

# Little Scarecrows

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 127366  
**Inspection date** 25/06/2012  
**Inspector** Shanti Flynn

**Setting address** Preston Road, Manston, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 5BA

**Telephone number** 01843 823918

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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 Scarecrows registered in 1993. The nursery operates from a single-storey building in Manston, Ramsgate, Kent and children have access to an enclosed garden. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 5pm for 49 weeks of the year. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 17 children under eight years may attend at any one time; all may be in the early years age range, including not more than three under two years. Currently, there are 10 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded free early education for three- and four-year-olds. The manager employs three staff to work with the children. All hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at this welcoming and friendly nursery. Staff promote an inclusive environment to effectively meet the individual needs of all children and help them make good progress in their learning and development. Overall, children play in a safe and secure environment. Overall, good partnership with parents and strong liaison with other providers support the continuity of children's care and learning effectively. Staff are aware of their strengths and have identified areas for development. All the previous recommendations from the last inspection have been successfully addressed, showing a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

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

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

- extend the risk assessment of the indoor area to include the condition of the joining strip between the floor coverings in the main room
- support all parents to contribute to their child's learning and development record to promote the continuity of care and learning.

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

Overall, children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe. There is a clear safeguarding policy and all staff know who to contact if they have any concerns about a child. Thorough recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to check that all staff are suitable to work with children. Visitors to the nursery have to sign in so that

there is a clear record of who is in the nursery at all times. Staff carry out risk assessments for all areas of the nursery environment to minimise the risks to children. For example, they identified uneven, paving slabs on the patio and placed a cone over the affected area. The joining strip between different floor areas in the main room needs further attention to prevent children from hurting themselves.

The environment is well organised, with a good range of interesting and stimulating resources. Staff clearly label the resources with words and pictures so that all children can choose what they want to play with independently. Children enjoy moving freely between the main playroom and messy creative area, and have daily opportunities to play in the large garden. Thoughtful planning of the indoor environment allows younger children to play in a separate area with age-appropriate resources. Staff are flexible with the routine and there is a quiet area for children who need to sleep during the day. Staff in the different areas use walkie-talkies to communicate with each other so that children are always effectively supervised.

Partnership with parents is good overall. Staff share information on their policies and procedures. They get to know children and their families well through the effective use of the key person system. Flexible settling-in visits ensure that staff work with parents to identify children's individual needs and can plan to meet them well. The nursery promotes equality and diversity effectively. Staff treat each child as an individual. They observe children and record their progress in individual learning journals. They encourage parents to share in their children's learning and development, but not all parents contribute to these records. Parents comment positively on the friendly staff and the homely atmosphere of the nursery. The staff works well in partnership with other agencies and providers. They have experience of working with other agencies in order to identify and effectively support children with any additional needs. Staff work well with children's prospective schools to support the transition process. They take photographs of their new schools and teachers to help children become familiar with their next environment.

The staff work well together in the small team and are committed to improve outcomes for all children. They seek the views of parents and children and effectively reflect on their own practice. The manager and her team identify areas for improvement through focused self-evaluation and action plans successfully outline their targets for improvement.

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

Staff observe children and plan interesting and stimulating activities to help them make consistent progress in all areas of their learning and development. Children enjoy the freedom to choose what they want to play with. They are eager to explore the ample resources on offer and invite staff to join in with their play. For example, they lay the table and prepare a 'meal' for staff to enjoy. Staff use this opportunity to support children's learning by asking open-ended questions so that children become active learners. Children of all ages particularly enjoy playing with

the sand and water. They develop their communication skills as they chat happily together, with older children showing younger children how to pour the water through their hands. Children enjoy sharing books and stories with the staff, who skilfully show them how to link sounds and letters. They join in with familiar rhymes, further developing their phonic skills. They also enjoy reciting number songs and practising their counting skills. Children have lots of opportunities to play with electronic toys and develop their technology skills. All these activities help them to develop good skills for the future.

Children have many opportunities to explore nature at this nursery. Staff are working hard to gain eco schools accreditation and have developed a wonderful, natural area in the garden for children to explore. Children also actively help staff to look after their pet fish, snails and terrapin. They enjoy digging in the garden for worms to feed their terrapin and learn how to keep themselves safe when using tools. Staff successfully encourage children to be independent, while supporting them to understand safety issues. For example, older children use knives to butter their own toast. They also regularly practise the fire drill so that they know how to safely evacuate the building in the event of an emergency.

Children effectively learn to adopt healthy lifestyles through consistent routines, such as washing before eating and after using the toilet. They learn about healthy eating through growing their own fruit and vegetables and children explain that, 'You only have chocolate cake if it is your birthday.' Children enjoy playing outside in the fresh air and have many opportunities to develop their physical skills. They particularly enjoy throwing the balls over the shed roof, eagerly anticipating where these are going to land. This helps them develop their problem solving and reasoning skills.

Children's behaviour is good and they display a strong sense of belonging in the nursery. This is because they are familiar with the routines and are supported by staff, who regularly praise and acknowledge their efforts. This has a positive impact on their self-esteem. Children are kind to each other and play well with their peers. For example, they make 'cakes' for each other and include younger children in their games. Children learn about their local community through outings in the local area. For example, they visit the airport and local farms. They also learn about different cultures through celebrations, such as Chinese New Year, and joining in with the Harvest activities at the local church.

## 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	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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