

# Little Explorers

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Inspection date</b>	06/03/2012
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 Explorers is privately owned and managed. It registered with Ofsted in 2011. It operates from the Scout Headquarters in Burbage, Leicestershire. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding area and has strong links with three local schools. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term-time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 2.15pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions, including lunch time. A maximum of 30 children aged from two to five years, may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 13 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It has systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff, including the manager are working towards degree qualifications and two are working towards Early Years Professional Status. The pre-school is a member of a recognised childcare organisation and receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a varied range of stimulating activities which cover each area of learning. Observations are used well to support children's ongoing progress toward the early learning goals. The setting is generally well-organised, although staff deployment and risk assessments are not always fully effective in practice. This potentially compromises children's safety and limits some of their learning experiences. Partnerships with parents, carers and other childcare professionals are very strong and supportive, leading to an inclusive service for all children. The provider demonstrates strong ambition and drive, promoting improvement through continuous self-review, taking into account the voices of the children, their parents and the staff team.

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

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- assess further the risks to children in relation to the insecure heater guard and take action to minimise these (Suitable premises, environment and

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- equipment)
- ensure that the individual needs of all children are met through effective staff deployment. (Organisation) 20/03/2012

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

- improve systems for dealing with potential hazards. This refers to discarded cigarette ends in the garden.

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

Children are protected from incidents of abuse because staff are vigilant about safeguarding procedures. They know what to look for and have effective systems in place to report any concerns about a child's well-being. Staff conduct daily safety checks of the premises to make sure that the toys, equipment and play areas are safe and suitable for children to use. However, at times, staff are not deployed effectively which means that they have little time to complete thorough checks at the beginning of a session. As a result, cigarette ends left by previous community hall users are not cleared away from a corner of the outdoor play area, leaving them accessible to the children. Risk assessment records contain all of the necessary information to ensure that most risks are suitably identified and minimised. However, the fireguard used to prevent children accessing the floor level halogen heaters is not secured to the wall. This creates a potentially high risk to children's safety as they play in close proximity to this area. Children receive good levels of support most of the time as appropriate ratios are maintained. However, sufficient numbers of staff are not always available to meet the needs of all children during the settling-in phase. Consequently, some children are not fully engaged in purposeful learning experiences.

Detailed information about each child is obtained and accurately recorded and all of the necessary consents are in place. This ensures that overall children receive safe and individualised care. There is a highly effective policy in place to promote equality and anti-discriminatory practice, successfully promoting inclusion. Children are welcomed from diverse communities and their individuality is highly regarded. They take part in activities and events which help them to develop respect and consideration toward people who have different lifestyles, religions, ethnicity and abilities. Toys and play materials are readily accessible to children in low-level and open storage containers, encouraging them to make choices and decisions about their own play.

The provider uses self-evaluation systems well to identify the settings many strengths and to highlight key areas for improvement. This leads to the organisation of a stimulating outdoor area and successful partnerships with parents, benefiting children's good health and emotional well-being. Staff are highly committed to the work they do, attending regular training courses to keep up-to-date with new ideas and information. Several members of staff including the manager are undertaking advanced training courses to significantly enhance their

professional knowledge and skills. The setting maintains very good links with other community providers and childcare organisations, fostering strong working partnerships to support children's learning and development needs. Parents are well informed about the educational programmes throughout the induction procedure. Information about their child's daily care, activities and 'learning journey' is shared through regular discussion and informative progress records. Displays of activity plans, forthcoming projects and children's artwork, create opportunities for parents to support their child's learning at home. This ensures that all children receive complementary care and education. Parents' comments and views are welcomed and actively sought through discussion and satisfaction questionnaires. Parents state that they are 'very happy' with all aspects of the provision and the care their children receive.

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

Children make steady progress toward the early learning goals. Staff plan a varied range of stimulating learning and development experiences which offer children suitable levels of challenge, most of the time. However, at times when younger children require high levels of attention, opportunities to support and extend other children's individual interests and capabilities are sometimes missed. As a result, some children show little interest and become easily distracted from some activities, which have limited purpose and meaning. Despite this, observations and assessments are used well to inform future planning and to identify children's 'next steps' in learning. This enables children to participate in activities, both indoors and outside, which cover all areas of learning. For example, children move around freely within this bright, warm and welcoming setting. Picture labels and photographs are attractively displayed to promote spontaneous discussion and self-selection of toys and play materials. Children enjoy opportunities for quiet and rest in the cosy book corner, looking at picture books and sharing stories with adults and each other, developing a keen interest in reading for pleasure. Children express a range of emotions, smiling broadly to show enjoyment and seek comfort from trusted adults when they are feeling sad. They form strong attachments to their key worker and form new friendships with other children, developing their confidence and social interactions within a supportive environment.

Children's creativity and imagination is supported well. They enjoy role play games in the home corner, making 'cups of tea' and 'cooking' for each other. They show care and consideration in their play, tucking the dolls up in a cosy blanket 'for a sleep'. They enjoy making three-dimensional models and dens out of boxes, using a variety of art and craft materials. Staff skilfully utilise children's interests in vehicles to stimulate other areas of learning, such as measuring how big a rocket is, how fast it travels and where it goes. This helps children to develop their problem-solving and numeracy skills through play.

Outdoor play is a significant feature of children's daily routine and learning. They enjoy robust physical activity, playing on the small trampoline and wheeling peddled toys with good control and coordination. They show fascination and interest in the frozen sheets of water on the water play tray and are encouraged to

look at how it is formed and how easily it breaks. However, opportunities for sustained discussion are not always maximised to their full potential. Children look at and point to the moving wind chimes and other attractive ornaments displayed in the garden, developing their sensory awareness as they observe the changing colours and sounds. They take part in planting and growing projects which help them to develop a sense of time, as they look forward to the growth of new spring flowers. They investigate and explore features of the natural world as they dig and find mini creatures and put out bird feeders and boxes to attract new wildlife to their garden.

Lunchtimes are sociable occasions when adults and children enjoy time together. This provides good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills. They follow good health and hygiene routines, washing their hands clean before they eat their meals. They develop positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles, eating nutritious meals and snacks and are encouraged to drink plenty of water throughout the day.

## 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>	3
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>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
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	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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