

Little Hands Preschool Nursery

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

Inspection date	11/11/2013
Previous inspection date	12/11/2012

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		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 requires improvement

- There are suitable relationships and attachments between children and staff. Therefore, all children settle into the pre-school and they are generally confident and willing to try new activities.
- Children's safety and well-being is appropriately promoted, which means that children are safe and risks are minimised.
- Partnership with parents and other professionals effectively support children's individual care and emotional needs.

It is not yet good because

- The supervision arrangements for staff lack focus on the quality of teaching to make sure that staff focus on the children rather than paperwork. This means that children's play and learning is not consistently fostered.
- Children's interests and attention is not effectively sustained because on occasions activities are mundane and lack a good level of challenge.
- Daily routines and space within the pre-school are not effectively organised to provide good quality learning experiences for all children and keep them motivated and engaged.
- Initial assessments on children do not include parents' contributions. Therefore, there is room to develop how information is gathered before children attend to ensure that staff are completely informed of children's starting points.

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 viewed activities in the main hall and the garden area.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff, managers and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a range of records including children's assessment plans and registration details, also risk assessments and staff suitability checks.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to at the time of the inspection.

Inspector

Lisa Paisley

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Hands Pre-school Nursery is privately owned. It was registered in 1994 and is on the Early Years Register. The pre-school operates from a main hall and an ancillary room in a community hall in Witham, Essex. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding areas. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school employs 10 members of childcare staff, of whom eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2, 3 and above.

The pre-school is open Monday to Friday term time only. Opening times are from 9am until 2.55pm. There are currently 57 children attending who are in the early years age group. Children attend for a variety of sessions or for a full day. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a small number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school 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:

- plan challenging and enjoyable play and learning experiences for each child to ensure their interests are captured and sustained enabling children to build on existing knowledge and skills
- improve the quality of teaching by putting in place more effective supervision arrangements for staff, so that there is a clear focus on the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning and there is a culture of mutual support fostered, in order to support children's good progress
- build on children's initial assessments by gathering early information from parents about what children can already do and use this effectively so that plans to move them forward can be readily implemented as soon as children start to attend.

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

- review the organisation of daily routines and space both indoors and outside, to provide good quality learning experiences for all children and keep them motivated and engaged.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are generally confident and happy in the pre-school as they arrive ready to play and take part in activities. Staff have a secure understanding of the seven areas of learning and how children learn. However, the range of activities tend to be repetitive and are not always inviting for children to play. This means that children do not have good ongoing opportunities to build on their existing knowledge and skills. Children have their own learning journals and information includes observations, assessments and next steps in their learning and staff make sure that they are kept up to date and are accurate. Therefore, children are being suitably monitored in their development. Information about children's care needs are obtained when new children start and an assessment is completed within the first half term on new children. However, staff do not gather information from parents about what their child can do to contribute to the initial assessment in order to plan for children's learning.

Children are supported in their language and communication skills as staff make sure that they listen and respond to what children say. For example, children playing with the soft dough, talking about shapes and making a snowman while a member of staff introduces words, such as squashing and stretching. Children also have a range of books and stories, however, the presentation of the book corner is not inviting to children. This means that they are not developing an early appreciation of books and stories or their use and purpose. Children do have access to a range of activities that generally promote their imaginative skills and self-expression. They have opportunities to use the garden area where they can actively engage in a range of physical activities, such as scooters, digging in the planting area and using slides and see-saws. They learn about the natural world through planting and growing flowers and they enjoy the log hotel and the nature den where they can find out about mini-beasts and insects. There is a suitable range of activities that support children's learning of early mathematical concepts; this includes puzzles and construction activities. A range of number songs and action rhymes during circle time helps support children's learning.

The progress check at age two is completed on the younger children attending the pre-school. Staff liaise with parents and health professionals when completing the progress check. This ensures that any concerns are identified and acted upon at an early stage. The pre-school works with other professionals and health agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff suitably support children's readiness for school as they work with the parents and the local schools in which the children are going to attend and there are regular discussions about starting school.

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

The established key person system ensures that suitable attachments and relationships are made between the staff and the children. This means that children settle in quickly at

the pre-school and they are generally confident to take part in activities. Parents are able to talk to their key person at any time and there are discussions between the parents and staff during arrival and departure times. Transitions when moving to school are well supported to ensure children are prepared for the move.

Children's health and physical well-being is generally supported through a range of healthy snacks and children playing in the garden. There are suitable procedures in place for children who stay for their midday lunch as staff ensure children's lunches are organised in a timely way. Staff provide suitable support so that children are relaxed and confident while having their packed lunch. There are some children who attend that require complex medical procedures. Staff have made secure arrangements through training to ensure that they have the correct medical training and technological knowledge to make sure children's individual needs are met.

The pre-school is generally a warm and welcoming environment as staff make sure the hall is set up and ready each morning for children attending. Resources and equipment are generally safe and suitable for children to play with and they are accessible to them. A combination of children's artwork and posters are displayed to support children's emotional well-being. However, staff do not make the best use of space and resources to provide good quality learning experiences and keep them motivated and engaged. Children generally play well together as they share, take turns and are co-operative, however, at times during the session there are some disputes between children as they become bored or staff are not always effectively focussing on children's play and learning. Children learn about being safe through staff reminders, such as not running inside the hall and also children take part in regular fire drills.

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

The pre-school meets the requirements for safeguarding and there are no causes for concern. Appropriate checks on staff working with the children are carried out to safeguard children and the welfare of children is closely monitored. All staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they have a concern and they know the role of the designated safeguarding officer. The manager makes sure that self-evaluation reflects the effectiveness of the pre-school and parents', children's and staffs' contributions are welcomed. This means that they have the capacity to improve.

The last inspection judgement for the pre-school was inadequate. Since then the managers along with the staff team have addressed the actions and areas for development. Children's assessment arrangements have improved, relevant training has been completed by staff and the local development officer has been working with the pre-school. This means that some improvement has been made, however, the arrangements for staff supervision does not clearly focus on the quality of teaching or monitor staffs' interactions with the children. This means that improvements to staff practice is not yet good enough for teaching to improve quickly.

The pre-school make sure that they work in partnerships with other early years settings,

for example, a shared care book is used for children when they go to another setting. There are also positive working relationships with health and social care professionals to ensure that they support continuity of care and transitions. There are suitable relationships with parents as newsletters, notices and ongoing discussions with parents make sure that they are kept informed about the pre-school. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection were complimentary as they felt that the staff are friendly, children are settled, happy and are making progress in their development.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	203764
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	902857
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	57
Name of provider	Little Hands Pre-School Nursery Partnership
Date of previous inspection	12/11/2012
Telephone number	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, 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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