

Little Monkeys

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY266229
Inspection date 01/02/2011
Inspector Anne Mitchell

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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 Monkeys Nursery opened in 2003. It operates from five rooms in a converted barn within the grounds of the Wringford Hotel. The nursery is situated in a rural location approximately eight miles from Torpoint. The group opens Monday to Friday all year round, except Christmas and bank holidays. The nursery is open from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, as well as the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 25 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 28 children on roll all of whom are in the early years age group. Children aged two, three and four are in receipt of nursery funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs a total of eight staff who work directly with the children. Of these, six hold relevant early years qualifications. The nursery employs two Early Years Professionals and the person in charge has an appropriate early years teaching degree. One member of staff is currently completing a National Vocational Qualification at level 2. Two other members of staff are completing an Early Years Foundation Degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in most areas of their learning and development. There are generally good systems in place to monitor their progress. They are happy, settled and highly motivated to learn and explore their environment. The nursery has a strong 'family' feel and staff know the children well. Consequently they are able to meet their individual needs effectively. Much of the children's learning happens in the extensive outdoor area. The staff team meet to assess and monitor the provision and are committed to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the consistency of assessment and observations to provide a clear picture of children's progress and to effectively inform planning for individuals
- provide clear labelling around the room and on storage to support children's understanding that print carries meaning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is a priority in the nursery. Staff at all levels have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures, having completed training in this area. A comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place. This is reviewed and updated regularly and is shared with all parents. Risk assessments are completed on all areas of the nursery and outdoor areas to ensure children can play in safety. There are robust and secure recruitment and vetting systems in place to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children.

The provision is monitored and assessed in a number of ways. Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for the staff group to discuss practice and reflect on how activities have worked. Activities are evaluated informally. Visits from the advisory teacher provides areas for improvement. Staff are committed to continued training and personal and professional development is an expectation within the setting. The nursery has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that support their practice and these are regularly reviewed and updated. Consequently, there is a strong commitment by staff and management for continued improvement.

A key strength of this nursery is the commitment and positive attitude of the staff group. Their 'family' orientated approach makes the nursery feel like a home from home. They support children well and are deployed effectively to ensure children are safe and happy. The displayed children's artwork and photographs of them at play provide a welcoming and child-orientated environment. Children demonstrate a clear sense of belonging within the nursery and are happy to look at work they have done or the photos of themselves and their friends. Although some resources are easy for children to access, some such as books are packed tightly into a box or on a high shelf limiting children's access. Their 'family' orientated approach is a key strength of the nursery, making the setting feel like a home from home.

Signing is used with all children especially at group time to support their communication, and they happily sign back. Resources that provide positive images of cultural diversity and disability, enable children to learn about the wider world, and children experience cultural festivals such as Chinese New Year. The staff team liaise closely with parents and professionals to effectively support children with additional needs. Children's individual needs are met effectively by all members of the staff team. The nursery has strong links with local school. Children visit regularly to watch assemblies and school productions. The reception teacher and teaching assistant visit the nursery to meet the children. This partnership ensures the transition to school is stress free because children are familiar with the staff and premises. The nursery has a secure relationship with parents and carers. They are provided with lots of information exchanged about their child's day. A parent states that they are very happy with the care provided and has seen their child progress well. Regular information is provided through newsletters and displays of activities ensure parents have a clear idea about what their children learn each day.

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

Children clearly enjoy their time at nursery and there are a broad range of activities for children to choose. On arrival, children self register, finding their names and putting them on a board. They spend much of their time playing together in mixed age groups. Older children are very supportive of the younger babies and toddlers, and the youngest children benefit greatly from being with the older children. They smile broadly and laugh as they watch the older children singing and participate in action songs. Babies are happy and content and enjoy a high level of interaction from adults and children alike. The atmosphere is very family orientated and staff relate to the children warmly. There are close bonds between staff and children as a child pats the chair saying to a staff member 'Come on you sit here.' There are high levels of interaction throughout the day, promoting children's language development. Resources are labelled with pictures but there are few written labels to support children's understanding that words carry meaning.

Children listen intently as they wait for 'Beat Baby' to uncurl. They clap in time to the music and participate enthusiastically in familiar songs. They learn early numeracy skills through familiar and favourite number rhymes, such as 'Five Silly Monkeys'. Children enjoy excellent opportunities in the outdoor area feeding the ducks and the Shetland ponies. Having seen the ducks incubate and hatch in the nursery, they now watch and care for them as adults. Children and staff make good use of the extensive grounds with a variety of play areas suited to climbing, balancing, riding bikes and trikes and general exploration. Children can even learn to swim in the summer months, supported by a qualified swimming teacher in the adjacent pool.

Plans cover all areas of learning and activities are adapted to meet individual children's learning needs. Each child has their own 'Learning Journey' which include observations and photographs. Parents complete a 'Chat wheel-sharing sheet', which provides information about children's likes and dislikes as well as their development to date, providing information for children's starting points. However, 'Learning Journeys' are inconsistent and some do not show children's progress clearly.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and meals, prepared on site. Children enjoy their meal of chicken and vegetable casserole and jacket potato. They have regular access to the outdoor area, where children can use bikes and cars and climb and balance. Babies benefit from sleeping in the fresh air when weather is suitable. Children explore the grounds and can run freely. Children are provided with wet weather gear enabling outdoor play in most weather. Babies emotional health is expertly supported as staff hold them gently during bottle feeds. They enjoy being part of the larger group and therefore able to be close to their older siblings. This also benefits the older siblings who have settled better since their baby has been attending. Children follow good hygiene habits as staff encourage them to wash their hands after feeding the ducks and ponies. They use paper towels to dry their

hands to limit the spread of infection. Consequently, there are good systems in place to ensure children learn about healthy lifestyles. Children learn about their own safety through regular use of the outdoor area and outings. They are able to climb and take some appropriate risks in a secure environment. On the way to feed the ponies and ducks children stop to listen for cars on the road. Children learn to use tools such as scissors with care and move around the room with care. Staff use reinforcement throughout the day to remind children about their own safety.

Behaviour is good throughout the nursery, given the children's ages and stage of development. Staff are excellent role models and are skilled at keeping children focussed at group times. Children are mesmerised as the member of staff leads the singing, using a duck voice. She cuts the session short as the children begin to lose interest saying 'Give yourselves a big clap and hurray for sitting so well - you've been brilliant!' Staff remind children to say 'please' and 'thank you' at snack time. There is a high number of toddlers in the nursery and consequently very minor disputes are common. Staff intervene promptly and sensitively, reminding children to be gentle and kind. Children show affection towards each other and are particularly keen to help the babies.

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

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	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

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