

Little Explorers

Aigburth Opportunities, Future House, 25 Pomona Street, Liverpool, L3 5TL

Inspection date	22/10/2013
Previous inspection date	09/05/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
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

- Children are safeguarded well because staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility in protecting children. They know the correct procedure to follow should any concerns arise about a child in their care.
- Children and staff enjoy warm relationships, which mean that children feel safe and secure within the nursery.
- Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise during outdoor play. This supports their developing understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle.

It is not yet good because

- Procedures for monitoring the teaching are developing and not fully embedded in practice.
- The quality of the teaching and learning experiences for children are not always consistent in all areas of the nursery to maximise children's learning.
- There is no named person for behaviour management. However, this does not have an impact on staff knowledge and ability to apply strategies and follow policy.
- The complaints record is not readily accessible or clear in recording actions taken. This means that any concerns raised are not easily traced.

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 within the nursery and during outside play.
The inspector looked at a range of documentation. This includes children's learning records, staff files and policies, such as safeguarding and behaviour management policy.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the deputy manager in the outside area of the pre-school room.
The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection and also spoke with the deputy manager and the provider. The inspector spoke with parents and took account of written feedback.

Inspector

Sandra Harwood

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Explorers was registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is managed by Aigburth Training Opportunities, which is a company limited by guarantee with Charitable Status and operates from their premises in Liverpool city centre. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. Children have use of three rooms on the ground floor and there are two enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and seven at level 3 and above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, for 51 weeks a year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 49 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

Out-of-school care is also provided before and after school and during holidays. During term time, out-of-school care operates from 7.30am to 8.45am and from 3.15pm to 6pm. Staff take children to and collect them from two local primary schools. Currently, there are 31 children attending the out-of-school care. Of these, 5 are in the early years age group.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure a named practitioner is in place to be responsible for behaviour management in the nursery
- ensure there is consistency of staff practice, in order for children to benefit from learning experiences that develop their critical thinking and offer challenge in their learning
- ensure the complaints file is more readily available. Record clearly any action taken to enable anyone to follow and understand any action taken.

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

- develop further management monitoring procedures to consistently identify areas of strength and weakness in teaching and build on effective practice.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are appropriately supported by staff, who generally have a sound understanding of child development and their role in supporting children's learning. However, this is not consistently evident in practice throughout the nursery. This means children make satisfactory rather than good progress. Staff find out about each child right from the start, through an 'all about me booklet' and discussions with parents. Parents and staff continue to exchange information through the use of daily diary's promoting consistency of learning. Staff carry out observations and assessments and adequately use the information to plan for children's learning. They complete 'progress checks at age two' and summaries of children's progress are shared with parents at parents meetings or transition times.

Very young children and babies are encouraged to participate in exploring their surroundings and interesting play materials through the many sensory baskets on offer. This promotes children's exploratory and sensory development. The construction area provides older children with opportunities to be creative as they make models and other interesting things. Children are supported in developing their understanding of mathematical concepts through activities and daily experiences. For example, staff and children count the pieces of jelly being shared around ensuring they match the pieces with a person. Mathematical concepts of size are used when discussing the size of nappies and dolls as children dress their 'babies'. The pre-school learning environment provides children with displays of time to support them in their recognition of numbers and time in a variety of ways.

The baby room provides younger children with a range of resources that are stored at a low-level, enabling them to easily choose what they wish to play with. These include a range of exploratory and discovery toys in which children show a real interest as they press the buttons and explore the sounds. Children, therefore, learn about simple technology. Activities, such as exploring sand using spoons or other pouring equipment enable babies to develop their manipulation skills aiding their ability to develop self-feeding skills.

All children show their developing concentration, for example, a baby spends time practicing their throwing skills. The baby seeks reassurance from adults who respond positively enabling them to continue with pride. Children in the pre-school room concentrate as they fill and empty the rods in the back of the truck. However, some staff do not support opportunities for children to explore their own learning and extend their thinking. For example, when young children show interest in jigsaws, staff inform them it is too difficult and direct them to try a simpler one. Other staff prevent children from developing their play as they continually ask them to return the toy to the car mat. This means that children's critical thinking is not supported and they are not effectively challenged.

Babies enjoy using a range of musical instruments as they shake, bang and join in with staff as they sing a range of nursery rhymes, actions and songs. This supports children as

they develop their understanding that words carry meaning. Pre-school children enjoy conversations with staff and each other; they discuss what they are doing. The outdoor environment provides children with a safe place to engage in physical activities and the separate baby area provides a range of suitable equipment for their ages and stages of development.

Children gain respect and value and celebrate their differences and similarities. Staff use a range of visual support and resources to support children's understanding of different cultures. Displays show the different countries some children come from, along with celebrations that children take part in, such as Eid. Children are developing an understanding of the natural and wider world, through first hand experiences, for example, digging, planting and growing vegetables and through many visits into their local community.

