

Little Lache Playgroup

Poplar Road, Chester, Cheshire, CH4 8EY

Inspection date

02/04/2014

Previous inspection date

10/01/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

3

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 have good opportunities to make safe and independent choices in their play, both indoors and outdoors. Therefore, they are happy, enthusiastic and motivated learners.
- Practitioners accurately monitor and assess children's progress, enabling targeted support to be planned for individual children who may require the intervention of other professionals and agencies in some aspects of their learning and development.
- The quality of teaching is good because staff provide a wide range of stimulating and challenging activities and effectively support children to make good progress in all areas of their learning and development.
- The key person system ensures that children receive consistency of care. Practitioners are loving, sensitive and attentive to children's individual needs and know them exceptionally well. This enables children to form secure emotional attachments and provides a strong base for developing their independence and exploration.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to extend the use of children's home languages in the daily practice at the setting so that all languages used by children are given the very highest priority as they develop their good communication and language skills.

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 talked to children and practitioners and held discussions with the manager during the inspection.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager of the pre-school.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and at their learning journal records.
- The inspector reviewed the planning documentation, evidence of practitioners' suitability, safeguarding policies and procedures and a range of other supporting documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Ron Goldsmith

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Lache Playgroup was established in 1972 and is managed and staffed by a qualified staff team. The setting has been operating from the current purpose built premises since 1998 and is situated in the Lache Estate, Chester. The setting opens Monday to Friday during school term between 9am and 3.30pm. It is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children have access to a playgroup room, an activity room, painting area, foyer and toilet facilities. There is also access to a large enclosed outdoor play and nature area. There are currently 36 children on roll, who are within the early years age range. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. There are eight staff working with children. Of these, one holds a qualification at level 6, one holds a qualification at level 5, four hold a qualification at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the use of children's home languages within the setting, to further support children's communication and language skills.

Inspection judgements

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

Good quality teaching within the setting offers children a strong foundation for their future learning. Practitioners display a secure understanding of the learning and development requirements and ensure that children make effective progress. They employ a range of teaching strategies, which are suited to individual children's preferred learning styles. The practitioner's relaxed, enjoyable dialogue with children and the use of open-ended questions create meaningful interactions from which children learn. This is frequently supported by signing to support children's early language skills and understanding. Consequently, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals, which prepares them well in readiness for school. The setting has improved significantly since its previous inspection and much work has been carried out by the manager to embed successful planning and assessment, which are now thoroughly understood by staff and there is successful monitoring of the work that practitioners are doing. Visits to children's home before they start give practitioners the opportunity to get to know the families and children well. Practitioners pay attention to ensuring that children's learning is secure before moving them onto the next steps in their learning. Informed observation is used to

further children's learning through their specific interests and age-appropriate activities, thereby, effectively narrowing the achievement gap.

The setting encourages children to develop the characteristics of effective learners. For example, children confidently use hammers, saws and drills to role play building. They develop concentration skills when using a computer. Children choose books to read independently and they access good quality resources to re-enact stories. For example, they use Tin-man and Scarecrow puppets when talking about the Wizard of Oz. Adult-led activities attracts children's listening and concentration skills well as they create handprints on paper or when baking Easter cakes. Practitioners skilfully encourage children to become independent learners and capture their imagination well when they play a 'What's in the box' game. As each child selects a hidden item from a covered box they join in a song with the practitioner about the item, such as the 'Wheels on the bus song'. Children imaginatively use building blocks to redefine their world and create different structures and practitioners encourage them to take measured risks as they climb on, in and around the blocks. They stack them higher to add to their fun. Children use simple mathematical concepts as they describe that things are bigger, smaller, next to or underneath other things. They use rich descriptive language in their play. Children learn about different cultural events in the world and read books, or labels which promote their understanding. For example, parents bring in books and packaging in their own language. However, although good communication and language skills are developing for all children, opportunities to extend the use of children's home languages at the setting are sometimes missed.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are sensitively supported to join in with activities as practitioners encourage other children to help them. All children begin to learn to accept difference because they spend time with children of differing ages and abilities. Children develop the characteristics of effective learners as they sustain interest and concentration in their chosen activities. Freely chosen play is balanced by adult-led activities, which are offered in line with children's differing ages and stages of development. Good partnerships have been developed with children's parents, who praise the setting and the changes brought about since the new manager has been in post. Daily verbal feedback is full and unhurried and parents are involved in assessments and are invited to see their children's learning journal records. Strong emphasis is placed on providing timely support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is achieved through effective partnership working with external professionals involved in children's care, as well as with their parents. Practitioners have high expectations of children in their care and create a positive, calm, enabling learning environment where children make good progress.

