

Leedon's Little Learners

Leedon Lower School, Highfield Road, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Bedfordshire, LU7 3LZ

Inspection date

03/04/2014

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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	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

- Staff are highly skilled at teaching children early literacy and mathematics. They find fun and engaging ways to bring learning alive for children.
- Children positively thrive in the pre-school because partnerships with parents are excellent and highly productive in providing consistency for children.
- Children are very independent and skilled in meeting their own personal needs, such as getting a drink when they are thirsty. Consequently, they are comfortable and content throughout the day.
- Staff demonstrate a good awareness of safeguarding as thorough policies and procedures and training underpin their good practice.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Several changes in the leadership of the pre-school have brought about changes meaning the structure and lines of reporting are not yet fully embedded and made clear for staff and parents.
- Relationships with some other providers are less well-developed to fully maximise support for children as they move between pre-school and other settings.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the two rooms and garden.
- The inspector had discussions with parents, staff and children.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of staff members and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and head teacher.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall

Full report

Information about the setting

Leedon's Little Learners was previously registered as Brooklands Pre-school Playgroup. It re-registered on the Early Years Register in 2013. It is managed by Leedon Lower School Parent Teacher Association. It operates from a standalone unit situated on the school site, in a large residential area of Leighton Buzzard. It is open each weekday during term time only and sessions are from 9am to 12noon and 12.15pm to 3.15pm. Children may stay for an optional lunch club between sessions if they stay for both sessions. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 53 children on roll. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. Most children who attend come from the local area.

The setting employs nine staff, with six staff working at each session. The manager holds a level 4 qualification and all other staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- define roles of responsibility within the leadership team more clearly to give staff and parents concise guidance about who is overall accountable for the pre-school
- enhance even further the already good links with other settings where children will and do attend to maximise children's sense of security during times of change.

Inspection judgements

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

The pre-school provides a highly stimulating, warm and welcoming environment where children positively thrive. The high quality of interactions between staff and children directly impact upon children's successes and they make leaps in their learning as a result. This means staff help to prepare children exceptionally well for entry to school. Children are highly autonomous, critical thinkers who fully lead and direct their own play. Children make excellent use of the inspiring outdoor area, which enhances every aspect of their learning. Children particularly excel in their physical skills. This is because of the extensive range of resources available for them. They make the very most of the digging patch, where they use spades and trowels to move earth and dig holes. Children kick balls and negotiate the climbing frame with excellent skill for their age. Staff are keen to join in with

children's play and find ways to further enhance their learning. The pre-school actively welcomes parents and wider family members to join in as they attend special occasions, such as Mother's Day and Easter egg hunts. Staff plan these days as learning opportunities. Children and their families search for eggs in the garden, where they begin to recognise and match numerals as they match the number written on the egg to the number on their card. Staff encourage children to begin to understand the concept of addition as they excitedly tell children they have 'two more to find'. This gives children an excellent and meaningful awareness of early mathematics in ways that they understand. Staff equally plan exceptionally well for children's early development of literacy. They create exemplary story bags and resources, which help children to sequence story lines and engage children in lively story times. Staff utilise their recent training to inspire children and their visiting parents to make marks and draw while expressing their emotions to music. Children use their whole bodies as they draw on large paper placed on the floor in the garden. Parents join in and together families learn and enjoy doing so immensely. Children have ample opportunity to use writing materials and become competent in forming letters and writing simple words. The teaching of phonics is outstanding as staff encourage children to find objects at home to bring in to pre-school which start with the letter of the week. Staff use the name and sound of the letter, so children become confident in recognising letters and use them to sound out simple words.

Children are extremely confident and self-assured because staff find ways for them to articulate their feelings and emotions. They use puppets to talk about feelings and talk calmly and supportively to children. Staff introduce programmes to target children's communication and language. They engage them in games where children roll a ball and say their name and that of their friends. This helps quieter children to find ways to join in within a group. Staff are excellent role models in language; they get down to children's level and maintain eye contact with children. This helps children to understand about when to stop and listen and when they may share their ideas. Children are articulate and enthusiastic talkers, who share their ideas with adults readily. This is because they understand that when they talk staff listen because what they say is important. Staff tell stories to children so they can hear new words and begin to use their imagination. Rhyme times help all children to enjoy using differing pitch and tone in their voice and explore the range of sounds they can make. Children understand about the world and how to use computers as a tool for learning. They can programme and retrieve information at will. They use the computer mouse to navigate the screen and call for assistance if a message appears which they do not understand demonstrating their excellent awareness of how to ask for help when needed.

The highly committed staff team work tirelessly to find ways to engage parents in children's learning and children's development is significantly enhanced as a result. Parents share information through a 'current interests' book and 'wow moments' and frequently read children's progress files and summaries of their learning. Staff are available and open, meaning that parents can approach and talk to them at the beginning and end of sessions. Staff observe children closely and use their observations to track children's excellent progress. They identify what children need to learn next and devise meticulous plans to find ways they can support children to achieve these. All children make superb progress from their individual starting points because of the exceptional

consistency they receive.