Children across all the age ranges enjoy books and stories and have lots of opportunities to look at them on their own or in small groups with and without staff. Staff support children's language development by talking to them throughout the day. They introduce new vocabulary, for example, as one child stretches, points and moves around staff introduce the idea of gymnastics and uses a range of word describing this topic. Children whose home language is other than English are supported by obtaining key word used by parents in their own homes. Staff check with parents to ensure the pronunciation is correct. Most staff use these to ensure children understand and help them make connections in their learning. Overall, children satisfactorily gain the skills necessary to support their future learning.

The out of school and holiday club offers activities and experiences that complement the learning that takes place in school. This is because staff are aware of their needs through continual exchanges with their school.

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

A bright, warm and interesting environment awaits children and families as they enter the nursery. Information boards guide parents' understanding of safeguarding and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff profile boards introduce all staff members to parents and enable both children and parents to identify them. Children are unable to leave the nursery unattended and the secure entrance prevents anyone entering without the knowledge of staff.

Behaviour is good as children play well together and they generally respond well to request from staff. Staff are suitable role models and behave respectfully to children. They confidently implement strategies as stated within the behaviour management policy. For example, staff calmly ask children to explain what happened giving them time to answer. Staff make it clear that reasons why the behaviour is unacceptable. As a result, children are being given consistent messages to support them in learning right from wrong.

Staff spend most of their time on children's levels engaging them in a range experiences. They follow their individual routines and demonstrate a suitable understanding of the care

needs of this age range. Babies and young children have suitable rests throughout the day and most staff are sensitive to children's needs. For example, one child requires close contact to enable them to feel secure, so their Key person sits with them, talks to them reassuringly and includes them in the range of routines. Nappy changing routines for babies and children show good hygiene practices. Staff check and record changes regularly and transfer this information to children's daily diaries shared with parents. For children, who require cream for nappy rash, this is supplied and applied according to the request of parents. Babies, key person ensures parents are informed if this develops during children's time in the nursery and are given the appropriate advice.

Children enjoy playing on their own, with friends and with staff. Staff are positive role models and are calm and caring in all their interactions with children across the age ranges. They support children well in developing their skills in taking turns and praise positive behaviour. Staff are well-deployed to ensure that children are safe and assist them in their play and learning by giving them clear explanations to help them understand about keeping safe. Children enjoy daily fresh air and exercise in the outdoor areas which they enjoy. They develop appropriate physical skills and are learning how to be healthy. Suitable systems are in place to record and meet individual dietary needs. Staff teach children to follow appropriate personal hygiene routines.

Transitions throughout the nursery are sound. Babies and toddlers spend time with their key person, who accompanies them on visits to the room they move on to. Transition summaries and verbal exchanges along with time building up the visits to ensure their transitions are smooth. This helps develop attachments between the child, new key person and parents. Transitions into education for older children are supported well. Staff liaise with teachers of local schools where children move on to, sharing what they know about children and inviting teachers into the nursery to meet children and for them to observe them in a familiar setting.

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

Staff are suitably qualified for their roles and demonstrate a sound understanding of their roles in promoting the health and safety of children. They have a suitable knowledge of child protection issues and the procedures to follow in the event of concerns. In addition, they know the procedure to follow if they have concerns about a colleague. The recording of all staff, children and visitors to and from the nursery, detailed policies further contribute to ensuring children are safeguarded from harm. The required policies and procedures are understood and on the whole appropriately implemented. However, there is no named person responsible for behaviour management. Signs on display and policies included in the parent pack give information on how to complain and complaints forms are available. However, they are not readily accessible to parents or other staff members. This makes it difficult to identify how any complaints are recorded and dealt with.

Sound systems are in place for the safe recruitment and vetting of staff and suitable induction procedures are in place. The provider is aware of their responsibilities in meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and confidently discusses issues, such as

when to contact Ofsted or monitoring staff suitability.

Self-evaluation and performance management systems are in place, although, they are not effective in tackling all the weaknesses in staff practice. Staff supervision is in place and the introduction of staff observations supports this. However, it is not fully effective in identifying training and development needs to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Recent training on behaviour management has further raised staff awareness and promoted their understanding. Staff provide suitable activities for children overall, that help them make steady progress in their learning. However, they do not always challenge children's needs or adapt activities to their individual abilities. Most of the recommendations and actions from the last inspection have been addressed and continue to develop, which means they have a positive impact on the quality of children's experiences.

Partnerships with parents are established. Staff exchange information with parents about their child's needs and development to ensure they meet children's needs. Information is shared verbally through daily exchanges. Written parental feedback and those spoken to on the day are complimentary of staff and parents feel staff listen to them and respond effectively supporting them in the child's care and learning. Partnerships with other professionals are established and staff implement programmes, which help support children's individual needs.

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 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	EY375074
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	936145
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	75
Name of provider	Aigburth Opportunities
Date of previous inspection	09/05/2013
Telephone number	0151 708 7868

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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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