

Little Oaks @ St Marys Catholic School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 Oaks @ St Marys Catholic School is a limited company and was registered in 2010. It operates from two mobile classrooms within the grounds of St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Studley, Warwickshire. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The setting offers care for children who attend St Mary's Catholic Primary School, St Mary's Junior Church of England School and Studley Community Infants School.

The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children from four years to eight years, at any one time. There are currently nine children attending in the early years age group. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 9am for breakfast sessions and 3pm to 6pm during the school term. It operates a holiday club during the school holidays from 8.30am to 6pm.

The setting employs five members of staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager has a degree in Early Years Education. The group receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

An inclusive and welcoming service is provided. Children are safe and secure and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging. They are making suitable progress and on the whole, planned experiences reflect their individual needs and interests. Partnerships with parents and others are generally sound and documentation is appropriately maintained. Staff and the management committee are constantly reviewing practice and show a suitable capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systems for planning, observation and assessment to gain a clearer view of children's interests, what they can do and where they need to go next in their learning and development
- improve the two-way flow of information with parents and develop strategies for working in partnership with other settings that children attend.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are good. The premises are safe and secure and effective risk assessment procedures help to identify and minimise any potential risks to children. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to implement the local safeguarding procedures. A clear safeguarding policy is in place and all staff members have received relevant training. Robust recruitment and induction procedures are in place and all adults working in the setting have been appropriately vetted.

Children have sufficient space to play and rest. Staff utilise the limited space within the mobile classrooms creatively and children regularly play outdoors. There are areas, within the classrooms, for children to relax and engage in quiet activities and children treat resources with care and respect. A variety of resources are stored in ways that children can easily access and this helps to foster their independence and freedom of choice.

The management committee and staff are enthusiastic and highly motivated. They show a sound understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses and self-evaluation is ongoing. A strong commitment towards improvement is evident and everyone involved in the setting has worked hard to raise standards since their last inspection. All actions and recommendations have been appropriately addressed and there has been a thorough review of all policies and procedures. The setting seeks the views of children and parents and their suggestions have led to improvements in meals and resources.

Children are valued as individuals and inclusive practice is evident in all policies and procedures. There are no children currently attending the setting with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, staff are aware of the value of partnership working to support children's progress and individual requirements. Partnerships with parents and others are satisfactory. A friendly rapport is evident between staff and parents at collection times and regular verbal communication is maintained. Parents interviewed during the inspection commented on the friendly staff and how happy their children are to attend.

Strong links exist with St Mary's School and this ensures coherence and consistency of care for the children that attend this school. However, strategies to establish successful two-way communication with parents and to form good partnership with another local school that some children attend are less effective. Regular newsletters are sent out to parents and some examples of children's work adorn the walls of the classroom. However, written policies and procedures and planning are not consistently shared with parents and there are no systems in place to gather information from the other school some children attend. For example, staff are unaware of children's progress at this school and know very little about what the school does in relation to behaviour management. Consequently, the ability of staff to help children settle and reach their full potential is somewhat reduced.

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

Children are making suitable progress. They arrive at the setting full of enthusiasm and quickly settle down to play. On the whole, staff work well to meet children's individual needs. Staff observe children to see what they enjoy and link some of the planned experiences to events and themes occurring at St Mary's School. For example, the school encourages children to explore their own cultures and those of others and the setting expands on this through discussion and experiences that include cookery and craft. However, effective systems for planning, observation and assessment are not yet in place and this potentially reduces children's enjoyment and learning potential. Staff do not show a secure understanding of what individual children can do or where they intend to move them on next in their learning and development. Also, even though staff ask children for their views to inform the planning of some experiences, this is not a regular occurrence.

Children's understanding of safety issues is demonstrated through their play and conversation. They show an awareness of potential safety hazards as they push chairs under the tables when they stand up and tidy away toys after use. They regularly practise emergency evacuation procedures and participate in experiences planned around road safety. Children adopt good personal hygiene routines and know that they must wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. They eat healthy snacks and through regular outdoor play are learning about the benefits of fresh air and exercise.

Children are gaining some of the skills they will need in future life. For example, they are learning to problem solve as they play board games and their communication, language and literacy skills are fostered as they look at books and participate in conversations. Children show by their actions that they feel safe and secure. They happily go to staff for comfort, support or reassurance and they are familiar with routines and boundaries. They are polite and well-behaved and show consideration for each other. Staff effectively use a range of positive behaviour management strategies to encourage good behaviour and provide children with good role models to follow. Older children provide effective support to the younger ones and happily read books to them and invite them to join in their experiences. There is a calm and relaxed atmosphere in the setting and there is lots of fun and laughter. Children talk freely to staff about their day at school and show lots of imagination as they engage in imaginary play and pretend to take orders and make meals in the restaurant set up in the role play area.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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