

The Little School by the Lake

Heath Road, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU31 4EJ

Inspection date	20/01/2014
Previous inspection date	06/02/2009

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

- High quality teaching and learning takes place with pre-school children which means they are making very good progress in readiness for school.
- There is excellent attention to outdoor play in all weathers, which all children thrive upon and relish. The forest school garden is hugely exciting and popular.
- Staff support children's learning needs well in the rich and stimulating play spaces for babies and children. This ignites their interest and motivation to learn.
- Robust safeguarding procedures are carried out by management and staff, to keep children safe.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Young children's care routines are not always carried out by their key person which impacts on their personal and emotional development.
- Staff supervision arrangements are not of high quality.

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 play and learning activities and tracked children indoors and out.
- The inspector had a discussion with the manager and provider regarding leadership and management.
- The inspector looked at children's progress records, planning, and sampled documentation particularly related to safeguarding and welfare.
- The inspector spoke to a sample group of parents to gain their views of the setting.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Lorraine Wardlaw

Full report

Information about the setting

The Little School by the Lake registered in 1998 and re-registered in 2005 under its current ownership. It is one of two privately owned nurseries. The premises is a converted golf club, on the edge of the heath land, in Petersfield, Hampshire. The premises comprise of an over two's unit, which includes the pre-school, and a separate baby unit. There are three enclosed outdoor areas. The nursery serves families from the local community and surrounding villages.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Nursery education funding is available for two, three and four- year-olds. The setting makes provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. The nursery opens five days a week for 52 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday. There are 17 staff working with the children. Of these, only one staff member is unqualified but is currently on a training programme. All of the other 16 staff are qualified in early years to either level 3, 4, 5 or 6.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the key person system to be able to completely support young children's personal, and emotional needs

- strengthen the staff supervision arrangements.

Inspection judgements

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

Children at this nursery demonstrate their eagerness and delight during their play alongside the practitioners, who support their needs well. This is because the adults engage in the children's purposeful play and interact with them well to foster their curiosity and develop a love of learning. The adults have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, of how young children learn and about their different styles of learning. Effective planning builds on children's skills, knowledge and interests which means that children are making good or better progress towards the early learning goals, particularly in the pre-school area. Most staff working with the older age group, are extremely knowledgeable about the needs of the children attending , They skillfully know and understand each individual child and tailor their practice to suit them. The teaching support for children with special educational needs and the more able child

is excellent. This is because of the way children are grouped according to their capabilities. In addition, the special educational needs co-ordinator is passionate about her work. For example, she implements a visual timetable for those children who need extra support and adapts the environment for children who have limited mobility. Planning of the educational programme is responsive to children's needs and interests, which means that staff are able to offer good challenges to the children on a day-to-day basis. This has an extremely positive impact on the older children's enthusiasm and motivation to learn, in addition to building on their current skills and knowledge. For example, the pre-school children become highly engaged in a musical, sounds activity. They listen attentively to the adult who expertly encourages them to problem solve. When asked how many owls there are in the group they swiftly say ten without counting aloud. When she tells them not to include herself they swiftly and accurately say nine, demonstrating their excellent mathematical skills. Children play their instruments, loudly and quietly. They follow instructions to swap to instruments with a different sound, sing enthusiastically, and promptly stop playing the music when they finish the song. Outdoors they make trumpets in the shed from card and paint; they have fun making their voices into different sounds. Children talk about the different shape their mouths make when they make different sounds, which effectively promotes their early reading skills.

The two-year-old educational programme is well-matched to their individual needs. They spend a lot of time out of doors exploring the exciting environment. For example, they dig holes in the soil excitedly looking for mini-beasts and experiment in the 'messy kitchen' with its pots and pans, water, split peas and spaghetti. The adults encourage them to role play the a favourite story by using bricks, sticks and straw. Some two-year-olds can recall elements of the story, showing an excellent ability. Babies are well cared for by the adults who are understanding and responsive to their needs. The adults purposefully interact with the babies under two to promote their communication and language skills. They encourage social, interactive play with one another as babies explore the moveable, musical toys and small world animals on the attractive low table landscape scene. The adults spontaneously sing and use the shakers to promote babies key skills, which results in good engagement from the babies. For example, they wriggle their bottoms, shake the shakers, smile animatedly and do some actions to the songs. The cosy, attractive book corner is used a lot by the babies who toddle up to it to select books. They take it to their key person, to read and sit on their lap. Throughout the nursery all key staff know their children well. They record good assessments of the children's abilities and implement their next learning steps regularly. For example, a specific language group helps those children who are not at the expected level in their communication and language development. They happily engage and get involved in a well-planned small group activity, where they talk and co-operate alongside their peers. Older children proudly count the children in the circle at registration time and show the corresponding number on the washing line. Children develop a full range of skills to support them in future learning.

