

Bradfield's Little Pumpkins Pre-School C.I.C

c/o Bradfield Primary School, Heath Road, Manningtree, CO11 2UZ

Inspection date	02/04/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	2 Not Applicable
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 very active learners who make decisions, concentrating and persevering at their chosen tasks, whether indoors or outside.
- All children form very effective attachments, allowing them to become confident and independent, and able to seek help when they need to. Staff value the partnership with parents and initiate many strategies to involve them at every stage.
- Strong leadership ensures that development is steady and a programme of improvements have a positive impact on outcomes for children.
- Safeguarding of children is highly effective in ensuring they remain safe and free from harm or abuse.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff occasionally miss opportunities to promote handwriting; for example, children are not encouraged to always try to write their own names.

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 interacted with children in the playrooms and in the outside area.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider and the manager, and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector viewed a sample of documentation, including evidence of staff checks, some policies and children's development profiles.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection, and on surveys issued in advance of the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

Bradfield's Little Pumpkins Pre-School C.I.C was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in Bradfield, Essex, and is owned and managed by a Community Interest Company. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a demountable classroom within the school grounds of Bradfield Primary School and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3.30pm. Children attend for whole days or part days. There are currently 28 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. Support is in place for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide supporting resources and consistent encouragement for children to try to write, for example, their own names, when they show readiness and understanding.

Inspection judgements

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

All children make very good progress towards the early learning goals at the setting. They enjoy a well-thought-out educational programme, delivered by dedicated and enthusiastic staff who have a very good understanding of the characteristics of effective learning. They plan and deliver stimulating and challenging activities and experiences based on children's interests and seasonal themes. This ensures that children are happy to engage in new activities as they are intrigued and keen to learn. For example, an adult-led cooking activity involves children in combining ingredients to make Easter nest cakes which they then take home to eat. They develop their understanding of traditions and beliefs as they talk about the meaning of Easter and the new life emerging in nature. Staff skilfully guide these conversations to ensure children understand and make connections with the world around them. A child has a fascination with planets and the solar system, so he is encouraged as he makes a collage using pre-cut sticky shapes. He shows his understanding and finds ways to express his ideas through crafts and model making.

As children enjoy a session of outdoor play, staff deploy themselves so as to be supportive yet not dominate the children's play. For example, a staff member stations herself at the

newly installed large sand box, which is a very popular piece of equipment. Several children are digging and manipulating the sand. They begin to form a plan to make it into a beach, so they bring buckets of water from the water tray. After a while, some children decide to take off their shoes and socks so they can paddle in the wet sand and feel it on their feet; this causes much delight and they have fun while experiencing the texture and temperature of the cold, wet sand. The member of staff joins in and encourages the children to describe what they are feeling. Afterwards, she helps every child clean their feet and get back into their various shoes and boots. This demonstrates how staff are able to be led by children's interests and make an activity a good learning experience for every child. For children who speak English as an additional language, support in the form of key vocabulary and printed labels is in place. A child takes great delight in helping staff pronounce words in his second language, and confidently uses English as he interacts with his peers.

Children develop the skills they will need for future learning, such as when they start formal school. They are very much encouraged to be independent and this starts when they first enter the setting and self-register by finding their own development profile and placing it in their personal drawer. Initially, they find this by the picture, but more able children begin to recognise their name as it is printed boldly on the cover. Children's emergent writing is valued, and examples are included on some wall displays and in their development profiles, but on occasion staff do not make the most of opportunities for children to practise writing, such as by writing their own names on artwork. Towards the end of their last term, children attend the local school assembly and various other events in the reception class, helping to familiarise them with the new environment. This, together with the formal visits they undertake with their parents, eases the transition into the next stage and allays any anxieties they may have. The development profile is passed on, along with a final assessment report, so that the reception teacher has a very good idea of each child's achievements and stage of development. Gradually, children become more competent in self-care and look after their own needs, such as by changing their shoes, using the bathroom and managing their own lunch boxes. These steps towards independence boost self-esteem and confidence, so they are ready to take on new challenges.

A very strong feature at the pre-school is the emphasis on a meaningful and effective partnership with parents. Many systems and options are already in place to engage and involve every parent in their child's care and education. For example, sharing the child's development profile and next steps in learning at regular formal meetings, as well as daily informal chats when parents have the time. Parents say they are very satisfied with the level of information they receive and they can easily contribute to their own child's profiles by making comments or writing on the 'stars' provided, which are then pasted into the books. The setting strive very hard to include all parents and have started a 'parents' voice' session, a forum whereby they can discuss developments at the pre-school and seek parents' views. One new initiative is being trialled; parents can come in and take part in a joint observation of their child as they play, so they can share the insights and understanding of learning that is achieved through what may seem simple play activities. These initiatives strengthen the partnership with parents and the links between home and pre-school.