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

Children's behaviour is very good and they are beginning to form strong relationships with each other and with practitioners, who support their emotional and physical well-being and help them to feel secure in the setting. An effective key person system means that children benefit from consistent carers who are known to their parents. If the key person

changes parents are given appropriate notification. The practitioners know children well and spend time getting to know them when they start; understanding what interests them and motivates their learning. Home visits are completed before children start so that practitioners get to know the families and children well. They clearly establish what children know and can do in order to complete a baseline assessment for learning and development. Practitioners act as good role models for children because they are calm and consistent. They give support and guidance that encourages children to behave well, to be kind to each other and to share in their play. Children respond positively to this. The good settling-in procedure fosters positive behaviour further. Therefore, children quickly become familiar with the routines and expectations of the setting.

Children play well together and show care and concern for their friends. Children show good levels of independence as they help to tidy away, or they organise their own play independently and imaginatively in quieter areas outdoors. After they have mid-morning snack all children are able to help by putting waste food into the bin and their plates and cups in a bowl to be washed. The setting is welcoming and well-organised. A wide range of age-appropriate resources and play materials gives children many options to choose from. Practitioners are vigilant in promoting children's safety. They check the premises for hazards on a daily basis and supervise children closely at all times. For example, practitioners talk to them about being careful when running around outdoors or climbing on building blocks indoors. They remind children about the importance of being safe while engaging in activities. Children are involved in safely managed risk taking, which helps them to learn about managing their own safety. For example, as they run, chase and play on grassy mounds outdoors. Practitioners skilfully allow the vigorous activity to take place, whilst supervising children discretely and intervening only if children's behaviour starts to become unsafe.

Children's good health is well-promoted. Children of all ages take part in regular fire drills so that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Children learn to manage their own personal needs when they wash their hands before they eat or after messy play. Dialogue between parents and practitioners about children means the arrangements for children's welfare needs are being reviewed and met on a daily basis. Children benefit from snacks that are healthy and nutritious and take into account their dietary needs, for example, hot cross buns, bananas and milk or water. They independently have snack when they are ready, an activity practitioners manage well. Children relish the freedom to play outside where they have access to a variety of resources to develop their skills and continue their learning. They have fun practising their physical skills as they run vigorously, cycle together, or push wheeled toys. Children are maintaining a healthy lifestyle through fresh air and exercise and they are developing an understanding of why this is important.

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

Leadership is highly effective. There are consistently high expectations for the quality of care, learning and development that is offered to children and families from managers and practitioners. All procedures and documentation are routinely reviewed and updated to

ensure that all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are well met. Policies and procedures for safeguarding are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements and reflect good practice. As a result, all of the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. This means children are safeguarded extremely well.

Confidentiality is maintained as records are stored securely and only shared with relevant parties. Managers and practitioners reflect critically on their practice and pursue high standards in all areas. The playgroup has a development plan, which is helping them to improve the provision even further. Management and practitioners are developing a shared vision of the direction in which they want the playgroup to go. Parents are increasingly involved in working closely with the setting to improve the quality of their children's learning and development. For example, the setting organise opportunities for parents to learn how best to support their children's learning at home. Parents have responded extremely positively to this. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all practitioners are suitable to work with children. A thorough induction programme provides good support, encourages teamwork and sets high standards. As a result, all practitioners are well-prepared to contribute to the good service provided. Effective performance and appraisal monitoring is implemented to ensure that training and professional development is tailored to both the practitioner's needs and to those of children. Management purposefully observe and review the work of practitioners and the educational programme, which enhances the quality of teaching and learning. Practitioner's individual skills are recognised and complement the work of the setting. Practitioners work well together as a team. As a result, they feel valued and are very motivated.

The premises are secure throughout so no unauthorised person is able to gain access. Comprehensive risk assessments of the premises and outings, completion of regular fire drills and qualified first aiders mean children's well-being is paramount. When concerns are raised practitioners respond instantly. A whistleblowing policy is clearly displayed for practitioners to follow. There is a very positive partnership with parents, who express how they are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and comment on the knowledge of practitioners. Parents say practitioners are 'welcoming and give them good support and information about their children's progress'. They add that children have 'benefited from being here' and that they have 'helped their children enormously'. Families are invited to bring an added dimension, enhancing the learning experience for all children. For example, taking home 'teddy' and returning him to pre-school with tales of his adventures. Well-established partnerships with external agencies involved in supporting children's care and education mean that the needs of all children are well met.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	305163
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	876737
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	36
Name of provider	Little Lache Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	10/01/2012
Telephone number	0776 324 8364

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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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