

Little Leaves Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 127211
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Inspector Beryl Witheridge

Setting address New Ash Green Youth Centre, Ash Road, New Ash Green,
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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 Leaves Pre-School opened in 1988 and operates from two rooms in a youth centre. It is situated in the village of New Ash Green, Kent. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9am to 12 noon during term time. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor, play area.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 29 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, six staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, including the manager. There is one member of staff working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The staff soundly promote and meet the unique needs of each child to satisfactorily support their welfare and progress in learning. Overall, staff use assessment appropriately to lead planning but they are not well included in this process and next steps are not robustly recorded. The partnership with parents is good but links with other settings are not well established. All staff are involved in evaluating the provision and they have identified some strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement. Ongoing aims to maintain continuous improvement and develop the provision help to appropriately promote the outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- combine the knowledge, skills and expertise of all staff members to clearly identify learning priorities and to plan the learning experiences for each child
- share relevant information gained through systematic observations of children's interests and achievements with other settings so there is continuity and coherence in children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are soundly safeguarded through the pre-school's policies, strategies and procedures that help to promote their welfare. Staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues. They know where to access relevant information and what to do in the event of a concern. Appropriate recruitment and vetting help to ensure that all adults working with the children are suitable to do so. Induction enables them to know their individual roles and responsibilities. Ongoing monitoring of staff performance through appraisals helps to promote children's welfare. Clear risk assessment and daily checks are used to suitably identify and reduce the risk of accidental injury to children. The staff also carry out risk assessment for each outing. Children take part in regular evacuation drills, so they know what to do in an emergency.

The pre-school is committed to continuous improvement by appropriately evaluating strengths and weaknesses. Staff hold monthly, monitoring meetings to look at areas for improvement and to set action plans to meet these. The recommendations from the last inspection have been fully addressed, helping to improve practice for children. The provision of good quality toys, resources and experiences enable children to make choices, as well as learn through suitable adult support. Resources are freely available and clearly labelled, enabling children to make decisions about what they want to play with to encourage their independence.

Equality and diversity are soundly promoted. Staff monitor their practice so that pre-school experiences are available to all children and their needs are suitably supported. This support soundly extends to the needs of those with special educational needs, for those speaking English as an additional language and for their families. Children have plenty of opportunities to begin to learn about diversity in society.

Working in partnership with others, overall, satisfactorily supports the needs of individual children and their parents. For example, staff work closely with other agencies and professionals involved in the care of children. However, the links with other settings that children attend are not well established. Staff recognise that this is an area for improvement so that children receive good continuity of care and learning.

Children benefit from the effective partnerships between staff and their parents. Regular newsletters keep families up to date with what is happening in the pre-school. Parents read and sign up to the policies and procedures. Staff work closely with parents to share the written observations and assessments of children's progress. Parents are able to see their child's 'unique story' every term or more often, if they wish. They say their children are well cared for by staff who know them well. They are happy with their children's progress and feel that staff are extremely supportive.

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

Children show they feel safe as they are happy and settled. They feel comfortable with staff, who are attentive to their individual needs as they sit with them at their play. Children gain confidence and are developing their language skills through talking, listening and sharing stories and books. They are able to follow the story, answer questions about the pictures and join in eagerly with refrains. They enjoy using the microphones, recording their voices and then sharing the result with friends. They are beginning to extend their learning through use of simple computers and cameras. Children are developing sound skills for the future.

Children make decisions about what they want to play with, as well as taking part in adult-led activities. Their individual needs and interests are identified and recorded in their 'unique story'. Staff record children's starting points when they first attend the pre-school and offer activities that build on children's known skills and areas of interest. They undertake observations and assessments to identify children's next steps and include these in the planning. However, staff do not always record the next steps in folders that are shared with parents. Therefore, parents may not always receive a clear picture of their child's progress. The planning is mainly drawn up by the deputy manager; staff make some suggestions for their key children and the areas in which they may require extra help and support.

Children dance and sing enthusiastically, joining in the actions with obvious joy and vitality. They show great skill when building with construction materials, for example, making models with magnetic shapes to admire each other's designs. They receive much praise and encouragement from staff for their hard work and concentration skills. Children experiment with colour and texture. They love mixing paints together to see what colours they can make. They use their imaginations well and produce some beautiful paintings and art work.

Children have free access to a safe, secure and well resourced, outdoor area. This allows them free choice in their indoor and outdoor play throughout most of the session. They love to dig in the garden. One child tapped on the ground, as a bird would do to make worms come to the surface. Later, a member of staff asked him if he had found any worms. He replied, 'No, but I did find a mole.' He then produced a mole puppet which he has found in the puppet box. He was very pleased with his joke, especially when staff and other children laughed with him. Children use the garden to grow seeds and flowers and take an interest in nature. Their knowledge and understanding of the world around them is being soundly developed in many ways.

Children gain a good understanding about healthy lifestyles. They access healthy drinks and snacks during the session. They independently pour their drinks, spread their toppings on their crackers and select their favourite fruits and vegetables. Drinks of water are available at all times. Children effectively understand the need for hygiene routines. Staff provide them with facilities to wash their hands in the play room before and after eating or playing in the garden. Children happily and

independently wash their hands after messy play.

Sound behaviour management procedures support children to develop responsibility for their actions. They play cooperatively together and respond appropriately to praise and encouragement. This gives them the incentive to succeed and develop their confidence and self-esteem. Any concerns over behaviour are discussed with parents and other professionals involved in the care of the family; strategies are set in place to meet children's individual requirements. Staff are consistent role models to children; they deal with any behaviour issues quietly, calmly and firmly. Overall, an inclusive and welcoming service is provided.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

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