

# Little Explorers

Somerford Primary Community School, Draper Road, CHRISTCHURCH, Dorset, BH23 3AS

## Inspection date

Previous inspection date

04/12/2012

Not Applicable

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This inspection:

3

### Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | 3 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children            | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision        | 3 |

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is satisfactory

- Staff are attentive to children's needs, offering individual attention and reassurance to help children feel settled and secure. They provide consistent messages to help children learn about acceptable behaviour.
- Children benefit from healthy and nutritious food and staff cook fresh hot meals provided daily to meet children's individual dietary needs.
- The new manager has put in place a detailed 'improvement plan' to help prioritise and plan improvements to promote the outcomes for children.

### It is not yet good because

- Staff do not maximise opportunities to model language, introduce new words and ask open-ended questions to extend children's vocabulary.
- Staff are still developing their understanding of the new assessment systems to support children to move onto the next stages in their learning and development.
- Play activities and experiences are not always sufficiently challenging, to keep children fully engaged or interested. In addition, staff do not make the most of both planned and unplanned opportunities to extend children's understanding of mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's play and staff interaction, indoors and outside.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of the nursery.
- The inspector looked at documentation including a sample of children's records, planning and staff suitability records.
- The inspector talked with some staff, parents, and the manager.
- The inspector looked at the systems used to review and evaluate the nursery

## Inspector

Dinah Round

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Little Explorers nursery registered under the current ownership of Dorset County Council in 2012. It operates from Somerford Community Primary School, in Christchurch, Dorset. It provides two main rooms, which are divided for children aged under two and those over two. Both age groups have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There is a separate sleep room for younger children and toilets are easily accessible. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 80 children on roll. The nursery receives funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week Monday to Friday all year round. Children attend for various sessions, between the opening times of 8am to 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions and staff provide hot cooked meals for those staying all day. There are 10 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, nine have recognised early years qualifications equivalent to level 3 and above. The manager has Early Years Professional status. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

#### **To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- develop the educational programme for communication and language through opportunities that allow children to experience a rich language environment by a) using more commentary and activities to highlight specific words; b) introducing new words in the context of play and activities.

#### **To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:**

- strengthen staff knowledge of new systems to help them build a secure understanding of how to help children move onto the next steps in their learning
- review play activities and experiences to provide a more challenging environment where all children's play can be supported and extended
- increase children's mathematical understanding through play activities, such as stories, songs, games and imaginative play and through daily routines.

### **Inspection judgements**

#### **How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. Staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework learning and development requirements. They provide children with a varied range of learning opportunities, indoors and outdoors. Staff have recently introduced a new system of observational assessment. This is helping most

staff to monitor children's progress appropriately and plan future learning experiences. Therefore children are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. However, some staff are still developing their knowledge of how to move children on in their learning. Staff have yet to implement the progress check at age two but through discussion show a clear understanding of the requirement. Planning covers all seven areas of learning and provides suitable play activities and experiences that contribute towards children's development. However, at times the activities lack challenge and as a result children do not always remain sufficiently interested or occupied.

Children show growing independence as they learn to do things for themselves, such as serving their own fruit at snack time and putting on their apron when choosing to paint. Generally, children are encouraged to make choices about their play with opportunities to choose resources from the low-level units. Babies are confident to move around and explore their surroundings. They are fascinated to discover how shaking different bells creates sound. Children's communication skills are sometimes supported as staff actively join in their play and promote conversation. However, staff do not adequately model language and introduce words to help build on children's vocabulary. Children join in songs and rhymes, and staff make suitable use of props to aid children's enjoyment and help develop listening skills. Children have access to a range of resources to introduce them to size and shape, such as floor puzzles indoors and large building blocks outside. However, staff do not make the most of everyday routines and activities to extend children's understanding of mathematics, such as number and counting. Children use their senses to explore and investigate. They have fun feeling the textures of gloop and spaghetti with their fingers and enjoy experimenting with paint. Overall, most children are generally beginning to learn the skills they require to support their future learning.