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

The nursery offers a highly stimulating, child friendly and enabling environment where children and their families feel welcomed, very settled and happy. The attractive, rich,

large play spaces with well-chosen play resources, furniture and equipment effectively supports children's all round development. Cosy, colourful and inviting book and role-play areas and a sensory room with low shelving, cushions and play resources, entice young children to play and learn. The exceptional outdoor areas are a key strength of the learning environment. Lots of wonderful, active fun takes place in the forest school garden with the pre-school children. The competent, caring staff team build good relationships with the children, which shows in their interactions. However, babies and toddlers nappies are changed by all the staff on a rota and not by their key person or buddy, which does not support high quality practice. This means that during the most intimate of times their relationships, attachments and emotional well-being is not fully considered. Young children's sleeping and care routines are followed in line with parent routines and according to each child's individual needs.

Toddlers and babies enjoy regular walks in the local, natural environment often twice a day. Staff use triple buggies to take children out in the fresh air and provide interaction and stimulation as they look out for any animals. There is excellent emphasis on outdoor learning and physical play in all weathers, particularly for the two-year-old children. They eagerly put on their wellies and are supported to put on their 'all in one' weather suits to venture and explore outdoors. They use balls and enjoy the physical challenges presented to them, such as walking up the steep slope with a pushchair or stepping across the wooden stumps. Pre-school children are highly engaged in the physical challenges of the forest school garden. They climb trees, use pulleys on the trees and enjoy the large equipment in the wonderful mud kitchen. Children enjoy the nutritious, well-balanced, home-cooked meal at midday. In addition, there are healthy snacks and regular drinks of water available, which they thoroughly enjoy. Staff take care to ensure that children know the ingredients of the meal, talking about the vegetables which were used by referring to their picture wall display. Personal independence is promoted well at meal times for the pre-school children. The 'very important person' each day wears a badge and helps to lay the table with cutlery and cups. They help serve the plates of food to the other children, which gives them a good sense of achievement and of pride. Children's behaviour is very good because staff value what children do, have high expectations of them and praise them well in their achievements. Older children know the boundaries of good, safe behaviour and demonstrate their helpful, co-operative social skills throughout the nursery. For example, two children carry a tub load of outdoor play resources to the shed at tidy up time. They stop what they are doing, make statues with their bodies and listen to the adult when there is a change of routine. Giving children responsibilities through the excellent 'very important person' system promotes their positive, helpful behaviour. Older children demonstrate they can independently attend to their own personal needs, such as going to the toilet and washing their hands afterwards. Children are well-supported to make the move to school. For example, past nursery pupils visit in their school uniform and confidently talk about their new school, proudly sharing photographs of their new school environment.

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

The provider, manager and staff successfully implement the robust policies and procedures to ensure the safeguarding and welfare requirements are consistently met. There is very good awareness of child protection issues because the manager and staff are well trained and they carry out the procedures to a high standard. This includes the whistle blowing policy and notifying to Ofsted of any significant safeguarding information. An incident occurred in the nursery where behaviour management strategies used were not in line with the setting's behaviour policy. This was in part attributed to poor deployment of staff at the time. The provider promptly carried out a thorough investigation and has introduced more robust systems to ensure the safety and welfare of the children. Staff are now placed with the age group of children that their skills and experience are best able to support. Senior staff make themselves available to call on, as needed, to deal with more challenging behaviour. Rigorous procedures are in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff, which includes an induction programme and mentoring support for new staff to develop their knowledge and skills. In addition, management undertake regular quizzes with staff to ensure their knowledge is secure. Annual appraisals and regular peer on peer observations take place to monitor staff practice. However, staff supervision is informal and is not yet of high quality. Underperformance by staff is tackled according to the setting's clear disciplinary procedures. The staff team are well qualified and attend external training to deepen their knowledge. For example, they are Makaton trained and attend a 'keep on talking' workshop to ensure all children's needs are met. The nursery policies and procedures are implemented well. The nursery uses the Ofsted on-line self-evaluation form to give a clear picture of their strengths and most areas for improvement. A development plan is in place to ensure the setting is consistently looking at ways to improve the nursery. For example, the front garden is currently being improved.

Partnership with parents is extremely strong. Staff communicate well with parents about their child's care and education. This is done verbally at pick-up time and through the children's learning records. Parents speak and write knowingly and glowingly of the nursery and staff, and of the excellent information sharing on all care and learning matters. For example, parents' said 'The whole nursery experience has been an incredibly positive one. The staff are wonderful from the baby unit up to the owls. The positively caring, nurturing environment that staff give to the children and their parents is exceptional'. 'My children are more than ready for school'. Management devise leaflets and information for parents for them to fully understand their child's early years. For example, on children's different learning styles. They involve parents in the children's learning by setting exciting challenges such as the 'nature detective'. The high attention paid to engaging parents in children's learning at the nursery and at home is impacting positively on children's development. Partnerships with external agencies and other providers are well-established. For example, two-way visits take place with the local school and the setting works closely with speech and language therapists, to help devise adult-led language group activities.

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	EY301512
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	944436
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	101
Name of provider	Patricia Lynne Matthews
Date of previous inspection	06/02/2009
Telephone number	01730 231537

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

