

Explorers Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY418428
Inspection date 06/04/2011
Inspector Jacqueline Munden

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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

Explorers Day Nursery is one of four provisions run by Little Shipmates Ltd. The nursery registered in 2010. It operates from a purpose built, single storey building within the grounds of Adanac Park in Southampton. Children access a secure outside play area. The nursery provides on-site childcare for the Ordnance Survey and serves the local and surrounding areas. It is open from 8am to 6pm each weekday for 50 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently 63 children on roll aged from five months to four years. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff to work with the children. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications, 14 at level 3 and above. The manager holds a level 5 qualification. She and other staff continue to work towards higher qualifications. The nursery employs a cook and administrative staff.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

All aspects of children's health, welfare and learning are exceptionally well promoted due to the highly effective operating systems in place in the nursery. The effective management structure provides outstanding leadership to the enthusiastic, well-qualified team of staff. Extremely strong relationships forged with parents and others involved in children's care has a significant impact on ensuring all their individual needs are met very well and that they are fully included at all times. Rigorous self-evaluation brings about continuous improvements to greatly improve outcomes for children and to provide a fully inclusive environment. The setting successfully identifies areas for further development such as the outdoor area.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- building upon the good practice already in place for outdoor play and learning to provide further opportunities to enable children even more exciting and stimulating experiences outdoors.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Extremely high regard is given to ensuring children are safeguarded. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure all adults are suitable to work with them. All staff are trained in child protection and are aware of the appropriate procedure to follow should they have a concern regarding a child in their care. Risk assessments are used extremely effectively to ensure children are kept safe and healthy. Great care is taken to identify and deal with possible hazards and the high staff ratio, both indoor and outside, ensures children are constantly supervised. The comprehensive range of records and procedures underpin the safe and smooth running of the setting and the excellent practice of staff. The system of regularly reviewing one of the policies ensures they always meet the needs of the setting and that all staff and parents are clear of the procedures followed in the nursery to meet children's individual needs. Management has high aspirations for quality through ongoing improvement in all aspects of the provision. They use extremely effective systems to reflect on their practice and the success of the activities they provide. Parents and children are invited to comment and staff show great commitment to further developing the nursery and their professional skills. Development plans are used to plan and drive progress made towards planned improvements. These include how they are further developing the outdoor play area to provide even more interesting and challenging play and learning opportunities for children.

The absolute commitment to promoting equality and diversity in the nursery is at the heart of all they do and is significant in ensuring all children are valued and included. The extremely effective key person system ensures children's individual care and learning needs are met. Staff positively promote each child's background and culture. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are welcomed into the setting and supported extremely well. Very effective links are made with parents and other agencies and professionals involved in children's care and development. Staff support children's speech and language through using Makaton to help them communicate and express themselves including those developing their use of English. Children benefit greatly and thrive from the vibrant and easily accessible environment and the deployment of staff. All areas are superbly organised and resourced both indoors and outside attributing to their excellent outcomes.

The nursery has highly positive relationships with all parents and carers. Parents and carers are fully informed about all aspects of their children's achievement's, well-being and development and about how to support their children's learning further. Parents report they are extremely happy with the quality of care their children receive. They and their child get to know their allotted key person from the outset and feel the strong bonds they all form are significant to how well their children settle and the high levels of progress they make. The nursery promotes the 'Every child a talker' scheme which is significant in helping children develop language and communication skills. Parents are informed of this and report this is having a positive impact on their children and how they continue to implement it at

home. Parents are involved in the nursery and contribute to children's experiences. For example, they bring special foods in for children to share to celebrate religious festivals they are celebrating at home. The nursery takes a key role in establishing channels of communication with others involved with individual children which successfully promotes all areas of their learning, development and welfare.