Staff link closely with parents and carers to obtain details about children's abilities when children first start at the nursery. This is through discussions during settling-in sessions, and the completion of an 'All about Me' form. Staff use this information alongside a new baseline assessment to tailor children's future learning. Staff inform parents suitably of their children's development through daily informal discussions at the beginning and end of the sessions. Parents also view children's progress files. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection speak positively about the nursery provision. They comment, how 'staff are very welcoming' and that children's 'social skills have increased' since attending nursery.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Children develop positive relationships with staff. The key person system means staff obtain clear information about children's likes and dislikes, and individual routines, which is particularly beneficial for babies. Staff are attentive to children's individual needs, interacting in a friendly and caring manner and offering cuddles and reassurance when needed. This helps children feel comfortable and secure. Staff organise the group activities in separate areas. This enables them to tailor activities, such as stories and rhymes to children's differing ages and abilities, which helps develop children's listening skills appropriately.

Staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They identify and minimise potential risks to children through use of an annual risk assessment and daily checks of the premises. They take appropriate action as required, such as ensuring the sand pit is hygienically clean for children to play with safely. Children receive gentle reminders from staff about how to keep themselves safe as they move around in their play. They generally behave well and know what is expected of them as staff provide them with clear boundaries and guidance. For example, staff use a tambourine and raised hands to get children's attention at tidy up time. As a result, children listen and cooperate in helping to put toys away. Staff support children in learning to share with others during the activities. They sit close by and help children take turns to push cars down the wooden ramps, offering praise, such as 'good sharing' as children listen and play well together.

Staff display examples of children's work around the room, helping children to feel welcome and valued. The good quality equipment and resources, placed at low level, allows children to make some choices about their play. Staff suitably support children's good health, for example, as they enable them to enjoy daily outdoor play to increase their physical skills. Children show control as they use wheeled toys and balance and climb on the climbing frame. This means children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise. Children learn to manage their own personal hygiene needs and are familiar with the routine to wash their hands before mealtimes to keep healthy. The provision of home-cooked meals and snacks of fresh and dried fruit, contribute towards children having a healthy and nutritious diet. Lunchtime sessions are a sociable event. Staff eat with the children, chatting and encouraging children to learn to feed themselves. This helps to build children's social skills and develop their independence. The manager is aware of the importance of establishing links with local schools to help children's transition onto school.

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

Staff have a sound understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Clear policies and procedures, recently updated, are in place to support the running of the nursery. This includes a safeguarding and complaints policy. Staff are suitably trained and know what action to take in the event of a safeguarding issue. The management follow clear recruitment and vetting procedures to check staff are suitable to work with children. Staff inductions and regular supervision, helps to develop staff's understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The new group of staff are beginning to develop as a team as they work together to help the sessions run smoothly.

A newly appointed manager with a clear drive for improvement leads the nursery. She has quickly identified the areas in the nursery that need developing and ideas to bring about positive change. An improvement plan with set targets and priorities is in place to help bring about improvement. Although some changes have been implemented, the new systems are still embedding. Therefore, they are not yet showing a significant impact on children's learning and development. The manager organises training events to support

the staff's continual professional development. However, staff knowledge varies and some staff are not secure in their understanding of how to help children move onto the next step in their learning. This impacts on the challenges and learning opportunities offered to children. In addition, there are gaps in the educational programme for communication and language. However, the manager is continuing to work with the local authority to develop the provision further, to help benefit children.

The manager is clear of her role to work in partnership with others. For example, staff are currently supporting several children with special educational needs. The manager liaises with external agencies to help provide children with relevant support to meet their individual needs. Parents receive clear information about the nursery, through the welcome booklet, regular newsletters and ongoing communication. Staff support children in learning skills that will help them when they move on to school, such as developing children's listening skills.

### The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

### What inspection judgements mean

#### Registered early years provision

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.   |
| Grade 2 | Good         | Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.   |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection. |
| Met     |              | The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for  |

|         |   |
|---------|---|
|         | registration.   |
| Not Met | The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration. |

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

|                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | EY446875                 |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Dorset                   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 803304                   |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           |                          |
| <b>Registration category</b>       | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 0 - 8                    |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 44                       |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 80                       |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Dorset County Council    |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | Not applicable           |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01202221351              |

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years

Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.



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