

# Little Bears Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspection date** 06/03/2012  
**Inspector** Heather Morgan

**Setting address** Shebbear Community School, Shebbear, Beaworthy,  
Devon, EX21 5SG

**Telephone number** 07890 814564

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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 Bears Pre-School opened around 1970 and was registered on the 12th of October 1998. The setting operates from a Portakabin at Shebbear Community School. Shebbear village is in the triangle between the towns of Holsworthy, Hatherleigh and Great Torrington, Devon. Children also have use of a secure, enclosed area for outside play. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 14 children in the early years age range may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open on weekdays during term time from 9am to 12.30pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and from 9am to 3.15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There are currently 17 children on roll between the age of two and the end of the early years age range. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school, which is managed by a committee of parents and interested others, employs three members of staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, one at level 2 and one at level 3. The setting works in partnership with the staff at Shebbear Community School.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The staff team know the children well, and overall, they work together well to meet each child's individual needs and to support their development; consequently children make good progress in their learning overall. Staff are reflective and critically evaluate their practice in order to find ways to continuously drive improvement and enhance provision for children; as a result there is a good capacity to improve. Staff have a strong commitment to maintaining the safety and security of the children. The excellent partnership with parents and carers results in highly effective links between children's learning at home and at pre-school. Effective links with the host school facilitate a smooth transition when it is time for children to move on.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- involve children in identifying issues and finding solutions to further promote harmonious cooperative play
- develop further the procedures for identifying each child's next steps for learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding is good and staff have a firm understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe and secure. They are familiar with the clear and comprehensive related policies in place. They attend regular training to help keep their knowledge up to date and support them in addressing any concerns. There are robust vetting procedures in place to support the pre-school in assessing the suitability of staff. Staff work closely together to observe children at play and plan activities that build on their current interests to support their learning and development. A regular focus on individual children supports staff well in tracking their progress, although current planning and assessment procedures do not make clear what the next steps for learning are for each child. Nevertheless, because staff know children well they interact sensitively to nurture and encourage them as they learn through play. Children's behaviour is good overall and staff are always on hand to manage conflict. However, they do not always consistently support children in beginning to learn how to negotiate and sort things out for themselves. Consequently, even older children turn to staff to sort things out for them. Managers embed ambition well so that staff are reflective and committed to improvement. They critically evaluate the activities they offer, the daily routines and the way they present resources. They value the input of other professionals and implement action plans that drive improvement. For example, they have rearranged the room to make a wider range of resources accessible and introduced a 'café' style snack to reduce the amount of waiting time for children. The pre-school is well resourced and equipment is presented attractively to encourage children to access it independently. Staff are deployed effectively to support children's independent choices and engage in their play. Recent improvements to the outdoor area have provided a much-improved play space that can be used in all weathers. Children are supported well in learning about different cultures within their rural community, which has limited diversity. They explore books that provide positive images of diversity and engage in themed activities that help them learn about a range of festivals and traditions. Staff are very aware of the differing developmental needs of two-year-olds in the setting and have attended training to help them adapt their provision to ensure all children are supported in achieving their full potential. For example, they limit the total number of children attending in order to provide appropriate adult support and adapt the layout of the room to give the youngest children plenty of space and access to many activities. Excellent engagement with parents and carers forges really strong links between children's learning at home and at pre-school. Very effective exchange of information, particularly through the use of home diaries, ensures staff and parents and carers share what they know about children's interests and abilities. The pre-school enjoys good relationships with the host school. They have established good systems to exchange information about the children who are ready to move on.

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

Children learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They are reminded to wash their hands before eating and many do this independently. They have adapted well to changes in their snack time routine and now choose when they want their snack if they are hungry or thirsty. Children enthusiastically choose to play outdoors whenever they have the opportunity and enjoy running around in the fresh air. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe as they practise fire drills regularly and are reminded how to use resources safely so as not to hurt others. They handle equipment such as scissors safely, and tidy up their toys to prevent others tripping over. Overall, children's behaviour is good. They learn to play together harmoniously, sharing resources and taking turns, although they sometimes need the support of an adult to manage minor disagreements. Children make good friends with one another and enjoy playing in small groups. They enjoy visiting places of local interest and learning about other cultures and traditions as they participate in a range of celebrations, including those of national importance such as the Royal Wedding and forthcoming Olympics. Children are supported well by adults who understand them and respond well to their current interests. Staff's regular observation of children and assessment of their progress ensures they plan activities that capture children's imagination and support their development. Children's self-esteem is promoted effectively as staff regularly praise their achievements. Consequently they confidently select resources and initiate activities for themselves. They enjoy singing, listening to stories and are developing a good understanding that print carries meaning as they develop their mark-making skills and ascribe meaning to the marks they make. Children spontaneously count the resources they handle and use comparative language to describe what they are doing. For example, in the garden they talk about making bubbles go higher, or making big and small bubbles. Children are inquisitive learners and like to develop themed activities. For example, while making a home for pets, they added a fish and created an appropriate habitat using a clear plastic container. They enjoy exploring the different properties of natural resources such as sand, water and clay. Children use the outdoor area well to develop their physical skills. For example, they manoeuvre wheeled toys skilfully, climb, slide and balance on the range of equipment. They like to express themselves in different ways as they mix paint to create different colours or engage in imaginative role play in the 'vet's' and the home corner, enacting familiar experiences and developing stories together. Overall, children are supported well in making good progress in their learning and development, which builds a firm foundation for their future learning.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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## **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