

# Little Dragons

57-59 Bath Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2BA

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 06/09/2013 |
| Previous inspection date | 18/06/2009 |

| <b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>                          | <b>This inspection:</b> |   |
|--|-------------------------|---|
|  | Previous inspection:    |   |
| 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 organisation has failed to meet their statutory responsibilities because they have not implemented a number of procedures to check ongoing suitability of staff in the nursery. In addition they have failed to provide Ofsted with required information regarding an issue that arose within the nursery, which is a breach of a legal requirement.
- Children's individual needs are not adequately met because staff do not gather accurate information on children's learning to support them to make good progress.
- The key person system is ineffective in helping children settle or providing equal on-going support. Partnerships with parents and other professionals do not contribute to a cohesive approach of support for learning.
- Self-evaluation procedures are weak. The management team has failed to recognise or address staff underperformance, which impacts on children's safety, well-being and their capacity to learn.

### It has the following strengths

- Children receive a healthy balanced meal, and enjoy access to daily fresh air and outdoor play opportunities.

## 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.

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 activities in the main room of the nursery and the garden area.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to members of the staff team about the progress of their key children and their understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures.
- The inspector looked at children's observation, tracking and assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working with children in the nursery and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and carers from their written comments.

## Inspector

Melissa Cox

## **Full Report**

### **Information about the setting**

Little Dragons opened in 2003 and operates from a purpose built modular building in the grounds of the Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust premises in Reading, Berkshire. The nursery has three base rooms including a pre-school room, older toddler room and baby/young toddler room. There is an outside play area for the children to access. The nursery operates every week day from 7.30am to 6pm all year round with an earlier opening time of 7am to accommodate NHS staff only. There are currently 87 children on roll. The nursery receives support from the local authority and receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. It serves the local community and currently supports children who are learning English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are twenty two members of staff working with the children; of these, all staff have relevant early years qualifications at level 2; four staff are working towards level 3 qualifications and the remainder of staff have qualifications at level 3 with four of those staff members also holding qualifications at level 5. One member of staff has gained Early Years Professional Status. The nursery also supports a number of apprentices who are working towards gaining their qualifications. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

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

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

- provide the following information to Ofsted when relevant: details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006
- ensure that staff know that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting)
- implement an effective key person system that ensures that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs; offers a settled relationship for the child and builds a relationship with their parents or carers
- maintain records and obtain and share information (with parents and carers, other professionals working with the child, and the police, social services and Ofsted as appropriate) to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met
- implement a policy and procedures to promote equality of opportunity for children, which includes how the individual needs of all children, including those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, will be included, valued and supported
- ensure there are appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families, which includes opportunities for staff to discuss any issues - particularly concerning children's development or well-being; identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness
- improve staff's knowledge of the learning and development requirements in order to consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child and use this information to identify their next steps and plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

**Inspection judgements**

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

Children do not make good progress in their learning given their starting points because staff do not support them in a way that is specifically targeted on narrowing the gaps in their learning, in readiness for school. Those children learning English as an additional language or with special educational needs in particular are not making expected levels of progress, especially in their language, communication and social skills. This is because staff have not sufficiently identified their specific needs or planned appropriately to meet them. This means that although the range of toys on offer occupies children, staff do not place enough rigour or focus on helping them make the same levels of progress as their peers.

Staff make frequent observations of children in their play and use these to inform their tracking of what children can do well and what they need to do next. However, because of their over reliance on moving children to the next stage of their learning in their tracking system, staff require children to complete daily tasks to satisfy staff's need to make observations of their progress. This means that children are taken away from their play to take part in short adult directed activities, often too complex for their stage of development, in order that staff can 'tick' the next stage in a child's learning. For example, a member of staff completes a clapping activity with a child and then states the child is able to clap the syllables of their name. However, the child just copies the member of staff as the activity is too complex for them. This demonstrates that staff do not have a secure understanding of how to plan for children's learning through play especially as the tasks children are required to undertake are not in line with their expected development stage. Nevertheless, staff note down that children have achieved this goal which gives an inaccurate record of children's progress.

Children have access to some activities that interest them. For example, children enjoy dancing to a favourite music CD and follow along to the actions and movements with staff. All children play outside where they are able to enjoy sand and water, and a social time with each other. However, the quality of teaching during activities, particularly in some younger rooms of the nursery, is weak. Staff do not extend good quality learning opportunities to children to allow them to think or find out things for themselves. For example, staff are quick to intervene in children's play with prescribed outcomes, which do not allow children to experiment or lead the play in their own direction. Staff interactions often focus on completing a task rather than promoting an enjoyment of the activity on offer and children gain little from the activity because staff over direct children in the task. For example, during a collage activity staff tell children where to stick the glue and what materials to use. At times staff offer children choices about what colours they would like to use but then quickly choose for them, rather than waiting for the children to choose for themselves. In addition, on occasion staff limit the amount of children who can access the activity and as a result, equality of opportunity is not extended to all children.

Partnerships with parents are friendly and they receive details of their child's progress in the nursery through attendance at parents' evenings, daily updates and regular reports. Further information on daily activities and developments is readily available via newsletters and notice boards.

