

Little Explorers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY342105

Inspection date

25/05/2011

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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 Explorers was registered in 2007. It operates from the scout hut in Copthorne, Shrewsbury. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children and there is an outdoor play area.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12pm. Extended hours for lunch club until 1pm are available everyday except Thursdays. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time, all of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 50 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications, including one who has Early Years Professional Status. The nursery receives support from the local authority

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children and staff thrive in this welcoming nursery. Excellent observations of children's individual achievements enable children to make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. Staff ensure that parents are kept fully informed about what their children are doing and are excellent in sharing information about their needs and routines. The owners and staff are highly motivated and have a positive approach to self-evaluation. They have established systems to support the continuous review of their work, enabling them to prioritise areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing the opportunities to provide positive images that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion and culture.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is consistently promoted as the setting has robust safeguarding procedures. Staff attend regular training and review their procedures to ensure

that they are able to work together to protect children. Thorough risk assessments and safety checks before and during the sessions ensure that hazards are minimised. In addition, these are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure children remain safe. Good daily practice, such as ongoing explanations from staff, reinforce children's understanding of safety issues. For example, they understand why it is important not to run inside. The management team follow a robust recruitment and selection process to provide a highly skilled staff team who deliver warm, consistent care and education to all children.

The owners have a clear vision for the future, fully involving staff and parents in reviewing the setting's practice. The setting has established a detailed self-evaluation process which highlights the outstanding organisation of the setting and positive improvements they have made. They actively seek feedback on their strengths and weaknesses from children, parents and carers as well as staff through yearly appraisals and staff meetings. All staff have a positive attitude and their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, meaning that children's care is consistent. Staff work well as a team and are supported in attending further training.

Recommendations raised at the last inspection have been addressed and staff have extended their learning through training courses. Children's learning and development is significantly enhanced through the availability of the resources used. For example, staff know the children well and ensure their interests are taken into account. They have an extremely sound knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the EYFS. They plan and deliver an excellent range of stimulating, challenging activities and learning opportunities. These activities are assessed and evaluated to ensure that the learning objectives are achieved. Staff are also very effective at extending spontaneous child-led opportunities and promoting children's independence and choices in this outstanding learning environment. Each child is assessed on their individual needs such as English as an additional language and Special Educational Needs and their needs are met accordingly. Resources are reflective of the children's cultures through books, toys and games. However, children have limited opportunity to see positive role models and to recognise different cultures and beliefs to begin to respect differences.

Regular parent and carer's play hour is held to enable the key workers to discuss the children's progress. Parents are kept well-informed on a daily basis through the use of boards and notices on what their child has done during the session and what was available for snack. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning which is done through encouraging children to take home books from the setting to read at home. The setting also works exceptionally well with other professionals such as speech therapists and specialist advisers, further promoting consistent, appropriate care for children. Children benefit because the setting is excellent at liaising with other settings providing the EYFS. To reinforce this they make arrangements to regularly visit each other's settings. Partnership working with outside agencies is a major strength of the nursery which is evident by the excellent feedback received from parents and other professionals.

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

Children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning and are supported in achieving because staff have an exemplary understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use clear procedures for assessing children, using this information to inform activity planning to ensure that children are offered appropriate support that promote their individual development. Each child has their own 'Learning Journey' which records their outstanding progress. These assessments are meaningful and relevant to the individual child and they also include feedback from parents and carers. Detailed and practical observations and monitoring of the children's development and achievements in all areas of learning highlights the next stages of learning for them.

Staff encourage children to explore and develop their own play, sensitively intervening only to extend children's thinking and learning. This enables children to take an active role in their own learning and staff to provide tailored experiences to promote individual development. For example, while playing outdoors the children made the decision to make a 'pirate caravan'. This was quickly resourced and material, sticks and pegs used to cover the area over.

The environment is attractive and resources are rich, varied and imaginative, enabling children to make independent choices and select equipment themselves. This promotes children's confidence and self-motivation. Children display their feeling of safety as they confidently move from one area of play to another, accessing their own resources to develop their own play. Staff have applied the reggio approach to their setting after attending a training course and children enjoy the natural resources available to them. For example, while playing outside they use water and brushes to paint the wall and explore in soil with spades and trowels.

Children are actively encouraged to choose their own activities and resources. This promotes children's feelings of being valued and rewarded and they display a sense of pride in their achievements. For example, two children choose the food for the healthy snack in the morning. They take turns to help set up the table and serve the food, contributing to the learning of new life skills.

Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported to enable them to make outstanding progress. They are supported in developing their use of English and their own language is also valued, with staff using key words in this. The excellent procedures in place for working with parents and others mean that children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered significant support to enable them to participate meaningfully. Highly motivated staff use information gained from training to ensure that children are offered a range of activities that interest them and encourage them to explore. For example, after attending a mark-making and language course, staff extend this activity by providing a wider range of resources. For example, they make marks in the sand and cornflour mix, enjoy chalking on the indoor and outdoor boards and help themselves to writing materials. They develop further skills for the future as they

share ideas and work together. Children enjoy learning new songs and the actions that go with them. This enables them to learn about rhyme and to interpret the words with their bodies in a creative way. They requested the 'singing in the rain' song so they could wiggle and stretch together as this is their favourite at the moment.

All children, based on their starting points and abilities, make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals in this welcoming pre-school.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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

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