

Little Apples

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 502595
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Inspector Janice Ellis

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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 Apples is run by The Apple Trust and was registered in 2001. It operates from two rooms in the St Gabriel's Parish Rooms near to Huyton town centre in the Knowsley area of Liverpool. The children have access to a secure, enclosed area for outdoor play. The setting serves the local area.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the early years setting at any one time and during school hours; this increases to 42 children for out-of-school provision. There are currently 57 children from two to 11 years on roll, of whom 26 are in the early years age range. Six children currently receive nursery education funding. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Children attend for a variety of sessions which are from 8am until 5.30pm. Eight full and four part-time staff work with the children, including the managers. All have early years qualifications from Level 3 to Level 6. The setting is supported by the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

There is abundant evidence of improvements made to the setting through training, resources and an on-going commitment to ensuring a high quality provision. There is a clear, ambitious vision which is shared by all trustees, staff and parents.

The children are extremely happy, busy and thoroughly engaged in everything on offer. They are encouraged to be independent through access to a high- quality environment with sensitive support from knowledgeable, caring practitioners. All staff are committed to establishing excellent relationships with all children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensure that parents are given opportunities to review their children's progress regularly and contribute to their child's learning and development record.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff ensure that children are kept very safe and are well protected in the setting because there are highly effective policies and procedures in place that are adhered to at all times. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures and know what to do if they have any concerns about the children's well-being. They have all been appropriately vetted and are safe and suitable to work with young children. They make every effort to get to know each child as an individual and understand the importance of their role as a key person. In addition, all staff have attended first aid training. This means that the children are exceptionally safe and feel very comfortable and confident in their care. Each day, rigorous checks are made of the areas and resources which the children will be using both indoors and out, which means that the children can move freely and safely and play with confidence. Children are gently reminded about the need to observe safe practices and are supported to resolve conflicts swiftly and sensitively by highly skilled staff.

Staff are highly motivated to attend training courses and bring back their newly acquired knowledge of innovative practice and new initiatives to the setting. For example, recent training around supporting the development of mathematical concepts has led to numbers, shapes and sizes being displayed more prominently across the whole nursery and mathematical language being used more often in natural situations.

Staff are exceptionally responsive to the needs of young children and all hold appropriate childcare qualifications. They offer sensitive support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work wholeheartedly in partnership with parents and other professionals to provide extra support by attending multi-agency meetings and drawing up play plans for additional support. They readily adapt activities to ensure that all children can access them. A highly effective equal opportunities policy ensures that the individual needs of all children are met and they are included fully in the life of the setting.

The enthusiastic practitioners form very close working relationships with parents and carers through informal chats each day and more formally through newsletters, questionnaires and the sharing of the children's achievements. The practitioners are continually exploring new and more effective ways to share ideas and information with parents. For example, they have recently introduced children's learning stories which are inspiring and exciting to read. Highly successful relationships with other early years providers and professionals involved with the children are well-established, in particular when children attend other settings or go to school, which means that transitions are particularly smooth.

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

Staff are exceedingly confident in their use of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. They use information from their meticulous observations of each child's learning and development to plan enjoyable activities that will capture each child's interest. They use a rigorous tracking system which enables them to ensure that all children are being supported consistently and effectively in all areas of learning and development. Children feel exceptionally safe in the setting because they know that the caring, responsive staff understand them and will respond to their needs. The children are listened to and their needs anticipated, for example, when they appear tired they are provided with a quiet place to rest. The children are also reminded by staff of the safety rules of the setting and good behaviour is reinforced through praise and encouragement and by example from the staff themselves.

The children are offered healthy food options at snack time, such as different fruits, crackers and toast. There is fresh drinking water available throughout the session which the children pour for themselves. They are given nourishing foods cooked on the premises by trained, knowledgeable staff. The children are given the opportunity to try out different foods, or foods from other cultures. Dietary needs are known and catered for sensitively. Children also thoroughly enjoy being physically active. For example, they are given daily opportunities to be outside where they run, jump, play games and explore the vast range of resources on offer. They are encouraged to dance or initiate impromptu games indoors, such as, rolling the hoops along the hall floor to see how far they will go and chasing them with great glee.

Children love being in the setting and have excellent relationships with staff and with other children. They invite the enthusiastic adults into their play, for example, when they play at being a hairdresser or play football outside. Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals because they are confident, enthusiastic and independent due to the highly effective environment provided for them. They have many opportunities to write, share books and ask questions or make requests. They show that they listen well, particularly to exciting stories that capture their interest, and they join in with great gusto and enthusiasm. They learn about capacity as they pour and fill their own drinks or use the different sized bottles and funnels in the water trough. They count how many pieces of toast or fruit they have put on their plates and recognise and match numerals on a number chart. They use a computer with a child-sized keyboard and find out about their community with frequent visits to the library, park and the local shops.

Children behave very well in the setting because the staff are very vigilant and deal with potential conflicts quickly and sensitively. For example, a tussle over a toy is turned into an enjoyable turn-taking game where the children time each other's turn. Children are developing an exemplary respect for themselves and others and they show this, for example, by helping to mop up spilled drinks 'so that people won't fall'. The children are learning in a very natural way about other cultures and beliefs. They play with dolls, read books and look at photographs and posters

which are available to them at all times. Staff make highly effective use of books and activities to introduce new ideas and promote diversity, such as, looking at their own and each other's faces and discussing their own families. The setting celebrates cultural occasions and festivals by following the children's natural interest. For example, Chinese New Year was recently celebrated by looking at photographs of a dragon parade brought in by a child and identifying the animals on a Chinese calendar.

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?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
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	1

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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