to enhance the environment in which children play and learn. All adults, including parents are encouraged to share their vision for continuously improving outcomes for children. Training, both internally and externally, has a positive impact on the quality of the service provided as all staff embrace this enthusiastically. Often during 'in house' training, individual staff are asked to research and deliver a topic that they are interested in and present this to the staff team. This enables staff to discuss and then apply what they learn in order to enhance all areas of children's learning and development. It also ensures that staff are highly motivated and committed in providing the very best support for all children. The management team have a clear sense of purpose and action plans are in place to continually target areas for improvement. They work closely with other community groups and early years settings to seek advice and share information.

The nursery works exceptionally well in partnership with parents to ensure that children receive the support they require. They actively encourage parents to share ideas and opinions, for example, through the use of questionnaires and forums. The views of parents are taken seriously and used to make improvements to routines and practice. For example, the sharing of children's 'Learning Journeys' has been improved to provide parents with regular information and input into their child's development. They regularly take these home to record their comments and observations. This is used to great effect by staff who plan a range of activities to encourage and promote children's personal development. Staff have also reviewed and revised the menus which focus on quality produce which is healthy and nutritionally well-balanced. Parents speak highly of the dedication, commitment and care provided by staff to promote all aspects of children's welfare, learning and development. They work exceptionally well with other professionals, for example, they often undertake visits with children to hospital. This helps staff to provide consistent care for all children and meet their individual needs well.

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

Staff plan the space, both inside and outside well so that children access a wide range of activities and play experiences. Appropriate resources are available and easily accessible to provide children with choice and reflect their individual interests. A multi-sensory room provides a calm and relaxing environment for all children and particularly helps to stimulate children with additional needs whether educationally, physically or emotionally. The facility is also used by the wider community. Babies play with treasure baskets full of natural resources to explore. They feel the texture of different brushes, ribbons and scarves. A black and white theme is included as staff recognise that these are the first colours that very young babies see. However, other areas in the baby room are more brightly decorated as babies develop and tune into colour. Staff are attentive and respond to babies gurgles and sounds. Cuddles and reassurance are given, particularly when unfamiliar faces enter the room.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is used in planning a generally challenging and varied range of activities across all six areas of learning. Children's progress is observed, monitored and assessed so that their learning is appropriately supported. Plans are formulated to help move their learning forward using the 'Development matters' prompts as a guide. Staff use a balance of adult and child-initiated activities to support children's learning but are keen to let children follow their own interests. For example, children enjoy playing in the 'post-office' and use boxes to make a delivery van. This evolves over time as children assemble and join the boxes using the smaller box 'to make the engine'. Children explain that they 'cutted the box to make windows like we have in our houses'. Children thoroughly enjoy the much improved outdoor area which is still 'a work in progress'. It provides numerous learning opportunities and experiences. Children enjoy walking bare feet across various textured surfaces and describe how these feel. They paint on the fence and chalk on the slabs helping to develop their early mark-making skills. A musical area with saucepans and chimes captures children's imagination. Staff acknowledge that resources and equipment are still required to develop children's physical development such as climbing frames and slides.

Children enjoy visits from the police, fire brigade and army. They dress up in the uniforms and play with equipment, such as, the water hose and pretend they are extinguishing a fire. They learn about camouflage as they smear their faces with paint so that they can blend into their surroundings. Various festivals and celebrations are included in the planning. During Diwali, children listen intently to the story of Rama and Sita and then make their own Diva lamps out of clay. They eagerly participate in the Christmas nativity play which is recorded and put onto a disc for parents. However, whilst there are welcoming signs in various languages in the entrance, photographs, signs and labels to promote cultural disability and diversity are limited in the playrooms themselves.

Mealtimes are social occasions where staff and children sit together and much

discussion ensues. Children and staff engage in various topics of conversation, for example, talking about the food they are eating, their family and friends. Menus incorporate a wide variety of high quality meals and snacks which are nutritionally balanced. Menus are extremely varied to incorporate lots of different foods from around the world. Children tuck into these heartily and enjoy delights such as Creole Jumbalaya with pitta bread. They are often encouraged to serve themselves or pour their own drinks to promote independence. They wash their own hands at appropriate times and know when they require a tissue. Staff talk to children about the transference of germs and the importance of covering their mouths when coughing and sneezing.

Children generally behave well and staff work with parents and other settings that children attend to look at behaviour management strategies. This helps to promote consistency so that children know what is expected of them. This generally works well for most of the session. However, 'circle time' is not particularly well-organised and managed to engage all children and some become distracted.

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	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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