

St John's Little Learners

St. Johns C of E Primary School, Sallowbush Road, HUNTINGDON, Cambridgeshire, PE29 7LA

Inspection date	20/01/2014
Previous inspection date	19/07/2011

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 make excellent progress towards the early learning goals as they are offered individualised learning opportunities that are accurately aligned to their particular interests and preferred style of learning.
- The superb partnership working ethos cultivated within the nursery ensures that parents and professionals alike are welcomed, their input valued and exceptional arrangements for information sharing ensure children's specific needs are met and timely interventions are secured.
- The stimulating and extensively modified outdoor learning environment is freely available to children who relish the extensive opportunities it offers them. Children take their play outside all year round and benefit from challenging physical activities and being in the fresh air.
- The exceptionally nurturing and caring atmosphere within the nursery enables children to feel relaxed and at home, which means they benefit fully from the skilful teaching and flexible learning environment offered. Practitioners knowledge of how to safeguard children is extremely high and backed by effective policies and procedures.
- The dedication of the whole team to the provision of a high quality service for children and their families is exemplified through the positive emphasis that is placed on training and professional development. Practitioners are offered intuitive support through regular supervision and monitoring of practice.
- The mutually beneficial working relationship between the committee and the nursery management team ensures that the outstanding features of the nursery are continually being built upon to offer children ever improving opportunities and outcomes.

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 playroom and the outdoor area including a joint observation with the manager of a shape recognition activity in the main room.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision and spoke to children's key persons as appropriate during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's records, planning, evidence of suitability of practitioners working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to at the inspection.

Inspector

Deborah Hunt

Full report

Information about the setting

St John's Little Learners was registered in 2010 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from a purpose-built building in the grounds of St John's School in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. It is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents and interested professionals and has charitable status. The nursery is a satellite of the Huntingdon Town Children's Centre. It serves the local and surrounding areas and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, the manager holds a level 5 qualification and is working towards a level 6. Seven members of staff hold a level 3 qualification. One member of staff has a level 2 qualification and is working towards a level 3. Another member of staff is working towards a level 3 qualification.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am until 6pm term time only and with the exception of public holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 46 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with English as an additional language. They receive support from the local authority and have completed the local authority quality assurance scheme.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further the already exceptional arrangements to support children speaking English as an additional language to cater for the new cohorts of children arriving.

Inspection judgements

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

Highly skilled teaching throughout the nursery helps children make extremely good progress in their learning and development. Practitioners who know each child exceptionally well work at their level, offering them individualised learning, aligned to their specific and changing interests. They skilfully move with children between activities, knowing when to stand back and when to intervene to support and extend children's play and understanding. Practitioners display a superb understanding of how to implement the learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They apply this knowledge to the different ways in which children learn, developing stimulating, innovative and challenging activities within which children fully

immerse themselves. Children's progress is monitored and tracked to a very high standard and practitioners plan the next steps in their learning by assessing observations carried out. Through comprehensive use of children's learning journals, practitioners ensure that children make progress across each area of learning, giving priority to the prime areas. The extensive, high quality resourcing of the nursery further supports children to engage deeply in activities, explore and develop creative and critical thinking skills.

Babies learn to communicate very rapidly as practitioners interact with them frequently using soft, gentle voices, sensitively encouraging them to respond. They make use of singing, facial expressions and gestures to further support children's early understanding. Soft surfaces, age-appropriate activities and practitioners' warm, highly responsive interaction all encourage these youngest children to explore and investigate. For example, a baby listens as a practitioner sings quietly to them, repeating the simple verses to emphasize new vocabulary. The baby communicates their delight by bouncing, smiling and giggling. Toddlers confidently move between different areas within the room, independently selecting resources of their choosing. Older children demonstrate familiarity in their environment as they go hand-in-hand to choose which calculators they want, and move across to the number line on another wall. They 'chat' to one another in their home language on their calculator 'mobile phones' as they go and tap in numbers they can see on the wall as they point them out to each other. A practitioner who speaks their language joins them and they converse in English and their home language, supporting their communication skills superbly. The high quality interaction practitioners throughout the setting provide ensures children's learning in all areas is promoted. A feature of the nursery is the degree to which they offer children personalised learning and seek to develop their ability as autonomous, independent learners. This is evident as children make choices about where to play and which activities they wish to participate in. Practitioners are particularly effective in promoting communication and confidence in these young children. Children whose language is less well-developed use choice cards, which they bring to practitioners, who use clear, simple language to ascertain which song they would like to sing. They offer children a choice of which language they will sing the song in. Children nearby join with the practitioner as they sing the chosen nursery rhyme and the child beams, runs off and returns with another card and the process is repeated. Children become lost in periods of uninterrupted play, displaying the characteristics of effective learning, as they take their baby doll outdoors and put them in a buggy. They talk to the baby as they head towards the play house where they search for blankets 'to keep the baby warm' and then trot off for a frosty walk. They return to the playhouse and take the buggy inside where they put the baby to bed for a sleep. Through an extensive variety of activities, only limited by children's interests and imaginations, children develop the ability to become confident, competent learners. They explore, investigate, use mathematical language and develop useful skills for future learning. For example, older children write their names and proudly show practitioners, who offer them genuine praise and challenge them to write their name to. Children display technology skills during an activity to explore the topic of families. They discuss shapes and count as they create faces depicting their parents and themselves. The practitioner asks them how they can use the camera to take a picture of their own face and children display independence of thought in their responses. One child asks the practitioner to take a photograph for her and another turns the camera around and takes their own picture.

