

Just Learning Nursery

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).

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

Just Learning Nursery was registered in 2006. It is part of the privately owned Just Learning Limited chain. It operates from a purpose built building in Bexleyheath, in the London Borough of Bexley. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 100 children aged between three months and eight years may attend at any one time; with no more than 100 being within the Early Years age range and of these no more than 36 being under one year at any one time. There is no provision for overnight care. There are currently 140 Early Years children on roll, 49 of whom are under two years. The nursery also supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also children with English as an additional language.

Children are based in different rooms according to their age and stage of development. The Little Ladybirds room caters for babies from three months to one year; it has its own milk preparation kitchen, sleeping area and nappy changing facilities. Little Snails room generally caters for children from one year to two years and has the use of several adjoining rooms and a toilet area. Wiggly Worms room generally caters for children from two to three years and has the use of several adjoining rooms and a toilet area. Ants Unit caters for children from three to five years and has the use of two rooms and toilets. Each unit, with the exception of the Baby room, operates a free flow access to secure outside areas.

The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6.30pm five days a week, all year round except bank holidays, Christmas and New Year's Day. Children may attend on a full or part time basis and the nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four.

There are 40 full and part-time members of staff working with the children. Five staff hold a Level 4 childcare qualification, 18 hold a Level 3 and seven hold a level 2. The nursery recognises the importance of staff development and all staff attend in-house training and are encouraged to obtain, or work towards, gaining a higher qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff effectively promote children's welfare, learning and development and demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Caring and positive relationships develop within the safe and generally well organised environment. Partnerships with parents are excellent and as a result key staff have a good knowledge of children's unique needs and abilities. They use this as a base on which to plan a wealth of stimulating activities which are clearly linked to children's interests and experiences. An outstanding and inclusive self-evaluation process monitors the quality of the provision, resulting in well targeted action plans which bring about sustained improvements and

demonstrate an excellent capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of every day routines, such as waiting to use the bathroom, to minimise the time children wait passively without being purposefully occupied
- increase children's access to resources and activities which help promote a positive attitude to diversity, and which encourage children to talk about similarities and differences, and to value their own and others lives
- implement a clear policy on teeth-cleaning which is both hygienic and promotes children's good health
- strengthen the planning for outside activities helping to ensure all areas of learning are covered

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The registered provider and management team of the nursery demonstrate a firm commitment to promoting good outcomes for children and ensuring their safety and welfare. Thorough recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensure the nursery is well managed and that children are cared for by suitably qualified and experienced members of staff. A checklist shows which staff hold suitable Criminal Record Bureau checks Children are well supervised and never left alone with probationary staff who are awaiting their suitability checks to come through. Regular one-to-one meetings and appraisals help staff to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. The registered provider supports staff development by providing in-house and external workshops and courses and, where appropriate, encourages staff to attend training to up-grade their qualifications.

All regulatory paperwork is in place and record keeping systems are highly effective as they are well organised, well maintained and available for inspection. Written policies and procedures reflect the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, underpin the good practice and are accessible to all staff and parents. Children's safety is a high regard and staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of how to promote children's welfare and well-being. The nursery communicates its duty of care to staff and parents through a policy which is line with local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. This also includes a clear policy and procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. Vulnerable children are protected as staff demonstrate they are aware of the signs and symptoms to look out for and are confident of the procedures to follow in the event of any child protection concerns. Designated individuals liaise and work well with outside agencies to protect children.