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

Children are very well settled at the pre-school and form close attachments to the people who care for them. This is because of the genuine care and affection staff show them. Staff find ways to help children to settle as they move between home and the pre-school. A new pilot project is being trailed to further support children during times of change where staff use a puppet to provide children with familiarity and understanding about their move into pre-school and school. The pre-school works closely with the onsite school, preparing children very well for the move when the time arises. The pre-school has been unable to establish such close links with other schools children will attend and the current other settings they do attend to fully maximise their sense of security during times of change. Staff share information with parents about children's changing needs so they experience consistency. For example, staff at the pre-school follow parent's home routines and approach to toilet training to help children to master this.

Children are very independent and confident because they make multiple choices about how and where they play. When children become thirsty they help themselves to a drink of water and tip the excess into a bowl before stacking their cups to be washed up. Older children wash their hands in preparation for lunchtime and find their own lunchboxes as they recognise which belongs to them. Staff encourage children to eat fruit for snack time and finish their sandwiches before having their dessert. On special occasions, children have treats, such as chocolate, which staff explain is nice to eat sometimes. This helps children to learn about foods which are good for them and those which need to be eaten less often. Children enjoy long periods of fresh air and exercise as part of their everyday routine, helping them to understand about healthy lifestyles. There are many ways children learn about how to assess risks in their play. They test out how high they can climb on the climbing frame and jump down safely. The pre-school has many pets which children learn to care for. Children know that they must not put their fingers into the chicken coop as they might peck. They also understand about reducing the risk of the spread of infection by washing their hands after playing outside.

Children know what staff expect of them and the boundaries which keep them safe. Staff swiftly tackle any unwanted behaviour in positive ways, such as by distracting children or awarding stickers for achievements. If children's behaviour consistently does not meet expectations staff develop behaviour plans for them. They introduce ways to help children to understand their behaviour and offer additional support to help maintain a safe and calm environment for all children and staff. Children use tools, such as scissors, under the supervision of staff, which helps them to know how to use and handle them safely. Staff explain to children that they need to walk inside the pre-school to prevent slipping over on the floor.

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

The pre-school staff have a thorough understanding about how to keep children safe. This is because there are well-written policies and procedures in place which underpin their work. All staff attend regular training to update and refresh their knowledge and skills. This enables them to fully understand what action to take if they have concerns about children's welfare. The pre-school has a stable staff team, but has robust procedures in place for inducting any new staff. The pre-school thoroughly vets staff and undertakes references to confirm their suitability to work with children. The pre-school maintains safe adult to child ratios at all times and staff supervise children closely as they move between the different rooms and outdoor area.

The pre-school manager displays efficient skills in management and closely monitors and reviews the quality of teaching and the resulting progress children make. The staff team are happy in their work because of the support they receive. All staff have regular meetings with the manager where they review their targets and discuss any training they have undertaken. Regular appraisals help staff to develop professionally and utilise their skills and interests in their work. All staff have a very positive attitude towards undertaking further training and implement their newly acquired knowledge effectively. This has a very positive impact upon children who enjoy the benefit of new activities and resources. The pre-school demonstrates their high commitment to ongoing improvement by thoroughly addressing recommendations raised at the previous inspection. The manager seeks the views of parents and children to fully inform self-evaluation. This means that staff can swiftly identify and tackle any less strong areas. Consequently, standards are high and the pre-school has a sound capacity to continuously raise the quality of care for children. The pre-school has undergone several periods of change to the leadership team. There are many changes underfoot with plans to enhance the pre-school further. However, the frequent and multiple changes have led to there being a lack of structure within the leadership team where roles are not clearly identified for staff and parents.

The pre-school manager effectively monitors the work of staff and the observations and assessments they make on children. This helps to ensure that they are accurate and reflect children's abilities, while also identifying any areas where they might need support. Staff summarise children's learning and undertake the 'progress check for children at age two'. They share the check with parents to make sure they have opportunity to contribute. Staff are skilful in identifying if children's progress does not meet expectations and take decisive action to access further support for them. Staff at the pre-school work closely with other professionals who are involved in children's care. The pre-school appreciates the support of the local authority development worker and children's centres. This has enabled them to increase the support they offer children and families. Staff find multiple ways to communicate with parents and frequently invite them to join children at the pre-school. This builds strong relationships which benefit children and enhance their learning. Parents find staff to be friendly and welcoming and are confident to discuss any concerns they might have. They explain that children love attending and they are confident in the good ability of staff to support their learning.

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	EY460705
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	940740
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	53
Name of provider	Leedon Lower School Parent Teacher Association Committee
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01525374713

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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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