Parents are extremely happy with the progress their children make during their time at the nursery. Key persons keep parents abreast of their children's achievements in a number of ways and share the next steps in their learning with them. They seek to involve parents in their children's learning wherever, and however, they can. For example, parents offer information about children's learning and activities at home and post their achievements on a board in the nursery. Children take home activities, books to share with their parents and reading scheme books, which local schools use for early readers. Bi-annual parent consultations are offered to ensure parents are kept apprised of their children's progress and learning. Through the wealth of information parents' share, which key persons add to children's learning journals, the rate of progress children make in their learning is further enhanced. The shared communication between key persons and outside agencies is highly beneficial for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Key persons are totally involved in the individual learning plans that are set, with targets to fully support children's development and progress. Consequently, all children make exceptionally good progress and are extremely well-prepared for the next stage in their learning and the move to school.

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

The importance of the key person role is recognized in this setting as being pivotal to the success of children's learning and development. Parents are made aware of who this person will be for their children during the settling-in visit. Much useful information is shared as the child plays and this begins the dialogue, which continues throughout the child's time in the nursery. As a result of the depth of knowledge gained early on, and the relaxed, welcoming atmosphere within the nursery, children settle easily. They demonstrate high levels of confidence in their environment and the warm, positive attachments they form with practitioners enable them to feel safe and secure. Baseline assessments completed from the comprehensive information gathered and practitioners' early observations ensure that children make excellent progress from their initial starting points. Practitioners meet their individual needs as they know what children can do, their daily routines and what interests them. The enabling environment is very well-equipped with age-appropriate, accessible resources and is bright and stimulating. Together with the firm relationships and positive communication that exists between children and practitioners, children's well-being and welfare is highly effectively promoted.

Children at the setting come from a wide variety of backgrounds and enjoy the harmonious, calm and peaceful atmosphere within the nursery. Behaviour is good and children display care and concern for one another. They help one another during activities, such as a child finding a lost pen lid for a friend and others who assist their friends on the computer. The independence practitioners encourage is exemplified by the success with which children solve minor disputes. They show respect for their environment as they use indoor and outdoor footwear and work safely with tools, such as scissors. Significant thought is given to children's transitions, both within their home lives and as they move between settings and onto school. Practitioners share learning information with new key persons and teachers and children enjoy visits to their new schools when the time comes. Teachers also visit children in the nursery and local schools have donated uniforms for

children to dress-up in. Practitioners create books showing their new classrooms and fine tune children's key skills to further ensure their readiness for the move to school. The careful thought practitioners put into helping children prepare for such moves ensures children achieve smooth transitions with little or no interruption to their learning and development. This is particularly effective for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as the key person assists the children on regular visits to the school, building firm relationships with teaching staff. Through close partnership working with the child's parents they are therefore, able to help the children feel totally secure before their move.

Children are provided with a varied, balanced and nutritious diet of fresh foods, which are often locally produced. Close partnership working with the local children's centre and a local church ensure a regular supply of fresh fruit and vegetables, with any excess being offered to local families. The inspirational kitchen lead, cooks healthy foods for and with the children, such as soups which they take home, together with the recipe, to cook and eat with their families. The foods used comply with any dietary requirements a child may have, whether culturally or health related. Children serve themselves, learning valuable skills for the future and sit with adults and their peers as they eat. They enjoy sociable and enjoyable interaction at mealtimes, which supports their understanding that mealtimes are social occasions as well as developing their awareness of how to eat healthily.

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

This inspection was brought forward by Ofsted following information received regarding safeguarding concerns relating to a member of staff. The inspection found that all practitioners were fully aware of their responsibilities and took all the necessary steps following the allegation made, including informing the relevant authorities. The allegation was unfounded. However, the manager carried out a full investigation, amended the safeguarding procedure and policy and retrained the staff team to follow the very high standards of operation in place at the nursery. All practitioners demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and their role and responsibilities around child protection. A highly detailed and comprehensive written safeguarding policy and procedure is in place and practitioners are very clear about the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Safeguarding is given the highest consideration and forms a standing item on the monthly team meeting agenda. Additionally, practitioners undertake regular training to update their skills and knowledge. The carefully considered and rigorous approach taken to recruitment and checking of practitioners within the nursery ensures that children are cared for by suitable adults who are highly suited to their roles.

The nursery manager and all practitioners have an excellent understanding of the learning and development requirements. The manager has developed concise and accurate monitoring of children's progress, which ensures they make exceptional progress. A specialist role oversees completion of children's learning journals and practice within the nursery. All practitioners hold specific responsibilities and because of their involvement,

they feel a part of the nursery and are proud of its success. Regular supervision and annual appraisal ensures that all practitioners feel supported and their continuing professional and personal development is valued. Through detailed and regular evaluation of practice within the nursery, management and practitioners clearly identify areas of further development. The nursery manager strives for excellence throughout the nursery and is dedicated to continuous improvement. Training is prioritised that will offer the highest impact on the care and education for all children.

Highly successful relationships have been established with parents based on trust. Information is exchanged daily and regular meetings with key persons ensure parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress in learning and development. The nursery shares a wealth of information with them to help them support their children's learning at home. For example, they send home topical interest sheets about activities going on and newsletters. The informative website offers prospective and current parents a clear insight into how the nursery operates and offers signposting to other helpful sites and organisations. Themed questionnaires are sent out following trips or topics covered. For example, a recent book event prompted the issue of a survey and has resulted in the book share scheme now operating. Parents speak very highly of the setting and express how very impressed they are with the knowledge staff have of their children's development and the utmost care they give them. The exemplary partnership working with outside agencies and schools children move on to, mean children are consistently and fully supported.

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	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	EY408157
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	943780
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	46
Name of provider	St John's Little Learners Committee
Date of previous inspection	19/07/2011
Telephone number	01480 412773

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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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