

Little Learners

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*.

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 Learners is a well-established setting which re-registered at the current premises in 2011 and operates from within West Lancashire College in Skelmersdale, Lancashire, close to several local primary schools. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am until 6pm for 50 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 74 children may attend the nursery at any one time and there are currently 56 children on roll. Children may attend for a variety of sessions throughout the week. The nursery provides funded nursery education places for three- and four-year-olds. It also supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

There are 13 members of staff, 12 of whom hold early years qualifications to at least level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are met very well and they make rapid progress in their learning and development. Staff plan and deliver a very good range of activities that reflect children's interests and abilities. The very strong management team inspires staff to evaluate their provision and find effective ways to continually improve their practice. Staff give the highest priority to keeping children safe, secure and happy. Excellent partnership working with parents and strong links with professionals very effectively underpin the individual care offered to each child. Consequently, children are highly confident, settled and enthusiastic in their approach to all the activities on offer.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- encouraging children further to use equipment to enhance their information and communication skills during outdoor play experiences.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Procedures for safeguarding children are very robust and all staff are fully aware of the detailed policies and procedures to follow should they have any concerns. Very

effective recruitment, employment and induction procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Risk assessment is undertaken by staff, and checklists completed on a daily basis are signed by staff and documented clearly. Documentation that supports safety, such as fire evacuation procedures and records of children's accidents and medication, is maintained to ensure that no child's needs are overlooked.

Children benefit from this bright and vibrant nursery environment where space and resources are very well planned to stimulate their curiosity and interests. The well-organised deployment of staff and an effective key worker system mean that children receive good individual attention. They respond positively to the needs of babies and young children, for example, by offering comfort and reassurance if they are upset. All staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, and they work purposefully with all children to ensure they receive enjoyable and challenging learning experiences at the nursery on a daily basis. Observations and assessments of each child's progress and development are monitored and the next steps in their learning identified and planned for. All staff attend regular team meetings and frequent appraisals enable them to identify with the manager their own future training needs and developments for the setting. For example, exploring how the outdoor areas can be altered to enable children using ideas from Forest School training. Staff were fully involved in the meticulous preparation of the self-evaluation document and regularly update action plans for development of their individual rooms.

The setting is highly inclusive and children are valued and cared for as individuals. Included in the range of resources and activities are some which reflect cultural diversity and broaden children's awareness of the wider world. Well-established systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and staff work exceptionally well with parents and have strong links with other professionals to ensure the individual needs of all children are fully met. Parents comment favourably on the care provided and the responsiveness of the nursery in meeting their requests and needs. For example, they state that the support they receive from staff is 'excellent' and the children have 'progressed so well since starting at nursery'. Parents receive information about the nursery in different ways. Staff chat with them as children arrive at and are collected from nursery, and they are given daily information sheets which provide details of their child's care routines and experiences throughout the day. They are also invited to attend regular meetings with their child's key person to report on their progress. The entrance hall notice boards provide additional details about forthcoming events and other information.

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

Children are cared for in a secure and stimulating environment, enabling them to play and learn safely. They move freely between the indoor and outdoor environments throughout the day as their play ideas evolve. They access the climbing frame or roll various objects down the slide and drainpipes. The experienced staff encourage them to predict if the objects will move slowly or

quickly as they let go. Children also enjoy painting and mark making using various chalks and pencils. They receive a variety of opportunities to learn about other people's lifestyles and abilities through a selection of books and other resources. The activity programme includes the celebration of festivals throughout the year, such as Chinese New Year and Easter.

Trips into the local community take place frequently and children occasionally join in activities in the main college or visit the hair salon. Visitors to the nursery, such as the fire brigade or dental health officer, support children's developing understanding of people who help them. Children are positively encouraged to develop an awareness of their own safety and well-being through discussions, such as reminders about the safe use of tools and equipment during their play. Indoors, children paint and glue with increasing skill and use modelling materials, which helps them understand different textures. For example, they skilfully learn how to use the shape cutters with the play dough when making their 'pizzas'. Each room has treasure basket materials or sensory resources which children explore, and skilful staff help develop communication and language skills as they talk to them about the different objects. Children throughout the nursery happily join in songs and action rhymes which have an element of counting and calculation.

Children develop an understanding of shape and space as they successfully complete one of the many shape-sorting puzzles or jigsaws. Some activities help them become familiar with measuring concepts as they pour sand from one container into another. They gain confidence in everyday technology as they access a computer and listen to the instructions on headphones. For the very young children there are lots of programmable toys that make different sounds when buttons are pressed or shape-sorter puzzles. However, staff do not always encourage children to extend this during outdoor play. Therefore, children's learning in this area may not be fully enhanced at all times. All children have access to the sensory room to experience a softly lit environment where they can freely explore a range of resources and listen to music. Children enjoy a varied and balanced menu at snack and lunchtimes and their independence is expertly fostered as they cut up their fresh fruit. At lunchtime they serve themselves with their own portions of food and skilfully pour their own drinks. Each child's key person is responsible for the monitoring of their progress as they complete a learning journey for the children in their care. Overall, children are exceptionally well supported to make progress in communication, literacy and numeracy, which has a positive impact on their future economic well-being.

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