

# Little Hands Preschool Nursery

Dengie Community Hall, Dengie Close, Witham, Essex, CM8 1DJ

<b>Inspection date</b>	12/11/2012
Previous inspection date	02/02/2012

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	4
	Previous inspection:	4
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is inadequate

- The management team does not have a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements, including knowledge of the prime and specific areas and observation and assessment, so are unable to effectively monitor children's progress.
- The management team fails to oversee rigorous monitoring of practitioners to ensure the educational programme is being effectively delivered to extend and challenge individual children.
- Systems for self-evaluation are ineffective; they do not identify and tackle areas of weakness or prioritise improvements, including those identified at inspection and local authority monitoring visits.
- Systems for observing children and assessing their progress are inconsistent and poorly understood. This limits practitioners' ability to understand the learning styles, achievements and level of development of individual children in order to shape suitable learning experiences for them.

### It has the following strengths

- Children and their families are welcomed to the setting, and children are kept safe and secure.

## 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.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector spent time talking to the joint managers and carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke to children and observed them at play indoors and outside, and at snack time.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, some policies, planning documents, and miscellaneous paperwork.
- The inspector spoke to parents, both those on a settling-in visit and those collecting children at the end of their session.
- The inspector spent time with the local authority development worker invited by the provider to attend during the inspection.

## Inspector

Sarah Williams

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Little Hands Preschool Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 1994 and operates from the main hall and one ancillary room in a community hall in Witham, Essex. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Operating times are from 9am until 2.55pm.

There are currently 77 children aged from two to five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions or for full day care. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The pre-school employs nine staff, seven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting 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 a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements, including knowledge of the prime and specific areas and observation and assessment in order to effectively monitor children's progress
- implement a systematic system for observing children and assessing their progress to understand their individual learning style, achievements and level of development in order to shape learning experiences which will promote their progress
- foster a culture of continuous improvement by developing systems to identify and tackle areas of weakness, including staff training and development needs, and to prioritise improvements, including those identified at inspection and local authority monitoring visits, for example improving the records of children's progress
- introduce rigorous monitoring of practitioners to ensure the educational programme is being effectively delivered so that activities extend and challenge individual children according to their identified stages of development
- ensure there is a well thought out procedure in place to assess children at age two, identifying concerns in areas where development is less than expected and which needs attention and support.
- encourage reflective practice and motivate staff to be able to complete all aspects of their key person role effectively, particularly in regard to observing and tracking
- initiate a system to ensure all information regarding children's welfare is regularly reviewed and kept up-to-date, for example, contact numbers and details of who has parental responsibility.

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

- develop the use of the outdoor area to encompass all areas of learning and increase children's daily opportunities to play and explore outside in a stimulating and well-

planned environment

## Inspection judgements

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

The educational programme does not provide adequate challenge for children, or provide tailored activities to meet their needs as there is no attempt to determine children's starting points. The management team does not monitor the educational programme to ensure that it meets children's individual needs. The system for assessment is not understood. Observations are infrequent, inconsistent and lack evaluation, so staff do not understand what children need to do next and cannot accurately track their progress. Too little effort is made to include parents in shaping plans for children's next steps. Children have free choice from the equipment and activities available, including floor play with small world toys, play dough, role play, water play, and a book corner. A craft activity involved printing with leaves using pre-mixed paint in one colour. Although children understood and concentrated well, the activity lacked differentiation. Children were unable to choose and mix colours, or to write their own name on their work, which means learning was limited. Children are supported at circle time, when they enjoy an interactive session, counting and listening to a story.

Photographs show past events, such as the creation of a den or hideout, which children enjoyed constructing in the summer. However, they are not able to use it year round as staff place limitations on the outside play area, keeping children on the hard surface only. This does not make good use of available resources or facilities, and does not encourage children to explore and use their imagination. Children are taken outside at set times and play on a paved area with a slide and some other outdoor toys. The grassed area is used only when it is dry. Outdoor activities are limited to basic physical play and do not include other areas of learning as the area is not imaginatively resourced or prepared for the full range of activities. Behaviour is generally good, although some children become disengaged when their activities are interrupted for a changeover. For example, when staff are occupied with tidying up and preparing the room for lunch time, children are not included or encouraged to help and take an active part.