Security systems ensure children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and also prevent unknown individuals from entering the nursery. A record is kept of all visitors and effective systems ensure children are only released to authorised individuals for example; a secure password system is used when someone unfamiliar arrives to collect a child. The nursery management maintains a record of the comprehensive risk assessment conducted on the indoor and outdoor environment and, in addition, pre-opening safety checks are carried out daily. The risk assessment also includes the preparation required for outings and, as a result, children are kept safe and accidents are kept to a minimum. In the event of any unforeseen accidents, children receive prompt and appropriate care as staff maintain an up-to-date knowledge of first aid procedures. The staff are able to seek emergency medical advice or treatment if necessary as parents have provided all of the required prior consents. Effective systems ensure staff maintain accurate records of all accidents and /or any medication that is administered and that parents are informed of times/dosage given. Children are closely monitored by staff whilst they sleep. The children are learning how to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency as they regularly take part in practicing the evacuation procedure. Babies can be safely evacuated using the emergency cots and evacuation bags contain all the necessary equipment to keep children safe and comfortable in the event of a real emergency situation.

Management and staff have been exploring ways of rearranging the available space and resources to enable groups of children to experience a more free-flow environment and more spread-out activities. This has been achieved by joining together smaller groups of similar aged children, and using several rooms for each larger group of children. This has improved the opportunities for children to make choices about what they do by selecting more of their own toys and play activities, helping them become independent learners, thus promoting their confidence and increasing their self-motivation. However, due to the nature of the routines in some rooms, children are spending unnecessarily extended periods passively waiting together in large groups and as a result there are times when children are not always purposefully occupied or when children's individual needs are not being fully met. An example of this is when lining up to go outside and while waiting for space in the toilet area to clean their teeth after lunch.

Soft drapes and fairy lights in the baby room help to create a calm yet interesting environment. Staff take pride in the presentation of children's own work, helping children to recognise that their contribution is valued. Labeling of children's work enables parents to link the activities their children take part in, to the different areas of learning and increases their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This helps parents play a key part in their child's learning and these displays, along with notices, posters and photographs help make it a welcoming and inclusive environment as they show positive images of different families, race, culture and disability. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of their key children. Positive and close relationships have been formed as staff are able to describe children's individual personalities as well as what they know and how each child is progressing. Equality and diversity is generally promoted well within the setting. Staff act as good role models and use a satisfactory range of resources to support children in learning about the diverse community in which they live. Children participate in some simple activities which develop their understanding of

the similarities and differences in customs, and the ways people celebrate their festivals. However, there is scope for these areas to be developed further.

Key workers are supported by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators who work in partnership with parents and other adults involved in the care of children. As a result individual educational and/or care plans are drawn up to help identify areas where specific children need extra support to enable them to fully participate and achieve best possible outcomes. Through careful monitoring, staff also recognise the needs of identified gifted children and work closely with parents to ensure these children are suitably challenged and continue to progress. The nursery describes good working relationships with outside agencies, liaising with health care professionals such as behaviour, speech and language therapists, and regularly seek advice from the local authority advisor on how to best support individual children. Parents are encouraged to share the written assessments they receive about their children with other settings their children might attend.

Children clearly benefit from the outstanding relationships between staff and their parents. Photographs are displayed of each staff member, clearly identifying their role, helping parents and visitors to identify who is who. During initial consultations key worker staff obtain all of the required information from parents including details about their child's home life and home routines. Parents are informed daily about activities their children have taken part in and have unlimited access to the observations and assessments of their children's progress which make up their individual learning story. All parents are invited to several open evenings each year but also know they can discuss their child's progress and can speak to staff any time they wish. Whole families are encouraged to attend events such as the sports day, pirate tea & treasure hunt and the Easter hat parade.

Regular newsletters and informative notice boards keep parents up-to-date with nursery news. A well formulated policy and procedure provides clear information for parents on how to raise concerns and complaints and sets out the responsibilities of the nursery. The record of complaints clearly shows the nursery deals with all concerns, however small, by setting out an action plan to address any issues raised. Extremely complimentary thank you cards show how satisfied parents are with the nursery, commenting on the 'professional way the nursery is managed' and how their children have a 'wonderful time and enjoy the activities'.