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

Children are extremely happy and settle very quickly into the caring and harmonious atmosphere of the nursery. Key persons recognise each child's uniqueness and plan to promote their individual welfare needs and learning. This ensures children thrive and enjoy their time at the nursery. They feel safe and secure and make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. The newly implemented systems used to monitor children's progress and to plan for the next stage in all areas of their learning and development are used effectively by staff. Excellent use is made of planned small group times for planned activities that promote specific learning for children as shown in their individual plans, including those with any additional needs. The rooms, garden and the huge range of accessible resources are planned for exceptionally well to provide a stimulating and vibrant environment for children to explore and learn and to meet their needs. For example, children aged from two to four years generally share an indoor area but this can be divided to provide suitable rest areas when needed. Overall, the very large outdoor area is an extension of the learning environment for all children which staff continue to develop. A canopy covers the immediate areas outside each of the rooms offering shelter and shade. The garden is used extremely well, in all weathers to promote children's health and learning, although maximum use is not always made as the babies do not have an enclosed area in which they can flow freely in and out of.

Babies and very young children benefit from the regular contact with the older children and siblings throughout the day. Babies are extremely happy and settled due to the extremely strong bonds they form with adults. They are all fully included as they all sit together in appropriate low-level seats at meal-times. Staff recognise the importance of this and arrange the tables in an 'S' shape to ensure all children can see each other and communicate. Strategies like this and the consistent use of talking and listening means even very young children develop excellent language skills and high levels of confidence. Children developing walking skills relish being able to push along wheeled toys for long distances across the garden. They explore texture and develop creative skills as they use various materials to make pictures. They use large, easy grip chinks to make marks. Staff help children learn about colours and numbers as they name the colours and count the number of bricks children use to build with. Children's concentration levels are increasing as they focus on stacking the beakers.

A very strong focus is placed on helping children aged two to four years to develop skills for the future. They become increasingly independent as they take part in the routines of the day, such as serving their own lunch and clearing away afterwards.

They are extremely confident speakers and express themselves well. They have many opportunities to make marks and develop pre-writing skills as they use the enormous range of malleable and creative resources such as paints, custard and modelling dough. They develop fine motor skills as they thread laces and build with construct sets. Many older children progress to writing their names. Children's interests are used to encourage all children to take part in these activities such as using the cars to make wheel tracks in paint. Children aged two years explore new experiences such as examining cubes of jelly. They learn new language staff talk to them about what they feel such as slippery. They use their senses as they smell and taste the jelly. Staff skilfully use events as they occur to help children learn and solve problems. For example, as children are weaving ribbons through netting in the garden, staff ask what direction they are going. Children describe going left and right. Children compare the lengths of their ribbons, deciding on whose is the longest and shortest. Staff challenge more able children to place the lengths of the four ribbons in order and asks if the longest will be the tallest. The activity is extended as children decide what to use to measure the ribbons, excitedly running off and returning with a tape measure and ruler. Staff suggest making a record of the children's names and the lengths measured. Those interested write on the information clipboard of paper. As a result children are motivated and interested to learn and make excellent progress.

Children are curious and knowledgeable about the natural world. Children plant sunflower seeds in soil explaining they need to be watered and placed in the sun to make them grow. The activity is extended as children cut out, colour and stick pictures making a chart of the lifecycle of a sunflower. Children care for an African giant land snail, using magnifying glasses to closely examine its mouth as they feed it. Staff respond to children's questions and demonstrate how the internet can be used for research as they find out snails have thousands of teeth. Children learn about the world around them as they use the wide range of resources that promote diversity and their own cultures. Children use computers and take photographs of their creations and of people around them with a digital camera.

Children are learning about healthy lifestyles exceeding well. They spend lots of time outdoors and in all weathers. Children develop physical skills as they climb and clamber over the challenging wooden climbing equipment and use large muscles pedalling bikes. Staff talk to children about exercise and how it affects them as they take part in music and movement sessions. Children thoroughly enjoy and benefit from a balance of healthy and nutritious foods prepared and cooked on the premises. They learn what is good for them to eat and access drinks freely. Children are clear that following hygiene routines will help keep them healthy. They know they need to wash their hands before eating and brush their teeth a while after, in line with current guidance. Children learn effective strategies to keep themselves safe in ways suitable to their age and development. For example, they are reminded to use tools such as scissors appropriately. They learn to take calculated risks through their everyday play but also to follow rules that help them to be safe. Children learn about road safety as they use role play equipment including a zebra crossing mat and lollipop sign.

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?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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