

Little Firs Day Nursery

Conifers Primary School, Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 0QF

Inspection date	10/01/2014
Previous inspection date	10/12/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are keen and enthusiastic learners. Good interaction from staff helps to capture children's interests and imaginations so they become fully engaged in their learning.
- All areas of the nursery are welcoming and stimulating. Good consideration to the organisation of play space and resources means that children can organise their own play.
- Strong links with parents and good systems for information sharing means that they feel fully involved and are actively encouraged to support children's learning at home.
- A well established programme of professional development helps staff to constantly gain new skills and make improvements to the provision for children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is some inconsistency in the way in which written information about children's next steps is shared when children move between rooms in the nursery to support their learning.
- Staff do not always provide children who speak English as an additional language with enough opportunities to hear and use their home language during their play.

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 voluntary and compulsory parts 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 playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector held meetings at appropriate times and completed a joint observation with the registered person/manager.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documents and a sample of documentation relating to children's welfare.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and the provider's self-evaluation.

Inspector

Samantha Powis

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Firs Day Nursery, previously known as Westhaven Pre-School, opened in 1979. It is a committee run group, which operates from purpose built premises in the grounds of Conifers Primary School, Weymouth. Children from birth to eight years are accommodated in separate areas within the building. Children have access to outdoor areas for play. The nursery operates from 7.30am until 6pm on each weekday throughout the year, excluding bank holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 183 children on roll, with 153 of these in the early years age group. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery cares for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 25 staff to work with the children. The manager and deputy both have Early Years Professional Status. All remaining staff are qualified to level 2 or 3 in childcare, or are working towards a qualification.

Inspection judgements

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

Children throughout all areas of the nursery are settled and happy. They are keen to learn and become fully engaged in their learning as staff create enabling environments where children can move about freely, select their own resources and organise their own play. Staff get fully involved in children's learning, offering supportive language and posing questions to challenge and extend children's learning further. For example, whilst pre-school children make play dough, a member of staff asks them questions which encourage children to think through their actions. They use mathematical language as they measure and estimate the ingredients and gain new vocabulary as they try to explain how the different ingredients feel, look or change.

Staff provide opportunities for all children to explore using different materials. They are flexible and adapt a planned painting activity for the two-year-olds to suit their interests. Children explore the paint using their hands and brushes instead of using the string provided. Staff encourage them to follow their own interests, making patterns and exploring colours, as well as learning about how the paint feels on their hands. As they use the brushes to paint around their fingers, they start to learn about the shape of their own bodies through their experiments. Free access to creative tools, such as tape, scissors, boxes, paper and pens, enables children to express themselves and use their imaginations. Younger children are fascinated as they play with a tray of jelly; they squash, squeeze and pat it, developing their physical skills. Staff are close by as children

play, providing them with vocabulary as they explore the properties of the jelly. Children imitate a member of staff sniffing at the jelly to see how it smells, using all their senses to investigate the unusual material to make sense of it.

Staff support children's language and communication skills very well. They implement helpful strategies based on the 'Every child a talker' programme to further encourage and promote children's language development. Babies and younger children enjoy listening to music. Staff demonstrate actions to the songs, which some children copy. This helps young children to listen and start to recognise the pattern and rhythm of the song. The use of resources, such as talking boxes and story sacks, encourages children to use language to talk about what they see, share their own experiences and make up their own stories. Although staff learn some key words in children's home language when this is not English, they do not use these very often in the nursery. This means children are not regularly hearing and using their home language during play to fully support and extend their communication skills and confidence.

Staff effectively plan activities and experiences that reflect children's interests and excite and motivate them into getting fully involved. This means they all make good progress and are prepared well for the next stage in their learning. Effective assessment arrangements help staff to monitor children's learning and plan for their individual progress. All staff make careful observations which help them to establish children's next steps and identify any gaps in their learning. They use this information well to produce accurate records of children's development, including the required progress check for two-year-old children. Staff share these with parents and other professionals as necessary. When children start at the nursery, information gathered from parents helps staff to support each individual child. Parents have frequent access to progress records to keep them well informed about how children are getting on. Staff provide parents with information about activities and strategies used within the nursery to support children's learning. This encourages parents to further support and extend children's learning at home. This demonstrates effective improvements made since the nursery's last inspection. When children move between different rooms in the nursery, they enjoy several settling-in sessions accompanied by the key person to help them become familiar with the new environment and staff members. At this time, the key person verbally shares some information about children's individual learning needs. When children permanently move to their new room, staff usually receive their assessment records. However, there is some inconsistency across the nursery for sharing this written information. This means that the detailed information about children's previous learning and next steps is not always readily available to new staff to help them provide specific activities to support children's individual learning needs right from the start.

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

Children develop strong relationships with their key person and members of the friendly staff team. This helps children to settle well and feel secure. Overall, key person arrangements are effective in ensuring that staff are able to meet children's individual needs well. Staff support children's personal social and emotional development very well.

