

Little Sunbeams Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY343816
Inspection date	29/09/2011
Inspector	Jenny Howell
Setting address	4th Epping Elm Scout Hut, Stonards Hill, Epping, Essex, CM16 4QE
Telephone number	01992 573 395
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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 Sunbeams Preschool has been registered under the current owner since 2006. It operates from rooms in a scout hut situated near to the centre of Epping, Essex. The setting is open each weekday from 9.15am to 12.15pm daily and until 3.15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, term time only. Children are able to access the adjoining park and outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time. They are also registered on the Compulsory and Voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 45 children in the early years age range on roll. The pre-school is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group is supported by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Local Authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school is effective in meeting the needs of individual children. All children make good progress in their learning and enjoy their time at the pre-school. Appropriate arrangements are in place in order to safeguard children. Good relationships with parents ensure that relevant information can be exchanged. A system of self-evaluation is in place to identify strengths and some weaknesses in order to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further systems to involve parents in their child's development and learning
- ensure that short-term planning shows how children's learning and development will be supported
- develop the system of self-evaluation to include the views of parents and children on the care and education provided, in order to support continuous quality improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All the required policies and procedures are in place to support the smooth running of the pre-school. Routines, such as, daily risk assessments help to protect children

from potential hazards. Staff also ensure that all outings, including to the local play area have been thoroughly risk assessed. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and this is supported by on-going training. Staff are experienced and all hold relevant qualifications. All staff have undergone checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. This supports the manager in ensuring that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Most staff have been trained in paediatric first aid to ensure that they can act quickly in the event of an emergency. All staff are supported in attending additional training in order to improve and develop their skills.

A system of self-evaluation is in place and this has been developed in consultation with staff. They have been able to identify what the pre-school does well and have identified some areas for development. However, they do not yet include the views of parents and children in order to fully support continuous improvement. Staff have made good progress in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection. This has brought about improvements staff's knowledge and understanding of health and safety issues and the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Effective relationships with other professionals help staff to meet the needs of individual children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Links are established with other childcare providers, in order to ensure a regular exchange of information, when children also attend other settings. This helps to ensure continuity of care, as well as supporting welfare, learning and development.

Good links are in place with parents. Staff are available to talk to on a daily basis and development records can be viewed at any time. Regular newsletters help to keep parents informed and their views are sometimes sought through simple questionnaires. However, staff are not yet sufficiently pro-active in ensuring that parents are well informed about what children are learning at pre-school and how they can support this at home. Parents comment positively about the pre-school, saying that staff are approachable and that their children have been well prepared for school.

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

Staff are effective in supporting learning and development. They plan the learning environment to provide a good range of activities which cover all areas of learning. Children are able to access resources independently and staff support them in following their own interests and ideas. Staff interact highly effectively with children, using conversation and questions to consolidate and extend their knowledge and understanding. Routines, such as snack time, ensure that children's welfare needs are met whilst still allowing ample time for children to play and learn.

Careful observations of what children can do support staff in meeting children's individual needs. Staff are able to assess what children need to do next in order to make progress and use this information to develop weekly planning. Plans cover all

areas of learning and are based on the needs of individual children, as well as the wider group of children attending. However, planning does not yet clearly identify expected learning outcomes for planned activities in order to focus staff on how to support children.

Children enjoy learning and make good progress towards the early learning goals. They are able to take the lead in their own learning as they access a wide range of activities independently. A good balance of planned, adult-led learning opportunities ensures that children also make consistent progress in all areas of learning. Children express their creativity in a range of ways, accessing paint, play-dough and collage materials freely. They learn about the world around them as they study insects with magnifying glasses and take walks around the local park. Construction toys help children to develop problem solving skills, whilst puzzles help them to develop a sense of shape and space.

Children are supported in developing effective skills for the future. For example, they communicate effectively as they talk about the adventures they have had with the pre-school teddy over the weekend. Children use numbers in context as they weigh out the ingredients to make biscuits and understand the practical applications of technology by using calculators in the pre-school shop.

Children are supported in learning to consider the needs of others. They enjoy games which require turn taking and are able to celebrate other people's achievements. Children take part in local charity events, helping them to learn about the needs of other people. Children learn about difference and diversity through a range of activities, such as, making star biscuits and tasting apples dipped in honey for the Jewish festival of Rosh Hashanah.

Children's behaviour is good. They respond well to instructions from staff and understand how to use equipment, such as scooters, safely. Children learn about road safety during walks around the local area. Their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy is further enhanced through visits from police officers, doctors and dentists. Children follow good hygiene routines, such as hand washing and most are able to do this independently. Children exercise regularly, both indoors and outside, helping them to understand the benefits of physical activity. Healthy snacks are enjoyed by all children, with fresh fruit and vegetables provided daily. Children have free access to drinking water through individual beakers.

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	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	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

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