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

Every child develops a firm and meaningful emotional bond with their key person and the other adults caring for them. This is evident as children are very settled, happy and secure at the pre-school. They understand the routines and respond very well to staff's clear instructions, so the sessions run smoothly and harmoniously. Staff consistently model courtesy, and through positive language and actions, encourage desirable behaviour amongst the children. For example, at lunchtime they sit with the children and eat the same meals, helping children learn good table manners and improving their social skills. Children are able to turn to staff for support and help when they need it as they know their appeals will be well met. This builds their confidence and they learn to take risks and try new things, knowing that they are supported.

The key person system actively contributes towards children's overall well-being. By establishing a sound relationship early on with the child and their family, staff are able to begin to plan and teach each child, based on their prior achievements and stage of development. They ask parents about the children and build a picture of the child's likes and dislikes, preferences and learning styles, and use this information to tailor the curriculum and help each child make progress. All children have thorough ongoing assessments, and every child aged two receives a detailed progress check, which is shared with parents. This is to detect any areas where a child may be needing additional support to reach the expected levels of achievement and secure that help in a timely fashion. The staff tirelessly pursue external support agencies when they find a child is in need of additional help, and work very closely with parents to achieve this. For children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities, the setting is able to call upon the expertise of a special educational needs coordinator, shared between the pre-school and its sister setting.

Children start to learn some of the features that will help them towards a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy daily outdoor sessions where they can run and move freely in the imaginative and well-resourced outdoor area. They gain control over their movements as they negotiate the steps, climb on the rope bridge and hold on to the fireman's pole to get down from the low-level climbing frame. A choice of bikes, buggies and other wheeled toys teaches children how to negotiate space and avoid collisions, and tools for digging in the sandpit and mud kitchen help them refine their motor skills. A nutritious and balanced midday meal is available, served plated from the school kitchen, or children bring packed lunches from home. Milk and water are available at snack times and children can take a drink of water at other times from their named beakers which are kept fully accessible, ensuring they remain hydrated. Any child feeling poorly or having a minor accident is tended to by first aid trained staff, and all incidents and accidents are recorded to be signed off by a parent. Children's specific medical needs and allergies are documented and well known to staff, so they are safe from foods or other materials which may harm them. Children learn the basics of self-care and use the bathroom independently or with support, as required. Staff cooperate with parents in terms of potty training when children are ready for this. Should children require a nap or a rest, they can use the sofa or cushions in the quiet corner, and recharge their batteries peacefully for a short while.

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

Strong, visionary leadership ensures that this setting provides high quality care and education. The directors and senior staff share aspirations to develop the pre-school and constantly seek improvements that will raise standards and outcomes for children. Children's safeguarding has the highest priority. The manager has attended higher level training in child protection and takes a lead role in ensuring that all staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse. The pre-school has comprehensive policies and procedures in place so parents can be reassured that their child is in safe hands, and that any concerns will be followed up without delay. Recruitment of staff follows robust procedures, and no adult is left in contact with children until the vetting and checking process is completed. Ongoing appraisal ensures that staff are suitably qualified and fit to carry out their duties and provide care for the children.

The manager has a very sound grasp regarding the impact of the quality of teaching and how this helps children learn. She monitors and regulates staff performance and oversees the educational programme, to ensure that it is broad and balanced to meet the needs of every child attending. By observing and holding discussions with staff, they can work on areas for development while ensuring that their strengths are recognised and used to benefit the children. All staff show enthusiasm and dedication, and engage in a friendly yet professional manner with children and their families. Peer observations are encouraged, so staff value the constructive feedback they can give one another. The company directors also oversee the day-to-day operation of the pre-school and provide a strong, supportive presence because they share the high aspirations of the staff team. A very well-formulated development plan is in place and prioritises actions which will make a difference to the overall quality. For example, plans to install doors leading to a covered outdoor area will mean that children can more easily freely move between the indoor and outdoor area and enjoy outdoor play in all weathers. As funds permit, there are plans to upgrade some of the older equipment, made as far as possible from natural materials, to give the children a quality learning experience.

The partnership with parents is highly valued and seen as a cornerstone to a successful childcare arrangement. By finding out about children before they start, and keeping themselves updated by maintaining a two-way flow of information, key persons are able to plan activities and track each child's progress accurately. If external support is required, this can be sought, ensuring children are able to make the best progress possible and gain the school readiness they need. Some children attend other early years settings, including the sister organisation. In each case, staff make contact and share vital information so that children have continuity and their learning needs are aptly met. Being situated within school grounds means that there are very good opportunities to liaise and work closely with the school staff. The pre-school children gain from this positive relationship as they have the chance to experience small bites of school life and help them understand what they can expect. Most children go on to attend the school, and parents say this is one of the reasons they choose to send their children to the setting. Parents also say they are happy to recommend the pre-school to others because they know that the children are

doing very well and the pre-school is having a positive impact in all areas of their child's development.

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	EY471126
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	938683
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	Little Pumpkins Pre-School C.I.C.
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01206391412

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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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