

Littlesteps Pre-School

Littlelover Methodist Church, Constable Drive, DERBY, DE23 6EP

Inspection date	04/04/2014
Previous inspection date	10/06/2009

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

- Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of how children learn. Teaching is strong, which enables staff to consistently extend children's learning and have high expectations for their achievements. As a result, children make good progress given their starting points and capabilities.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are a key strength of the pre-school. Staff work hard to ensure there is a collaborative approach to children's care and learning.
- The management team demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the pre-school. As a result, all children receive a good quality early years experience.
- An effective key person system promotes children's sense of security and helps them form strong emotional attachments. Staff are kind, nurturing and successfully safeguard children in their care.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Sometimes, set daily routines, such as outdoor play interrupt children when they are engrossed in activities.
- There is scope to further enhance the outdoor play provision to provide a more challenging physical environment, allowing children to develop core muscle strength and have more opportunities to experience risk taking.

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 pre-school room and in the outdoor play areas.
- The inspector spoke with managers and children at appropriate times throughout the observations.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's progress records and planning documentation, a selection of policies and required documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of managers and staff working with the children and the provider's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Jacky Kirk

Full report

Information about the setting

Littlesteps Pre-School registered in 1987 and moved into their current premises in 2009. The pre-school is owned and managed by four of the staff working supportively together as a team. The pre-school serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The pre-school opens Monday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 12pm, Tuesday 9am to 3pm and Wednesday 9am to 1pm, term-time only. Children have the opportunity to stay for lunch on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Children are cared for in a purpose-built pre-school room, enclosed outdoor play area and also have use of a larger outdoor play area and indoor sports hall within the adjoining Methodist Church. There are currently 32 children attending in the early years age range. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-old children and supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are currently eight members of staff working directly with the children. Of these one holds Early Years Professional Status, five hold a qualification at level 3, one holds a qualification at level 2 and one has experience of working with children who have physical disabilities. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review how daily routines, specifically outdoor play time, are organised so that children who want to continue to play indoors can do so without being interrupted

- enhance children's already good learning opportunities in the outdoor area by extending the resources to make it a more challenging and physical environment for children.

Inspection judgements

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

Teaching is good across the pre-school, with some excellent elements. All staff have high expectations of the children and have adopted a pre-school ethos that children learn through play. The 'voice of the child' is completed on entry to the setting and careful assessment of children's abilities thereafter is effectively used to form clear starting points on which to build children's learning. Planning is effective in providing a broad range of daily activities which cover the seven areas of learning based on children's interests and their individual learning requirements. For example, staff plan a super hero week triggered

by children's interests and use this in order to help some children identify good role models within the community who help us. Language is successfully supported through such activities. For example, children learn new vocabulary, such as 'invisible' and mathematical shape understanding is extended by learning that a picture of an egg is an oval shape. Outdoor sand play encourages children to safely handle tools and use them effectively with gained control, as well as encouraging early writing abilities as they make marks in the sand. Children's listening and attention skills are consistently supported throughout the session and nearly all children show very good development in this area. During group story time all children sit beautifully and are engrossed with the story the member of staff is reading. Children laugh as a toy telephone rings and disturbs the story. The member of staff makes light of this saying, 'perhaps it is a super hero trying to contact us', supporting children's early concepts of humour. During song time children are asked, 'how can we use our ears like super heroes?'. Children respond by saying 'listening'. Children are fully engrossed and listen very intently to every word the member of staff is saying.

Children show consideration to one another during activities. For example, they comfort one another and can be heard saying 'you can have one next time'. Staff use visual props during song time to support children's learning, for example, numbers as well as early concepts of money. Children are confident and motivated learners, who evidently enjoy their time at the pre-school. Staff place a strong emphasis on the importance of extending children's personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and physical skills, which supports them very well as they move forward in their learning at school. Children are confident to try things for themselves, invent their own play ideas and eagerly join in with pre-school activities. However, some children's engagement in their own imaginative and creative play is sometimes interrupted by the daily routine of outdoor play. Key people accurately observe and track children's development to ensure they are making good progress in their learning. All staff are aware of what their key child's needs are and this ensures all children's next steps throughout the session are met. Staff daily 'debrief' meetings allows each member of staff to discuss children's accomplishments or emerging concerns. This system is highly effective in meeting and planning for children's individual needs and enabling staff to put early intervention strategies in place.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support from staff and other outside agencies, enabling them to make good progress and begin to close the gaps. Effective parent partnerships help key persons to support children's holistic learning. For example, parents are given story bags to take home containing items of interest to the child, such as cars and books and are given advice on how to play with them with their child at home in order to enhance learning and development. Staff use knowledge gained from training to put on a workshop to help and support parents by giving them practical ideas of how to develop their child's pre-writing skills. A variety of methods are used to keep parents informed of their achievements. These include daily discussions with their key person, daily access to their child's learning journey, telephone calls, email, the pre-school website and parent evenings and events.