Children gain confidence due to the respectful and responsive interactions they receive from staff. For example, staff listen to the reactions of babies and respond to these promptly, making changes in daily routines to support their individual needs. Staff encourage children to become increasingly independent in managing their personal care needs. For example, babies receive support to learn to feed themselves using their hands and simple tools. Staff gradually increase the tools to enable them develop new skills and become independent. This means that by the time children are in the pre-school room, they are able to choose when they want to have a snack and organise this for themselves. Children benefit from healthy snacks and meals during the day, all of which are adapted to support any individual dietary needs. This means that children feel fully included and valued. Staff talk to children about the benefits of fresh fruit and vegetables in their diet as they eat. This helps children to develop a positive attitude to healthy eating, supporting a healthy lifestyle. Good routines followed by staff and encouraged with children, help to support children's health. For example, all children are encouraged to clean their teeth after lunch, making them increasingly aware of the importance of good practices to support their own long term health.

Children develop strong relationships and learn to work well with others. Having a key person with whom they feel secure encourages younger children to explore new situations and form bonds with others. Older children learn about boundaries and expectations and start to form friendships. Children discuss the 'Golden Values', learning about how their actions and behaviour can keep themselves and others safe and create a friendly environment where they can all play together.

Safety and security are a priority within the setting. Staff complete risk assessments and monitor safety throughout the day. Children also participate in helping staff to complete risk assessments. This helps children to start to recognise and react to safety issues, helping them to keep themselves safe. Good staffing ratios are adhered to at all times. Staff deployment arrangements are flexible, enabling staff to follow children's interests. For example, children are able to free-flow between indoor and outdoor areas at most times of the day. Staff monitor the number of children using each area and deploy themselves effectively to ensure children remain well supervised at all times. Overall, effective use of documentation helps to support children's welfare and well-being. For example, staff keep a detailed record of any accidents. Staff monitor these records to identify any patterns or recurring issues to help prevent accidents in the future.

The premises are well maintained and welcoming for children and parents. All areas are very well resourced and space is organised to support children's needs. Flexible use of equipment helps to support children's learning. For example, children experiment with finding alternative ways of getting some soft bricks up the slide, creating an original stacking system. As they play, staff pose questions that help children learn about mathematics and the science of forces. They use problem solving skills to overcome any difficulties and try out different ideas and strategies. Staff praise children when their pile of bricks is safely at the top of the slide, reinforcing what worked well. Children laugh as they slide the bricks back down and repeat their task, demonstrating and practising the skills they have learnt. Babies have a separate playroom, with a sectioned off area in which they can sleep peacefully while still under the close supervision of staff. There are several secure outdoor play spaces which children enjoy access to throughout the day.

This provides many opportunities for children to gain physical skills, as well as benefit from playing out in the fresh air.

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

This was a brought forward inspection, following concerns raised to Ofsted relating to the nursery safeguarding policy and procedure. A notice to improve was sent to the provider and they have now ensured the safeguarding policy is very clear, particularly with regard to allegations against a member of staff. All staff are familiar with this strengthened procedure to help them effectively safeguard all the children in their care.

Successful leadership and management of the nursery means that staff support children's needs well. Staff are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities, due to regular staff meetings, staff induction and ongoing supervision and appraisal procedures. This means they all work well together to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. All staff have a secure understanding of the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for both learning and development and safeguarding and welfare, helping to ensure they fully meet them. The committee support the senior management team in monitoring the effectiveness of the setting, helping to ensure all aspects are working successfully. The nursery team are well qualified. The management continue to support staffs ongoing professional development extremely well. Staff frequently attend training courses, and cascade any new ideas or skills with the remaining staff team through meetings. This extends the skills of all those working with the children and helps to ensure they make continuous improvements to practice. Feedback from children via the 'nursery council' means that the management consider their views, along with those of parents and staff when making changes to the setting. The manager and deputy demonstrate a real drive and commitment to providing high quality care for children and this attitude is apparent throughout the nursery. Effective systems are in place to monitor individual children's progress and plan for their next steps. Senior staff also monitor the overall progress children make, helping to identify any gaps in educational programmes or staff knowledge.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to help the setting to safeguard children, which include a whistle blowing policy. All staff are familiar with the policies and procedures and their roles and responsibilities to protect children from harm. Most staff have attended training to help them identify and escalate any potential concerns promptly. This helps to protect children's ongoing safety. Effective procedures are followed with regards to staff recruitment and vetting. All staff undergo full checks to confirm their suitability before they are able to work alone with the children. This helps to safeguard children well.

Strong partnerships with parents, carers and others involved in children's lives, help staff to meet children's needs. Parents receive detailed information about the setting and about the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and certain strategies staff use to support children's learning. Links between key persons and parents are strong, ensuring ongoing

information sharing to promote consistency. Staff develop successful relationships with other professionals supporting children's needs. For example, individual learning plans that staff, parents and other professionals contribute towards help to support the needs of children. This helps to support each child in reaching their full potential, as teaching is individually tailored to meet their needs.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary 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	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	141017
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	918137
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	77
Number of children on roll	183
Name of provider	Little Firs Day Nursery Committee
Date of previous inspection	10/12/2008
Telephone number	01305 782727

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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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