

Little Explorers

206c Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent, ME1 3EJ

Inspection date	10/05/2013
Previous inspection date	27/10/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children are making outstanding progress in their learning because they use an excellent range of enriching and motivating activities.
- Children are welcomed on to the premises by cheerful staff who know the children exceptionally well and treat them with respect and courtesy.
- Partnership working with parents is excellent because parents are involved in all aspects of care and learning for their children.
- Children adopt healthy lifestyles at the nursery because staff are exceptionally skilled at teaching children to respect the environment.
- The provider has excellent procedures in place to engage in partnership working with other health professionals.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector talked to children, parents and staff during the inspection.
- The inspector sampled the nursery's paperwork including the safeguarding procedures, the risk assessments and children's personal records.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the provider.
- The inspector observed children's play in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Inspector

Linda Coccia

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Explorers registered in 2005 and operates from a converted house in Rochester, Kent. It is registered on the Early Years Register. The provision is privately owned. There are three play areas comprising the preschool, the toddler room and the baby room. Children have access to a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. There are separate kitchen and staff facilities. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. Children come from a wide catchment area and attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 57 children aged between six months and four years on roll. All fall within the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for early education for children aged three and four years. The nursery employs 14 staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at National Vocation Qualification level two and above. Both the provider and her manager hold Early Years Professional Status.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the information sharing procedures for working with other providers when children attend more than one setting.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have an outstanding impact on children's learning and progress because they have high expectations of the children and enthuse and motivate them to learn. They carry out extensive observations of children and accurately assess the children's progress by taking into account their starting points and capabilities. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of children's expected levels of development and skilfully challenge children in acquiring skills for the next stages of their learning.

The educational programmes are full of rich and varied activities and cover all of the areas of learning. Children use the upright tyres, half buried in the garden, as stepping stones and for balancing on. They physically construct vehicles from crates and tyres and have access to pipes, wood, planks and boulders with which they can further their imaginations during construction. They construct their own cosy corners and dens both indoors and outside, using moveable screens. The covered area allows children to take activities such as craft and books outside if they want to. Children learn to be responsible for others by

looking after the tadpoles. They watch them through magnifying glasses and note their development. They use plastic mini-beasts to compare with pictures in books. Children understand that some insects go through changes and can explain what happens. The staff are highly effective in implementing the 'Every Child a Talker' and 'Every Child a Reader' schemes. The babies and toddlers are keen to listen to stories and eager to participate in opening flaps and feeling the different textures on the pages. The pre-school staff skilfully teach children about phonics during daily group activities. The children readily sound out letters on signs and posters and can recognise letters from their own names within other words. Many are beginning to read stories for themselves.

The children use a remote controlled robot to help them develop their mathematical skills. In small groups they programme the robot to move forwards and backwards and turn left and right to reach a desired destination. Children take turns to select the desired number or direction on the remote control and collectively help the robot reach the goal. In this way children learn to work together and also develop their understanding of technology. Staff proudly display children's art work all around the nursery. These range from hand and body prints in the baby room to more extensive group displays in the preschool room. Children demonstrate they use their imaginations in all they do from making models with stickle bricks to decorating their den.

Children are making outstanding progress in their learning because staff plan an excellent range of enriching and motivating activities. Children demonstrate that they are keen and active learners who are motivated, have their own ideas and are engaged in the activities. Children's excellent progress is due to the exemplary work that their key persons and the provider undertake in engaging parents in their children's learning. It is also indicative of the invaluable support provided by all the adults involved with the children at the nursery.

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

Parents report that children are extremely eager to come to nursery each day. Children are warmly welcomed on to the premises by cheerful staff who know the children exceptionally well and treat them with respect and courtesy. Children chat happily to staff about their home lives and are used to talking about how they feel. All of the children demonstrate confidence in their abilities and happily approach visitors to find out what they are doing. Through their body language and demeanours children show they are flourishing, both mentally and physically in this nurturing, stimulating and, well resourced environment. Children are developing independence and co-operation as they work and play together. Staff understand that their involvement in children's activities have an impact on children's learning. Therefore, they allow children to explore activities for themselves, intervening only when they need to and in order to extend an activity. For example, staff occasionally need to remind children about managing disputes. Children know that toys in the holding area are not to be used because other children are still using or working on them. The children help to set rules for their behaviour as individuals and also in groups. This helps them to understand that they need to consider each other's feelings and points of view. Children manage their behaviour exceptionally well.

