

Little Den Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	507935
Inspection date	22/03/2011
Inspector	Christine Clint

Setting address	The Den, Chawton Park Road, ALTON, Hampshire, GU34 1RQ
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Telephone number	0794 1367287
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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 Den Pre School has been registered since 1983. It operates from a scout building on the western outskirts of Alton in Hampshire. Children use one main room with adjacent kitchen and toilet facilities, there is a large, secure outdoor play area. The pre-school is managed by a committee of parents; families and children from the local area attend. The pre-school operates from 9.15 am to 12.15 pm each weekday morning during term time. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register, to care for 20 children from the age of two years to the end of the early years age group. The pre-school accepts children from the age of two years and nine months old. There are currently 29 children in the early years age group on roll. The pre-school provides funded educational places for children of three and four years of age. There are six staff members who work for a variety of sessions throughout the week, four staff hold early years qualifications at level three and some staff are continuing to attend training. There are links with the nearby school and the local early years network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school staff show strong levels of dedication and continuity, they work effectively as a team and with the parent committee to provide a wide range of learning opportunities for children. Most policies and procedures are in place and followed to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage, but not all requirements are fully met or soundly implemented to show how safeguarding is promoted across the provision. The supervisor and staff show a proactive and dedicated attitude to evaluating the provision and making changes which benefit the children's experiences and increase the quality of their play. There are well established links with parents and some carers, although parents are not fully informed about the plans for individual children's progress.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- include, in the safeguarding children policy, the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- 05/04/2011

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

- review the systems for staff employment and include evidence of medical

suitability

- include opportunities for parents to see and contribute to all records of development in place for individual children and develop the links with other providers to ensure children's learning is fully supported

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school staff maintain a high level of team work and the organisation and planning in place shows that there is a strong commitment to meeting the regulations to support children's welfare. The supervisor and staff have a clear knowledge and awareness of protecting children and of referring any concerns, although the policy and procedure for protecting children does not clearly state how any allegations against staff will be managed and this is a requirement. There are fully established policies and procedures and most are regularly reviewed. There is documentation available to show that suitability clearance is completed for all staff, although this does not include details of medical suitability, which enhances and strengthens the systems for clearance. New systems of staff and student induction have recently been introduced. A high ratio of staff to children is maintained throughout all sessions to ensure children's safety and promote their well being. Parents are provided with relevant information about the complaints procedure and the supervisor understands the need to record and manage any complaints. There are sound systems for maintaining confidentiality. The pre-school has developed a record which identifies aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis and daily checks are carried out to include all indoor and outdoor areas. Staff are continually vigilant in their supervision and they have established 'rule cards' to help children understand and manage their own safety as they develop. There are also clear records of risk assessment for outings which show how children will be protected from identified hazards. The premises are fully secure and all visitors are recorded. Fire equipment is in place and procedures are displayed. There are very regular fire drills to encourage children's growing awareness and understanding of safety, and these are recorded monthly. There are clear systems for recording all accidents and well planned routines for administering any medication. All staff maintain their first aid training and have attended additional training to support individual children's needs. Parents provide written permission to meet all areas of the requirements and this ensures and supports children's welfare.

The pre-school has made strong improvements in many areas since the last inspection and this has extended the provision for children and supported staff. There is now a daily allocation of employed time to prepare the setting, which fully benefits the children when they arrive. Staff are also keen to seek out and attend frequent further training, this has increased their knowledge and awareness across a variety of areas. All staff have taken key person responsibility and have developed good systems of linking children's progress with the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have included effective ways of compiling evidence of children's activities, with termly written summaries of children's progress; parents have also added their own comments. All parents have very regular access to these records and they can take them home at any time,

although the records do not show any linking with parents regarding the planning for children's next steps in development. The supervisor and staff show a proactive attitude towards self evaluation on many levels, they assess and record activities for impact and effectiveness and daily discussions take place whilst packing away the equipment; this enables staff to share important information about the day's events or any impact on individual children. There is a thorough and detailed self evaluation in place which covers all areas of the provision, although this has not fully identified the weakness in the regulatory requirements.

The pre-school has an excellent provision of resources which are very well organised on a daily basis, providing planned areas within the room and outside for variety, stimulation and interest for children. Children enter eagerly with their parents and carers, they seek out their favourite activities and they are fully supported and settled by staff. Children move freely for most of the session, making decisions about play resources and following their preferences. They are keen to remain outdoors and take part in a wide variety of physical play and learning opportunities, they can access the outside shed and select resources of their choice. Staff have fully increased outdoor play provision and often follow children's spontaneous ideas, for example, providing water for painting on the wall which encourages development across many areas of learning.

Staff show a clear knowledge of children's individual characteristics and behaviour, they link closely with parents and build relationships with families. They are committed to following the equality and diversity policy for the pre-school and this enables them to meet children's individual needs. There are everyday resources available to reflect differences and planned celebrations include festivals from other cultures. Staff understand and show an awareness of enabling and encouraging all children to make progress and to learn about valuing differences.

