

Little Sparkles

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Little Sparkles registered in 2011. The pre-school is part of St Mark's Children's Centre provision and is based within the grounds of St Mark's School in Mitcham, Surrey. The pre-school operates from the children's centre, which is in a single storey, accessible building. It has use of a main playroom and an enclosed, outdoor, play area. The pre-school serves the local community. It is on the Early Years Register to care for 20 children aged two years. There are currently 21 children on roll, who attend on various days. The pre-school is open from 8.30am until 11.30am each weekday morning during term time. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. There are five staff working at the pre-school, who all have relevant childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The pre-school successfully promotes most aspects of children's welfare and development. Children are safe and well cared for, overall, in the welcoming, inclusive and, mostly, well-planned environment. Good relationships with parents and effective partnerships with other professionals ensure that staff know children well and their individual needs are effectively met. Children make good progress in their learning, given their age, ability and starting points. The staff and management team continually monitor the service they provide and demonstrate good capacity to improve through identifying priorities for future development. The pre-school's service is responsive to the needs of the children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the outdoor play environment further in order to extend outside, learning opportunities for children
- review arrangements for hand drying in order to minimise the risk of cross-infection and extend children's understanding of good hygiene practices.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. Staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities in this area and follow clear procedures for managing any concerns about a child. Children are cared for by well-qualified staff, who have all been appropriately vetted. Staff make sure that all required documentation that supports the pre-school's smooth, day-to-day running is in place and is

comprehensive and up to date. Members of the staff team work well together, effectively sharing tasks and responsibilities throughout the day, including conducting thorough risk assessments or planning an activity. Staff make good use of resources to create a well-planned, welcoming and interesting indoor environment. As a result, children easily access wide varieties of good quality, play materials that are suitable for their age and needs. Children also access a variety of resources outside in the pre-school garden. However, the use of the outdoor area to create a stimulating environment, rich in learning opportunities, is not yet fully developed. Free choice of outdoor play is restricted in the colder months as the play surface becomes worn. Though children have daily access to a playground, there is no specific planning for outdoor play at present.

Staff value partnerships with parents highly. Families are kept well informed about all aspects of children's care and learning, through daily discussions, notice boards, newsletters and regular meetings. The positive relationships that staff have with parents contribute significantly to children's well-being. Staff gain a thorough understanding of each child's background and needs, for example, by making home visits before children start at the pre-school. They also work closely in partnership with other professionals and agencies, where children require additional support or attend other early years provisions. They adapt care effectively where needed, including using sign language to aid communication and dividing children into smaller groups for stories. This helps to ensure that children's individual needs are met and equality and diversity are successfully promoted.

The management team is strongly committed to continuous improvement. Managers make good use of discussions with staff, feedback from parents and the support of the local authority to monitor and evaluate the provision. Actions taken are well chosen to improve outcomes for children. For example, the pre-school has improved the safety of the garden and built a safer, more accessible step for the children's cloakroom. Staff have reviewed the use of large group times to make sure the needs of all the children are effectively met.

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

Children show a strong sense of belonging at the pre-school. They settle quickly, and are confident. They show good levels of independence, as they find their own coat on their peg to go outside and help themselves to resources. They learn to keep themselves safe when they remember not to run inside. They help tidy the toys so that nobody falls over them and take part in a regular fire drill. Overall, children gain a good understanding about healthy lifestyles. They make healthy choices as they enjoy a selection of fresh fruit at snack time and help themselves to water to drink. They play outside in the fresh air every day as part of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy visits to the school playground, where they practise their physical skills on large, climbing equipment. Children adopt a thorough hygiene routine when they wash their hands before their snack or after using the toilet. However, the current arrangement of sharing a towel for hand drying does not minimise risk of cross-infection or extend children's understanding of good

practice.

Staff know children well and make regular observations of their achievements. They use these effectively to plan activities that build on their learning and support their good progress towards the early learning goals. Children take part in a wide variety of activities and experiences across all areas of the curriculum. They quickly become familiar with the daily routines and expectations. For example, they sit quietly on the carpet at circle time and wait patiently for their turn at the water tray. They listen attentively to a familiar story, remembering some of the words and phrases. They develop good skills for the future. They follow the pictorial timetable, count how many children are already playing with the water and push buttons to make a 'telephone' call. Children eagerly find out why things happen and how things work. For example, when they pull the plunger up and down in a syringe, they discover that the water squirts up into the air. They experiment with play dough, using cutters, moulds and their hands to squash and squeeze it into shapes. They use their imaginations when they 'make' tea in the role-play area, stirring and mixing ingredients in a pan. They extend their creativity when they dress up to role play in colourful costumes or paint swirling pictures with big brushes at the easel. Children benefit from a balanced routine, with opportunities for uninterrupted, free play, as well as group sessions. They are well occupied throughout the morning and thoroughly enjoy their time at the 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?	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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