Children adopt healthy lifestyles at the nursery because staff are exceptionally skilled at teaching children to respect the environment. For example, children grow food in the nursery allotment and in the garden growing beds. They understand the use of the composting bin and encourage bees and other insects to visit the garden by providing insect houses. Indoors, children cut up food to use in the food hydrator. They understand that food can be stored for use later and prevents waste. Children are provided with a variety of healthy foods at meal times. The cook produces excellent menus which cater for children's individual needs. The staff give consistently high priority to children's safety both indoors and outside. They effectively support children's awareness of danger by skilfully teaching children to negotiate and/or avoid hazards and keep themselves safe. Children play in an extremely safe environment. Children receive excellent support for their moves to different rooms and school. The under twos are prepared for their move to the toddler room by visiting regularly with their key person. They begin to use different equipment in their own rooms. For example, they use a small table and chairs instead of high chairs at meal times, begin to learn to drink from beakers instead of feeder cups, and use sleep mats instead of cots. Staff implement these changes after full consultation with parents to ensure that children can be supported at home. The consultation also helps parents appreciate that the changes may impact on their children's behaviour. The provider invites children who have made the successful move to school to talk to the pre-school children about their exciting school experiences. This motivates the children to explore school life through books, pictures and role play.

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

The provider and her experienced, highly qualified staff team organise and operate the nursery in an outstanding manner. The provider has an excellent understanding of her responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, staff implement the provider's safeguarding procedures proficiently because they undertake high levels of training in this subject. All staff have an enhanced disclosure issued by the Criminal Records Bureau. The staff rigorously enforce all of the safeguarding procedures but especially the children's departure policy. For example, staff check with parents if anyone arrives to collect children who they have not been notified of. This demonstrates that staff give high regard to protecting children. The provider's recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous and robust and excellent procedures are in place for induction, annual appraisals and, support for staff in their professional development. This means that staff are continually improving their already first rate understanding and practice.

The provider is committed to knowing each child in the setting personally. She is meticulous in the way she monitors each child's development and progress. She closely questions staff about their observation and assessment of each child to ensure these are accurate and that their next steps are challenging children to progress in their learning. The provider thoroughly monitors the weekly educational programmes to ensure that they cater for each child, especially those children who have additional needs. This means that staff cater for children's individual needs precisely. The provider's evaluation of her service

is extremely thorough. She takes into account the views of staff, parents and children by conducting a variety of surveys using questionnaires and discussion. The provider publishes results of all surveys in newsletters for parents. Her resulting improvement plans support children's achievements and demonstrate a well documented drive to maintain the highest levels of achievement over a sustained period of time.

The provider has excellent procedures in place to allow her to work closely with other health professionals, although there are currently no children attending who require additional services and support. The provider's extensive range of contacts within the education field allows her to access excellent information about resources and play environments. The provider attends termly meetings at the local Sure Start centre which allows her access to information to pass on to parents. However, the links with other care provisions when children attend more than one setting are not fully developed to ensure continuity. Overall, children receive excellent support for their development and learning. The provider works extensively with parents on all aspects of their children's care. She has developed an excellent support line for new parents with the help of existing parent volunteers. This enables new parents to talk to existing parents about their experiences in the nursery and ask any probing questions. The provider is currently working with a number of dads who are recording themselves telling favourite stories for the children. This innovative scheme will enable children to make greater use of technology as well as concentrating their listening skills. Children receive excellent support from the nursery and their parents.

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 action. 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

Unique reference number	EY313883
Local authority	Medway Towns
Inspection number	917742
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	57
Name of provider	Little Explorers Day Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	27/10/2009
Telephone number	01634 840437

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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