

Little Munchkins

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY392543

Inspection date

22/08/2011

Inspector

Mary Chambers

Setting address

Springfield Hotel, 67 The Avenue, FAREHAM, Hampshire,
PO14 1PE

Telephone number

01329230681

Email

little-munchkins@btconnect.com

Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Munchkins registered in 2009. It is situated in a detached house in a residential area of Fareham, Hampshire. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to the large garden and soft play area. The baby and toddler unit is on the first floor. A maximum of 59 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 101 children in the early years age range on roll. Children aged three and four years are funded for free early education. Little Munchkins currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 18 members of staff employed to work with the children, all of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. Some continue to train towards higher level qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a good nursery with some outstanding features. The children thrive within the generally nurturing and well resourced environment. The owners, together with the recently appointed manager, have built a strong staff team who work effectively together to enhance the provision for all children. All policies and procedures are well maintained, regularly reviewed and their implementation monitored to ensure the children's safety and well-being. An effective key person system is implemented so that inclusive practice is fostered. Extremely positive partnerships with parents and other agencies effectively enhance the quality of care that the children receive. The staff demonstrate an exceedingly strong commitment to on-going improvement to continue to cater for the needs of all the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance the play environments so these are rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, words, rhymes, books and pictures to stimulate children's literacy and numeracy development and so help them gain valuable skills for their future lives.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's well-being is paramount. All staff are notably committed to protecting children's welfare, undertaking regular training to do so. Highly efficient systems and procedures for employing staff ensure that the children are extremely well safeguarded. The premises are secure and include the use of a CCTV system. All required risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed by the manager, so children play in safe environments

The manager's vision and leadership have triggered several recent improvements to the nursery, including the very successful new toddler room. Together with the owners, this nursery now has exceptional leadership driving improvement that is both appreciated and supported by all the staff. A very positive climate of team work exists, which is clearly focused on the children's care and well-being. There is a regular focus on self-review and evaluation, which ensures there is no complacency.

The available resources are used well to support children's development. Children benefit from a comparatively large and generally inspiring garden area, which includes a soft surface play for the babies. Very well maintained grounds include many shady areas, such as seating under an oak tree, which helps protect children during hot weather. A brick built path allows children to use wheeled toys on a large circuit. A vegetable garden enhances their understanding of where food comes from. This all supports children's good health effectively, but staff miss chances to encourage children's learning in literacy and numeracy as much as possible when outdoors. This disadvantages those children who learn better when outside.

The nursery has highly positive relationships with all groups of parents and carers. Parents' views are regularly sought on key matters and used in the nursery's very effective self-evaluation system. Suggestions to assist the children's learning at home are now included in the regular newsletters. Parents speak highly of the nursery with comments such as 'My child has loved her time here. She has made great progress and will miss everyone.' and 'My children are both very happy here. They are so lucky to have such wonderful grounds to play in.'

The nursery is highly committed to working in partnership with others and takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships. The manager visits all schools who are receiving children, from the nursery, to ensure a smooth transfer into their reception classes. There are well established channels of communication between all partners involved with individual children, which successfully promotes their welfare and development. Adults actively promote equality and diversity.

They have a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. Staff make the most of diversity to help children understand the society in which they live. Chinese New Year and other festivals are celebrated with the children. Systems are in place for staff to learn key words of the language of any children admitted to the nursery who learn English as an additional language, showing the management is committed to improving outcomes for children and taking effective steps to close possible achievement gaps. However a lack of some resources for literacy and numeracy in some spaces fails to maximise the children's learning.

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

The children are happy and confident within this generally well planned, safe environment. They show a clear understanding of ways to keep themselves safe. They put on cycle helmets before riding their bikes around the brick paved path and all put on their sun hats before going out into the garden, understanding why. The younger babies and toddlers clearly feel safe as they are happily engaged and have developed very secure relationships with the adults.

Learning how to stay healthy is encouraged exceptionally well from an early age in the nursery. Children make quick progress in following excellent hygiene routines; for example, toddlers automatically go straight to the sink to wash their hands following a messy activity. Most of them need only a little assistance, as everything is at their height to promote their independence. They respond with smiles to praise for their attempts, showing how their confidence is boosted.

At snack time, all children enjoy healthy snacks of fruit, vegetables and bread sticks, choosing milk or water to drink. This time is a happy sociable one where all the children sit down together. The older children's understanding of healthy eating is promoted still further through use of the nursery's vegetable garden. Children help to plant seeds, watch the crops grow and then assist with picking the vegetables. These are used in their lunches and snacks, which helps the nursery's commitment to sustainability.

Babies and toddlers make very rapid progress in their bright, nurturing environment. The babies explore their surroundings confidently, delighting in watching toys move, as they turn handles and push buttons. In the toddler group, children are fascinated by changing textures when experimenting with rolling and squashing beans as part of their planned messy play.

Children in the pre-school group happily engage in a variety of interesting activities. They enjoy participating in group parachute games in the garden and in a 'Sticky Kids' dancing session. They make sound progress in their learning overall, which is not always extended fully; for example, children's imaginative play is not supported with a wide range of stimulating resources.

Staff model respectful, caring attitudes and suitable behaviour extremely well.

Children are given frequent praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour. Nursery 'rules' are simple and appropriate to this age group and are reinforced with photographs of children behaving well. The children are encouraged to use good manners at meal times and serve their own portions of lunch. Most manage this with a little assistance. Consideration of others feelings is promoted right from the baby room, as they hear staff use words such as 'We are gentle and share our toys in nursery'. The children are developing useful skills for their future lives overall. Toddlers hear staff saying numbers and they enjoy trying to count the children sitting at their table for snack time. Children progress generally well in literacy and numeracy but the older children's environment does not stimulate these aspects of learning fully; for example, the book corner appears somewhat neglected and books are not presented invitingly. The pre-school room is well equipped with information and communication technology resources. These older children have the use of an interactive white board for games and exploration. They play with an interactive globe, delightedly announcing animals names when

using a special pen, gaining knowledge of the wider world as they do so.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	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	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	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