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

Children are kept safe and secure as staff conduct a daily risk assessment on areas of the premises and equipment used by children. Children's details are recorded before they start to attend the setting. However, while documentation includes basic information that the setting needs, the forms are not systematically updated, to ensure all details are up to date in order to support all aspects of children's well-being. The key person system is not fully established and is not used sufficiently rigorously to inform the planning and care needs of individual children. For example, while the settling-in procedure allows parents and children to gradually familiarise themselves with the setting and routines and form a friendly relationship with their key person, key persons do not seek information that will inform an initial assessment of children's capabilities. As a result, children's progress is

limited, and in cases where there may be additional needs, these are not followed up in a timely fashion. For example, some children have been identified as having speech and language delay and have not been referred or had plans put in place to help them.

Children manage their own self-care and show independence in using the toilet and washing their hands. At snack time children enjoy fruit and a drink of milk or squash. They pour their own drinks and most need little help to manage this. The lunch session is a social and relaxed time, when children enjoy their packed lunches while staff sit and eat alongside them and chat informally. Children manage their own lunches and display developing table manners and control, advancing their social and emotional development and their sense of belonging. They are able to find their coats and changes of footwear when getting ready for outdoor play or at home time. The playroom is set out with a variety of toys and play materials, which are varied and occasionally themed to fit in with a topic. Children have free choice from these core activities and thus develop their independence and decision-making skills. However, some areas, such as the outside area, lack a full range of stimulating resources, for example role play and large scale construction, to encourage children to explore and be active and imaginative.

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

There are breaches of requirements in regard to the learning and development requirements as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, while basic provision is made for children to explore the play materials on offer and make choices, the lack of attention to initial assessment and ongoing observation and assessment means children's progress is severely limited. The provider has too little understanding of the learning and development requirements so cannot effectively implement them in the setting. Staff training needs are not addressed. While training has been put in place to inform staff of the revised Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, its implementation has not been effectively monitored by the management team, so the setting is not meeting all the learning and development requirements.

The poor monitoring and supervision of practitioners' performance limits children's progress. For example, some teaching methods are ineffective, lack imagination and rigour, and do not provide challenge and stimulation for children as they do not have regard to what children can do or what they need to do next. The planning system is fragmented, resulting in too much emphasis on organisation and too little regard to in-depth attention on assessing individual children's learning needs. Some children's records have not been updated for six months, so staff and parents have no clear idea of children's stages of development or their next steps in learning. The management team does not inspire or encourage staff to maintain, update or apply their knowledge. The appraisal system is only partially effective and, combined with the lack of planned supervision, does not identify training needs or put in place remedial action.

The provider has attended a safeguarding course and has updated the safeguarding policy to reflect the most recent requirements. Children are safeguarded because staff have an

understanding of their responsibilities and are confident about referring concerns when appropriate. Parents do not receive details of the progress that their children are making and how they can continue learning at home as records are inconsistent, lack meaningful detail or evaluation and do not identify next steps in learning. Links with other settings attended by children are in place and processes for transition to school are established and effective for most children. In some cases, children go for visits and in others the reception teachers visit the setting.

The provider has not developed an effective system for self-evaluation and is unable to identify or prioritise weaknesses or areas for development. Actions and recommendations from previous inspections and from local authority monitoring visits have not been fully addressed. Some of these issues have been repeatedly set as actions over a long period and call into question the provider's willingness or ability to improve and sustain development of the setting, to keep pace with requirements, and to provide a high quality service which meets children's learning and development needs. The facility is clearly a much-needed and well-used aspect of the local community, and parents are loyal and supportive.

### 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>	203764
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	778341
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	2 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	26
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	77
<b>Name of provider</b>	Little Hands Pre-School Nursery
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	02/02/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01376 511194

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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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