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

Children and their families are welcomed into a calm, caring and nurturing environment. As a result, relationships between families and staff are good. Children are evidently happy and settled within the pre-school. They form secure emotional attachments to staff and have good relations with their peers. Furthermore, children show empathy and understanding towards each other. This is facilitated through an effective key person system and effective teamwork which allows children, their families and staff to work together to support children's individual personal, social and emotional needs. Parents are encouraged at the outset to share in their child's learning throughout their time at the pre-school. Parents comment that they chose the pre-school because it is a supportive, caring, nurturing, accepting and friendly pre-school who always put children first. Settling-in sessions are staggered to allow the key person more time to spend with each child; parents are welcomed into the pre-school to help settle children. This ensures children are emotionally prepared for the transition from home to the pre-school. Furthermore, parents also feel supported in their child's transition to school as staff deliver parent workshops on 'how to prepare your child for school' and 'completing the application to school processes'.

All children demonstrate good levels of confidence and self-esteem and their behaviour is exceptionally good. They show respect for pre-school rules. For example, they put their hand up at circle time to answer questions or to ask a question and are mindful of turn-taking. They also respond well to gentle reminders about how to keep safe when using scissors. Most children manage their own personal needs and understand they need to wash their hands afterwards. Children are encouraged to blow their own nose and make choices of whether to dispose of the tissue by putting it in their pocket or the bin and so they are beginning to understand how to stay healthy. Independence is supported well. For example, on entering the pre-school in the morning children find their own peg and hang up their own coat and bag. Similarly, when getting ready to go outside younger children see older children modelling how to put on their own coats, which helps them to become independent too. Children have access to healthy snacks and drinks are readily available. At snack time children self-register by finding their name label, and putting it in a holder this allows staff to ensure each child has had something to eat and drink. Children invite their peers to come to the snack table, which encourages children's social and communication skills. Children have good opportunities to run, skip, jump, balance and ride while outside. Staff make children aware of how running helps them keep fit by noticing how much faster their heart beats. However, outdoor play resources and opportunities offered can be extended further to develop and challenge children's gross motor skills and core muscles.

The high staff-to-child ratio ensures children are well supervised at all times, which keeps them safe within the pre-school. The design and layout of the premises also promotes the safety of the children. For example, the pre-school door has a high lock on the inside and children are only released to people who are authorised to collect them. The stimulating indoor and small outdoor area, allows children to move freely between the inside and outside; resources in both areas are easily accessible. This encourages children's sense of exploration as they choose where and how they play.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

Managers have a comprehensive knowledge of safe recruitment procedures and clear vetting of staff helps to ensure children are cared for by a suitable staff team. All staff understand it is their legal duty to inform managers of change in their personal circumstances that could affect their ability to work with children. All managers have a very secure understanding of their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children and protecting their welfare. They demonstrate confident knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are clear about the procedures they must follow to report their concerns. The pre-school has an appropriate safeguarding policy in place, which includes the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff and the use of mobile phones and cameras where children are present. Parents feel confident to discuss with staff any arising individual needs their child, themselves or other family members may have, which helps to safeguard children also. The pre-school is secure and the high ratio of staff supports effective daily risk assessments.

Four managers and a well-qualified, dedicated team of staff work closely together to provide all children with a quality pre-school provision which enables them to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Managers demonstrate a robust understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements and strive to provide all children with an effective, enjoyable learning experience. Staff have a comprehensive self-evaluation form which sets out their vision for future improvement. Managers share responsibilities according to their individual strengths. Managers and all staff have a voice and are all involved in decision making. Staff are supported well in their continuous professional development, with most staff acquiring higher levels of qualifications or working towards higher qualifications since the last pre-school inspection. Staff attend various training courses which they disseminate to the rest of the team and parents. This enhances all aspects of children's learning and care. There is always a member of staff who holds a current paediatric first aid certificate on duty and all staff have undertaken food hygiene training. Managers monitor each other's and all staff performance effectively both through supervision meetings and through general observation of practice. The pre-school clearly values the views and input from parents, who hold all pre-school staff in high regard.

Highly effective partnerships with parents and other agencies have a positive impact on all children's learning and development and well-being. Parents are well informed about the learning and development needs of their child and learning is successfully supported and extended at home. Parents are highly complimentary about the pre-school staff and the way in which they provide a calm, inclusive and nurturing environment for all children. The pre-school has good lines of communication with other professionals and staff attend meetings to support children with additional needs. As a result of these strong partnerships, children have a consistent approach to teaching that supports their development and contributes to the good progress they make towards their early learning goals.

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	EY385725
Local authority	Derby, City of
Inspection number	858930
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	Littlesteps Preschool Limited
Date of previous inspection	10/06/2009
Telephone number	07963314745

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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