Outstanding self-evaluation systems are in place and demonstrate the provider's excellent awareness of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. Meetings held at other settings and run by Just Learning Ltd, enable the nursery manager to meet others to discuss best practice and access group in-house training which is then cascaded down to all staff during staff meetings. Staff routinely evaluate the activities children take part in and use the information to make improvements and plan for next time. Along with the Ofsted self-evaluation form, the nursery uses a separate programme to evaluate, identify and plan for staff training needs, to draw up action plans for improvement and then re-evaluate. Questionnaires are used to canvas both staff and parent opinion on how the nursery can be improved. Staff seek the views of children during circle time, so all parties feel involved in contributing to the nursery's continuous improvement.

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

Staff are well motivated and demonstrate a good understanding of how to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. The effective key-person system helps to support children to achieve good outcomes and make progress towards the early learning goals. During the settling-in period useful information is obtained from parents about their child's interests and what they already know and can do at home. These starting points are used to plan initial activities to help the child settle. Staff then observe the children while they play and chat to them about what they enjoy doing. This information is then used to plan activities for the following day. Staff also regularly complete more detailed, focused based, observations and use all this information to assess where each child is at in relation to the different areas of learning and to write a summative assessment of their progress. Every four to six weeks this is shared with parents who are asked to contribute what their child is achieving and enjoying at home in order that together they can plan the next steps of learning and development their child is working toward.

Individual planning systems are displayed in each room and detail how all activities are linked to children's interests and clearly show there is a balance across all areas of the indoor curriculum. The organisation of transition for children through the different age group rooms is excellent. Familiar staff meet with the parents and new members of staff to pass on detailed information about children's individual care plans and where they are at relation to their learning and development. This system helps to ensure continuity of care for the children and is highly effective in identifying any gaps in the children's achievement records.

Children demonstrate that they feel safe and settled as they confidently explore their surroundings. Close bonds are forming as children approach staff for comfort, snuggling on staff member's laps during story time, or when tired, and babies clearly benefit from being closely held whilst bottle feeding. Young babies separate well from their parents. Children are clearly benefiting from the close interaction with staff who spend time smiling, singing and encouraging them to use all of their senses to learn about the world around them. Staff have created a soft and visually stimulating black and white area for the very young babies. The older babies explore natural and man-made items in the sensory baskets and enjoy using the interactive 'light and sound' activity centres. Furniture and resources are positioned to encourage babies to stretch, reach, crawl and pull themselves to stand. Photographs and displays around the room show babies clearly enjoy experimenting with paint, using their fingers, hands and even get stripped down to nappies for body painting! There are opportunities for them to play with tactile materials such as shaving foam, splash in water and explore the properties of sand, jelly and pasta.

Children's relationships with their peers go from strength-to-strength as they enjoy playing together throughout the day. Staff sit with the children, joining in with their chosen activities, extending their language and suggesting new ways of approaching problems. Children are learning good manners; automatically saying

please or thank you and sorry if they bump into each other. Staff praise children, making them feel good about themselves. For example, after helping to tidy away some toys a child visibly swells with pride as a member of staff says to him. 'You've done a beautiful job, I'm impressed!'. Staff remind children of the safety issues if they run indoors or throw sand, and so they are beginning to understand issues relating to their own and others safety. Turn-taking is encouraged and staff use visual aids such as clocks and egg-timers to show children when it is the next persons turn. Children are learning about helping others within their community as they take part in fun fund-raising events.

Consideration is given to the presentation of role-play areas so children play with resources which enable them to act out real life situations. For example, as they cook pretend meals and dress the dolls, as they write and post letters and weigh parcels on the scale at the post office. They learn to care for animals at the vets or use the different types of stationary at the office. Children have opportunities to take part in supervised cooking activities, proudly taking home their cheese straws and jam tarts. They actively participate in group singing, happily joining in with familiar movements and actions.

Table-top activities are regularly changed by staff and the children throughout the day. This offers an ever changing environment and helping them remain interested in their play. This is balanced appropriately as children are also given many opportunities to consolidate their learning by ensuring the same type of activity is offered throughout the week such as; sand and water, puzzles, role-play, construction and small world play. There are a range of activities which encourage children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. Resources supporting numeracy include wire and bead blocks, others which give the younger children a sense of space and shape such as the large stackable milk crates in the garden and the puzzles, marble runs, dominoes, matching and number games for the older children. From a young age children learn to use a wide range of tools and equipment safely; for example, they learn to handle cutlery when using dough and children can roll out and use cutters. Staff ensure safety scissors are readily available.

