

Little Learners Day Care Centre

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 Learners nursery re-registered under new management in 2011 and is privately owned. It operates from four rooms in a purpose-built building situated on a large business park close to Oldbury in Sandwell. The nursery is accessible to all children. There is a separate secure enclosed outdoor play area within the premises. Children come from a wide catchment area as most of their parents travel in to work on or around the business park.

Little Learners nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7am to 6.30pm for 50 weeks of the year. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 52 children under five years of age at any one time. There are currently 48 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

There are 12 members of staff employed to work directly with the children. Of these, 11 hold early years qualifications and one staff member is currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the early years team of the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are recognised and consistently met by a team of staff who plan and provide good learning opportunities for children of all ages. Staff are professional in their practice providing an inclusive environment to ensure children's individual needs are fully understood and respected. The whole team has a cooperative approach to engaging children, parents and carers in supporting positive outcomes for the children. They are motivated towards continuous improvement and use generally effective systems to monitor, review and reflect on the practice used within the nursery. Partnerships with other professionals and providers are in place and offer consistency to enable children to make transition between settings with ease.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the risk assessment to ensure that it covers anything with which a child may come into contact to ensure children's safety and well being
- review assessment systems so that parents have regular opportunities to add to records

- involve parents in practical ways to support their child's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare is effectively maintained in the setting. Rigorous and robust recruitment and vetting procedure ensures staff hold appropriate qualifications and are suitable to be working with children. All staff understands their responsibilities to safeguard children and capably describe procedures for working with relevant agencies to protect children from harm or neglect. In the main, the environment indoors and outside is subjected to thorough risk assessment, however cookery and gardening activities children take part in needs further monitoring to ensure that potential hazards to children are minimised effectively. All records relating to children's individual health and safety are suitably maintained.

The setting displays children's art work and has a key worker system in place which helps to create a child-friendly environment where children settle quickly. Sufficient age appropriate resources are available. Ratios of staff to children are exceeded and staff are well deployed resulting in children receiving high-quality interaction and support. Routines run smoothly as visual aids such as signs and symbols are used to help children understand daily routines. The nursery actively promotes inclusive practice at all times and works well to ensure that each child and family is fully included in the life of the setting. Staff have an excellent understanding of children's individual needs and recognise and value children's differences.

Parents receive a good level of information about the setting through the parents' notice board. Staff keeps parents very well informed on all aspects of their child's achievement, well-being and development, however parents are not actively encouraged to play a part in their child's learning and development at home or add their comments to contribute to the educational programme. This has the potential to hinder children's progress. The setting promotes good partnerships working with other professionals because staff recognises the importance of this to support children's individual needs. They make appropriate links should the need arise, to ensure continuity of care and learning and a smooth transition as children move on in their education.

The new management demonstrates a commitment to improving their practice and has a clear vision for the future to maintain continuous improvement. Regular staff meetings provide valuable opportunities for practitioners to share good practice and to identify their training needs, which are prioritised by the manager. Staff attend various training courses to increase their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and to ensure that all keep up-to-date with changes. The management team and staff are working together on the process of self-evaluation of the setting, and have identified strengths and areas for development. They are implementing action plans to bring about improvements for the benefit of the children.

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

Staff demonstrate a confident knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are effective in helping children progress very well in all areas of learning. They observe children during play and record their achievements. They use this information to highlight any gaps in children's learning. Activities are then planned to take account of children's interests and their individual learning needs and plan next steps for them to work towards. This method is effective and, as a result, children make good progress.

Good relationships are evident between the staff and children. They are appropriately comforted by staff, helping them to feel safe and secure. Children make good friends, they chat whilst they play and they are encouraged to play together and learn about right and wrong. Children move around the room developing their independence as they choose what they play with. They are able to continue playing with the toys and resources until they are finished. Children develop hand-control needed for later writing as they use a range of tools in art and craft activities such as stencils, paints and crayons to produce some very effective art work. Older children show developing skills in labelling their own art work. Their language skills are developing as staff engage in play with the children and take time to listen to them during social times. Routines are used effectively for example, staff encourage children to take responsibility for tidying up and putting their coats on for outdoor play. This helps to develop children's independence skills.

Babies enjoy musical toys and show pleasure as they press buttons or create a sound with the rattles. All children undertake messy play activities, such as painting and sticking, which stimulates their creative development. Babies enjoy exploring different mediums such as playing with damp sand, soil and paint. Simple mathematical and scientific concepts are introduced during story time with older children as they sing number rhymes and songs or during sand play, comparing and filling different sized of containers.

Children also develop skills for the future through the range of activities such as, exploring technology using a variety of programmable toys. Staff provide opportunities for children to consolidate skills learned and enable them to develop awareness of the world around them as they take part in a variety of cultural festivals and special events such as a 'pirate' party where children hunted for gold coins. Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world as they learn about the food chain through planting, growing and harvesting cress to make egg and cress sandwiches or use vegetables dipped in paint for printing. Children develop a range of physical skills and benefit from fresh air and exercise through energetic play outdoors. Younger children also have fun dancing indoors to familiar songs during music and movement sessions.

Methods used to encourage children to follow effective hygiene routines such as, hand cleansing before snacks or after nappy changing are appropriate. Good procedures have been implemented to ensure that children's dietary requirements are recognised and met appropriately. They enjoy snacks which consist of a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables and meals are freshly prepared on site are nutritionally balanced. Meals and snack times are sociable occasions when children sit round the table together and chat about their day. Overall very good methods are used to encourage children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Children are beginning to understand about staying safe as they practise evacuation procedures and learn how to use equipment safely. Older children respond well to gentle reminders of not running indoors in case they slip. The support and care they receive from staff and the bonds they are forming with them enable children to feel secure and safe in their environment. Behaviour is good in the setting. Children begin to understand the need to share and take turns appropriately supported by staff. They show care and consideration for each other, taking turns and demonstrating very good manners, remembering to say please and thank you at relevant times.

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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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