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

The key person system within the nursery does not meet the needs of the children attending, in particular those children who are new to the nursery or those children who require additional support to promote their emotional well-being. Although each child is assigned a key person to cater for and meet their individual needs, staff do not consistently gather enough information during settling in visits to inform their interactions with the child when they first settle. This leads to inconsistent levels of support being given to children when they first start because not enough is known about their specific needs. This leads to a delay in getting specialist interventions in place. In addition the range of resources within some rooms is not reflective of the backgrounds of the children attending, which does not make children feel as welcome or included as they could be. However general resourcing across the nursery is adequate to meet the differing age groups and children can access toys at their height, which allows them to make some choices in their play. In the younger rooms, individual routines are adhered to and children receive cuddles and reassurance, which is beginning to help them feel more secure. Staff manage children moving between rooms in the nursery in an adequate way.

Staff make suitable use of the outdoor space to support children's play. Children can access a range of bicycles and balancing equipment outdoors or experiment drawing with chalks as they decorate large pieces of paper on the walls. Children enjoy their time outside and this is suitably supported by the range of activities that staff plan for example, quiet time reading with staff or construction play. Defined areas outdoor allow older and younger children to play safely together. Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately, with some staff modelling adequate behaviour techniques such as sharing and turn taking.

Opportunities for children to learn independence in readiness for school are not purposefully thought out by staff and therefore have limited success. For example, during the lunchtime routine in the pre-school room, staff lay tables for children prior to them sitting down, even though placements have been provided to the children to help them select and place cutlery appropriately on the table. During lunchtime, staff call children to the front to serve themselves. This takes some time, because children struggle to use the serving utensils on offer because they are the wrong size. This does not support healthy levels of self-esteem as staff end up taking over the task for children. However, a suitable range of snacks are provided to the children and the lunchtime meal option is healthy and well balanced and caters for children's additional dietary needs or preferences. The majority of staff are trained in food hygiene and follow appropriate procedures when preparing, or serving food. Suitable procedures for nappy changing, the administration of medication and the treatment of accidents are in place and children have appropriate spaces to rest or sleep. Reminders from staff about safety rules allow children to build on their understanding of personal safety.

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

This inspection was carried out as a result of a concern reported to Ofsted by another agency. The concern related to the on-going suitability of a member of staff. At the inspection it was found that the organisation had taken some action in respects to notifying Ofsted of additional information that linked to the concern. However further details could not be provided to Ofsted because the organisation had failed to gather information that related to the specific case. It is a requirement to provide such information. In addition, it was also noted that the organisation had failed to implement a robust procedure to ensure staff's on going suitability, which means that safeguarding procedures in the nursery are not secure. This is in particular regard to staff understanding their responsibility to disclose a change to their personal circumstances, in a timely way, that may affect their suitability to work with children. This also formed part of the original concern. At the time of the inspection, senior management were unaware of their responsibilities to monitor this and there is currently no procedure in place. This is a breach of a legal requirement. However, the organisation and senior management team do follow safe recruitment procedures when a new member of staff first joins the nursery. This includes a detailed interview process, which involves scrutiny of previous employment information and obtaining a check through the Disclosure and Barring Service, prior to staff starting at the nursery. This is further supported by sound induction procedures to ensure new staff understand how the nursery operates, and important policies and procedures discussed and their implementation monitored. A further procedure is in place for these checks to be repeated, but the current procedure does not take into account changes that may have occurred to suitability of staff between checks. As a result, children's welfare may be compromised.

Staff demonstrate that they have a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms that may indicate a concern relating to a child's well-being. Staff demonstrate that they are suitably aware of how to report a concern in line with the child protection and whistle blowing procedures. The nursery policy on staff's use of mobile phones and cameras is strictly monitored by senior staff and this practice also extends to all visitors and parents to promote children's safety. Suitable risk assessments are in place for all areas of the nursery and staff conduct daily checks on areas used by children, including outdoor areas and outings. There is a robust system for ensuring children are unable to leave the nursery unsupervised and additional safeguards such as an electronic finger print system ensures only those adults who are allowed access to the building are able to do so.

The senior staff team have a weak understanding of their role in monitoring the impact of how they deliver the learning and development requirements. The quality of teaching within the nursery is variable because monitoring procedures are not rigorous enough to identify or address weaknesses in teaching. This means that staff are not providing good enough support for some children in the nursery and on occasions teaching is poor. The impact of this can be seen on those groups of children who require additional support in their learning, including groups of boys, children with special educational needs and those children for whom English is an additional language. Therefore, these children are not prepared sufficiently for their move to the next stage in their education. Relationships with parents are positive and parents receive a range of information. This includes information specific to the age group of their child, for example to support them at home with toilet training or the arrival of new siblings. However because the information they get from staff about their child's progress is not always accurate, parents and those professionals

who work with the children are not always gaining a clear picture of how to support the child at home or at another setting.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met  
(with  
actions)**

#### **To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:**

- ensure that the childcare is accessible and inclusive by taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the needs of each child, relating to their childcare, are met (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure the registered person informs Ofsted of the following: any significant event which is likely to affect their suitability or any person caring for children on the premises, such as any offences or orders that may disqualify them .



## 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

|                                    |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | EY263914                       |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Reading                        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 932420                         |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           | Full-time provision            |
| <b>Registration category</b>       | Childcare - Non-Domestic       |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 0 - 8                          |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 64                             |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 87                             |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 18/06/2009                     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01189 585316                   |

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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  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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