Partnership with parents and carers is valued and nurtured. Parents show delight in the pre-school and they are very happy with their children's progress, the activities and staff dedication. They enter the setting regularly at delivery and collection times and children clearly benefit from this close liaison because they show a strong sense of belonging. Parents and family members help regularly at the pre-school on a rota system, they are well informed because of the wide range of information displayed and available through newsletters and posters. They provide information about children's development when they first attend and have regular termly meetings with their child's key worker, parents can write their own comments about their child's progress. The pre-school has close links in the community, through planned visits to the local school to prepare children for transfer and close liaison with the parent and toddler group. There are also links with local childminders who share children's regular care and the supervisor and staff are fully aware of liaising with other agencies when any individual children and families need specific support. Staff attend meetings with the wider early years network to promote and develop the provision. The pre-school has developed a strong and reliable reputation in the community for providing a wide range of learning opportunities for children.

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

Children show they are delighted to be in the setting, they arrive with enthusiasm and know where to find resources of their choice. The pre-school has an excellent layout of play equipment in organised zones and ample choice on the floor to encourage children to settle immediately. They can show their parents different areas of the room or sit quietly with parents until they feel secure. Children gather at the craft table, they help themselves to glue sticks and felt tips, they sit and concentrate on their emergent writing, changing pens and finding other colours freely in the nearby drawers. They cut with scissors and stick the glittery paper, they respond to staff suggestion and write their names in the corner; they are praised for trying. All children have individual named trays, on the floor with small photos attached, they know they can put their own items here at any time and staff often remind them to put paintings there when they have finished. They are learning to recognise their own written name to correspond with their photo and this enables them to self register and to use their own names at snack time. Children freely paint at the easel with each other and use the prepared colours, they are gaining confidence and enjoy spontaneously painting the outside of the building with water and watching this dry in the sun. Children show enthusiasm and ability when practising with the remote control car, they attach this to the track and learn to use the controls to keep the car on the track; they experiment by making it travel faster across the floor and staff encourage them to use the timer to take turns.

Children sit with staff to read stories, there is ample choice of books and comfortable cushions. Staff recognise when younger children need individual attention and they readily provide this because there are high ratios of staff to children at every session. Staff have used a curtain to create a small den for cosy play and this encourages role play and develops children's communication skills with each other, sharing ideas and introducing imaginary play. They wear dressing up clothes and excitedly giggle together, making beds and acting out their roles. There is also a larger black-out tent which provides a dark interior and children can learn not to be afraid of the dark space inside by entering at their own pace and for short times.

Children regularly help to make the play dough every week and this tactile activity attracts many of the younger children, they use the rolling pins and their hands to squeeze and form shapes, they notice the glitter and the pink colour. Children are eager to handle resources and show clear skills of managing when they practise with the hammer and nails to secure small wooden pieces together. They are very organised in finding their coats for outdoor play and ask for help to fasten these, they clearly recognise how they feel and make decisions later, stating that they are warm enough without their coats for going outside. Children use the sloping exit to travel down on scooters and wheeled toys, they run and chase each other in the secure grassy area, they are learning not to climb on the gate because staff are vigilant and explain the dangers of slipping. Children are eager to push the buggies with dolls in and some children spend a long time travelling indoors and outside continually, they take part in other activities and then return to the security of

pushing the buggy. Children use shovels in the sand they pour the sand through funnels and learn how to fill up the digger, they cleverly put their finger over the end of the funnel because they know this will stop the sand coming through. Children practise with large magnets and join small marble shapes to these, the small balls remain attached and children carry these to show others. Children build the farm house and search for the roof pieces with each other, they use the farmyard fence and talk about the animals. They are gaining skills of physical balance and movement in the garden when they practise on wooden blocks, picking up courage to move from one to the other without stepping on the ground. They use hoops and balls, they practise kicking and aiming at the football goal. They use very large balls and learn to bounce as they run alongside. They are keen to talk about the flowers they have planted with staff and recently they have noticed how tall the daffodils have grown and they have watched the flowers opening.

Children's independence is encouraged at all times, from when they first enter and learn how to self- register, they then learn to recognise their names at snack time and help themselves to prepared fruit. Most children are keen to try kiwi and melon and pineapple, they spoon this into small bowls and carry these to the table, they are pouring their own drinks and show high levels of competence and ability. Children can have water at any time and they are increasingly managing their own personal care. They all wash hands very regularly and always before snack time, children line up when they come inside from the garden and wash before eating. They are able to find tissues for their noses and they are encouraged to learn to do this themselves. All the children follow snack time by washing up and drying their own bowl and mug; they do this without question and know that it is their responsibility.

Children respond really well to the music which signals the time to tidy up. They help outside and use brooms to sweep in the shed before packing away. Children know the routines for grouping together after snack time and they find small different shaped mats to sit on. They listen to their names as staff take the register and children learn to answer, older children are confident and know the names of all the staff as they note who is present today. They practise reciting the days of the week and they recognise it is Tuesday when staff ask them 'what comes after Monday?'. They look at the date on the calendar and learn to recognise numbers, they count together and children are encouraged to use their fingers. Children are keen to take part in singing and actions with staff, they all hold on to a piece of stretchy material and pull this into a circular shape, they sit down and stretch the fabric back and forth whilst they sing 'Row row row the boat', excitedly shouting at the end. They learn about rhythm and sound by singing and moving quickly and by slowing down the song and the movement; children show they are listening to instructions and following staff requests. They are eager again to return to outdoor play and have the freedom to choose activities.

Children are following the pre-school rules and they know that these are noted on different cards which staff can refer to. They carry the timers to different activities and use these to take turns with equipment. They are learning to respond to each other politely and to say please and thank you. Children are making strong progress in all areas of learning and especially in their growing levels of self

esteem and confidence, to make decisions and choices and to be valued.

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	1
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	1
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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