

Little Explorers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY423778
Inspection date 18/07/2011
Inspector Sheena Gibson

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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 Explorers Day Nursery registered at new premises. The setting is privately owned and managed by Derby College. It operates from three playrooms within a purpose built single storey building on Broomfield College Campus on the outskirts of Derby. The nursery offers places to the children of students, staff, the local and wider community. There are two fully enclosed play areas available for outdoor play. A maximum of 54 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 55 children attending who are all within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children attend for various sessions. Of these, 18 children receive funding for early years provision. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years in the school holidays.

This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and disabilities. The group opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year and sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting employs 16 members of child care staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to Level 2 and above. The setting receives support from the local authority and has strong links with other providers of early years care and education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Children's safety and welfare is compromised as policies and procedures are not effectively implemented by staff. The provision welcomes all children but does not always effectively meet their individual needs, with particular reference to the organisation of the environment. On the whole, their learning is suitably promoted. Systems for evaluation and monitoring staff practice are weak and therefore areas for development are not prioritised in order to support continuous improvement. The provision works suitably in partnership with parents and carers in order to support continuity of care for children.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that an effective policy for the administration of medication is understood by staff and always effectively implemented (Safeguarding and promoting
- 19/07/2011

- children's welfare)
- carry out a full risk assessment on outings, which includes an assessment of required adult:child ratios and take account of the nature of the outing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 19/07/2011
- ensure effective systems are in place to meet the individual needs of all children, by developing a culture of self-evaluation to effectively identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision (Organisation) 01/08/2011
- ensure that premises and equipment are organised in a way that meets the needs of children. (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 19/07/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- build on opportunities for children so that they always have sufficient challenge, ensuring that staff support is always effective
- improve systems for monitoring and planning for children's progress so that their next steps are always clearly identified and acted upon
- risk assess everything with which a child may come into contact
- develop further understanding of safeguarding children procedures, with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines and the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' summary booklet
- carry out regular appraisals for all staff to identify training needs and apply a programme of continuing professional development so that these needs are met.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are inadequate. Some staff do not fully understand, and therefore are not implementing some procedures correctly, putting children at risk. They do not pay close enough attention to the times that medications require administering and on the day of the inspection this resulted in a child being given medication earlier than requested. There is a detailed safeguarding policy, which is known to staff. On the whole, staff understand the symptoms of abuse and what to do if there is a concern. The designated person for safeguarding has a suitable understanding about the setting's safeguarding procedures and has undertaken training. She is confident that action would be taken if there were concerns about a child. However, she is not secure in her understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines, or the information in the booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.

The indoor area provides a safe environment for children with written risk assessments in place. However, not everything that a child may come into contact with is risk assessed and this impacts upon children's safety. For example, the construction work outside the building has impacted upon children's journey to and from the nursery but was not risk assessed. Appropriate measures are taken to

ensure the security of the building and outdoor play area in order to support children's safety. Suitable fire safety equipment is in place and children are involved in fire evacuation drills that help them to be able to calmly leave in an emergency. Staff take children on outings. For example, they go for walks in the grounds around the setting. However, these are not appropriately risk assessed and so potential dangers have not been identified in order to sufficiently protect children.

The manager of the setting is positive about the future of the provision, having recently moved to new premises. Systems for recruitment are sufficiently robust and include carrying out Criminal Records Bureau checks. Staffing ratios are met and there is a high number of staff who are qualified to at least level two. Some staff have attended training workshops that relate to specific areas of their practice. However, staff appraisals are not carried out regularly in order to effectively identify training needs. Consequently their professional development needs are not always met. The manager has begun to complete the Ofsted self-evaluation form but is not realistic about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Therefore systems for evaluating the provision do not ensure that children's needs are effectively met. Whilst all children are welcome in the setting not all children's welfare and learning are successfully supported. Toys and activities are accessible to most children. However, the way that the environment is organised means that children with less mobility sometimes find difficulty getting to resources.

The organisation of resources does not fully support children's learning and care. For example, the sleep room is not utilised well. As a result sleeping children and babies lie on floor mats whilst the other children are playing in the room. The setting works suitably with parents, sharing information with them in various formats such as newsletters and daily diaries. A notice board displays information about the provision and a folder contains the policies and procedures. Parents are encouraged to share information about children's development including home-observations. Therefore parents and staff have a consistent understanding about their child's care and learning. The setting works suitably with external providers such as medical and local authority support in order to promote children's care and learning.

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

Children have suitable opportunities to understand about good hygiene. They have appropriate hand washing facilities and some staff show them how to wash their hands thoroughly. A sickness policy is shared with parents who therefore know that their child should not attend if they are unwell. This helps to minimise the risk of infection spreading. Children are offered wholesome snacks and meals. These are made on-site and generally consist of plenty of fruit and vegetables, supporting children's health. However, children's individual health needs are not met in relation to the administration of medication. Babies in the setting are cuddled by staff if they are upset and staff sit with them to offer reassurance when they are

going to sleep, helping them to feel safe and secure. Few staff help children to understand about how to effectively stay safe in the setting. For example, when they climb on the table staff quickly get them down but they do not explain why this is not a safe activity. Children then repeat this action because steps are not taken to prevent it.

Most staff have a suitable understanding about how to support children's learning and so they make satisfactory progress. Some staff engage with the children in order to develop their skills further. For example, they ask open questions and suggest ideas to children about how they can extend an activity. Staff obtain information from parents, which helps them to ascertain children's starting point. They then carry out observations to gauge their progress. However, some are not clear about how the observations are used to effectively identify and support children's next steps for learning. The rooms in the setting are organised to be generally suitable to the ages of the children. They are resourced appropriately so that children have a range of play opportunities. Sometimes, however, the resources alone do not provide sufficient challenge for children and staff do not always offer the required support and guidance to keep children interested and focussed. Nevertheless there are sufficient opportunities across the different areas of learning.

On the whole, children are confident and enjoy their play. The environment is bright and cheerful with displays and posters around the walls. Babies who are developing mobility use wheeled toys to become proficient walkers. They use rattles, musical toys and textured items to explore using their senses. As they develop they progress to the toddler room where they expand their skills further. Children are becoming independent and, as they grow, become able to manage their own personal needs. They enjoy sitting with a member of staff, listening to a story and have free access to a range of books. They explore hay to find different animals hidden within it and explore how the hay feels and smells. They are fascinated by the diggers outside the building. Staff have built on this interest by taking photographs of the diggers. Children enjoy looking at photographs and recognise themselves in the different situations.

Some children are able to recognise their name from the name cards and sound out some of the letters in their name. The computer is freely available and some children are competent at clicking the icons with the mouse. They are physically active and enjoy plenty of time in the outdoor area. For example, they jump and roll on the soft play and ride wheeled toys. For the most part children are well behaved. Some have formed close friendships and spend time playing together. Staff encourage co-operation and sharing between the children. They speak to them about consequences of their actions and the importance of apologising if they upset someone. Children have a suitable range of opportunities to understand about diversity including toys, books and activities that help them to understand about other people in the world.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	4
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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