Children have opportunities to speak in groups during circle time and do so with a great deal of confidence, indicating that their views are regularly listened to. Independent access to mark-making resources and name cards enable children to independently draw or write their name on their own work when they choose. They enjoy chalking pictures and roadways on the floor outside and washing it off with water using brushes. Children take pleasure in looking at the selection of fact and fiction books by themselves and listening to favourite stories which are well read by staff. There is a display of pictures that the children have drawn of their favourite books. These are labelled by the staff with a short review of what children said they enjoyed about the book. Older children enjoy using the computers and help each other to complete the educational games available.

Children enjoy making a positive contribution to the routine of the day such as tidying away and taking it in turns to be the monitor who helps to set the table at meal times. During a visit to a local recycling point children helped staff to sort items and learnt where and what to recycle. Staff then used posters, leaflets and

photographs of the trip to create a 'Help Our World' display and extended the project by talking the children about saving water and electricity. Children have opportunities to explore nature as they take part in simple planting activities, enjoy digging in compost, using magnifying glasses to look at bugs and take it in turns to feed the fish. They use different types of wood and leaves as they play with toy animals and dinosaurs, creating their own habitats.

Staff provide lots of opportunities for children to develop a good understanding of keeping themselves healthy through plenty of exercise in the garden, healthy eating and by encouraging good personal hygiene routines, with reminders displayed to show children how to wash their hands thoroughly. Children are encouraged to clean their teeth after lunch; however the younger children do not visit the bathroom to do this, instead they are given a toothbrush and paste at the lunch table and attempt to clean their teeth, often with food around their faces and without water to rinse their mouth. This method is ineffective. When a child shares her exciting news of a visit to the dentist a member of staff uses this to set up an activity where she takes photographs of the children's smiles, provides paint for them to draw a picture of their own smile, and instigates a discussion about why we clean our teeth and what foods are good or bad for teeth. By the end of the day a wonderful display of the children's work and their comments is up on the wall and clearly demonstrates they have a good understanding of healthy and less healthy foods.

Children are protected from cross-infection as staff follow stringent nappy changing, hygiene and cleaning routines. Children are excluded when they have an infectious illness and a notice is put up to inform other parents of the potential signs and symptoms to look out for in their children. Suitable outdoor clothing is provided so children are protected and can benefit from the fresh air all year round. Canopies are provided to protect children from the sun and staff organise the routine so in summer months children are not over exposed to the midday sun. The outside area has been divided into areas so all children can explore safely on age appropriate equipment. Children clearly enjoy being outside and are developing their co-ordination skills as they learn to kick, throw and catch balls, balance on the tyres, climb on the frame and ride bikes. Staff have identified that they do not give as much consideration to the planning of outdoor activities and so are not clear if they are providing activities within all areas of learning when children are outside.

Most staff have attended food hygiene training. and written menus are displayed to ensure parents are advised of what food is on offer each day in advance. Parents inform staff of any known dietary allergies, religious or cultural preferences and children's individual likes and dislikes. Children's safety is considered as a colour coded plate system is used to ensure children do not eat something they should not have. Meal times are a social occasion, and the food presented is healthy and nutritious. A wide variety of food is offered including fresh fruit and raw vegetable sticks at snack time, with ratatouille, chilli-con-carne, fish in cheese sauce, vegetable curry and roast dinners for lunch, and finger foods such as small rolls, pita bread, crackers or crumpets at tea-time. Children help themselves to a drink from their own cup when they are thirsty, and during meal times older children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and have some opportunities to

serve themselves and each other food. Care plans ensure babies' individual feeding routines are followed and staff make up bottles and prepare individual feeds according to the age and stage of each baby.

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	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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	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