

# The Little Academy Day Nursery.

Tillotson Road, Off Headstone Lane, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 6PS

<b>Inspection date</b>	16/01/2014
Previous inspection date	05/10/2009

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	4
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## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is inadequate

- The provider and manager do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding and welfare requirements. Vetting procedures are not robust and many aspects of children's safety and general welfare are not robustly safeguarded.
- Children's welfare is not consistently promoted as they do not have appropriate guidance and access to resources to support their understanding of good personal hygiene. Younger children do not always have access to appropriate furniture and equipment to support their developing independence and physical skills.
- The key person system is not consistently embedded throughout the nursery; this means that at times children's individual needs are not fully considered.
- Although children are able to enjoy many positive play experiences these are not always tailored to their individual needs. This means that at times children are not always able to listen and enjoy learning because peers, who are unable to engage in large group adult-led sessions, disrupt them.

### It has the following strengths

- Staff have established positive partnerships with parents. The result is parents say that they are happy with the care offered to their children.

## **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 children's play and staff interaction both inside and outside in the garden area.
- The inspector and manager of the provision undertook a joint observation of adult-led art activity.
- The inspector talked with staff and held discussions with the manager, deputy manager and provider of the nursery.
- The inspector examined documentation including a representative sample of children's records, policies and procedures and staff suitability records.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of the inspection.

### **Inspector**

Siobhan O'Callaghan

## **Full report**

### **Information about the setting**

The Little Academy Nursery registered in 2005 and has sole use of premises situated in the grounds of Hatch End High School. The nursery is owned by a private provider who also has another nursery in the same borough. The nursery is situated close to the Uxbridge Road in the London borough of Harrow. Children have access to four separate base rooms, a communal area and toilet facilities. There is a secure outdoor area situated at the rear of the nursery. The nursery serves the local and wider community and is open for 51 weeks of the year, closing for one week during the Christmas holidays. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children attend on a full or part-time basis.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. There are currently 64 children aged from eight months to under five years on roll. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are 14 members of permanent staff working with the children alongside three full-time apprentices. The manager holds a National Vocational Qualification at Level 5 and is studying for her BA (Hons) Degree. The majority of staff have early years qualifications.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

**The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take the following enforcement action:**

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:  
implement robust procedures for vetting and ensuring the suitability of staff including obtaining enhanced disclosure and barring service checks for all adults working on the premises  
ensure that risk assessments are robust in identifying potential risks to children with particular reference to activities provided to the youngest children and to all the areas accessible to children including the laundry; disabled toilet and outside play area.

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- strengthen the role of the key person system so that staff are consistently involved in meeting the care needs of their key children
- ensure that necessary steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and that children are supported to develop an understanding of the importance of implementing good personal hygiene practices to support their overall health and well-being
- ensure that younger children have access to appropriate furniture which includes seating to support their developing independence
- improve the programme for physical development so that babies have regular opportunities to access resources to support the development of larger physical skills such as climbing, standing and walking
- ensure that learning experiences consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child so that they receive challenging and enjoyable learning experiences

**Inspection judgements**

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

Staff demonstrate a competent knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements. They mostly provide children with appropriate educational programmes that overall encompasses the seven areas of learning. However, failings in not meeting fundamental safeguarding and welfare requirements impact on children

receiving consistent and safe learning opportunities. For example, children aged between two and three years of age are offered shaving foam and hard kidney beans to explore as a creative activity. Both items put these young children at significant risk of harm as they may choke, be poisoned or have allergic reactions to these items. This lack of due care has an impact on children's ability to enjoy and achieve in a safe learning environment. Although most babies are generally happy and busy, there are times when some babies do not have the support of their key person, and practices to initiate a second buddy key person are not robust. This means that some babies are overlooked and do not receive effective interaction to support their individual learning.

The quality of teaching and the planning of activities are not always effective in meeting the different needs of the children. For example, during large group story time sessions children who want to listen and want to learn are not able to do so because some of their peers disrupt this experience. The story time is also too long for some of the children; they become restless which means that staff are left to manage individual children's issues rather than promoting a quality learning experience. Overall, this hinders the older children's opportunities to develop essential skills such as listening and being able to concentrate to support their move to school. Nevertheless, older children are developing positive independence skills as they access their indoor and outdoor environments with confidence. They are supported in their self-care as they help to serve their own food at lunchtime and enjoy this relaxed experience. However, younger children, including babies, in the nursery do not have appropriately-sized tables and chairs to support their growing independence. They are not able to put their feet comfortably on the floor when they are engaging in tabletop activities or when they are eating. Babies do not have consistent access to resources to support them to stand and begin to climb and walk which are essential in supporting their physical development.

Children enjoy small adult-led activities where they are able to chat with staff and begin to learn some positive skills such as sharing and taking turns. Staff use positive questioning and encourage children to observe the different shapes and textures of the fruit that they are painting. Equally, there are positive one-to-one interactions with children who are engaging in role-play scenarios where staff support their purposeful play. Therefore, the quality of teaching in some cases is positive. Staff have appropriate assessment arrangements in place to monitor children's learning and development. They have implemented required assessments for children between the age of two and three years of age. This helps to identify support for children showing early signs of learning delay. There is positive evidence to show that staff work in partnership with parents and outside professionals to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language. Staff record key words in children's home languages to support and value these within the nursery setting. Discussions with parents confirm that they feel well informed about their children's learning and development and say that staff are good at communicating with them.

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

Children have, at times, independent access to a generally appropriate range of resources that help them in developing some skills to promote the seven areas of learning. However, their personal safety is not fully safeguarded as they have potential access to unsafe areas within their environment. For example, children can access the laundry room housed with a washing machine, dryer and soiled linen. A disabled toilet, which is stacked with children's chairs, has a sanitary disposal unit, a mop and a bucket. Discussions with staff, the manager and the provider say that children are never left unsupervised in this area. However, older children walk through this area to access their bathrooms and younger children walk through to gain access to the garden, therefore this is a busy walkway. There are no locks on the doors and therefore there is potential for human error and children gaining access. Coupled with this, staff have not ensured that hazards in the garden are made inaccessible to children. There is a large metal barbeque, wood and old resources which are waiting to be taken to be disposed of. These have not been secured or fenced off in any way. Therefore, children are put at further risk of harm.

Children on the whole behave well and are learning to be polite and respectful as they follow the positive role models presented by staff. For example, older children help to tidy away their plates after lunch and are proactive in helping to tidy their environments when this is requested by staff. All children have access to drinking water at all times which supports the development of self-care skills. The nursery has a key person system in place to support children within the nursery setting. However, this practice is not effective in promoting consistent care for babies. For example, their key person does not take full responsibility for meeting their individual needs. This means that they have different adults changing their nappies, feeding them and supporting their sleep routines. The impact is that some babies are anxious and cry when they are dropped off in the morning and also when they are collected by their parents at the end of the day. Other babies cry when an adult leaves their side for a short moment. Therefore babies do not all develop secure attachments with a familiar adult.

Children are provided with healthy snacks and meals, which take into account their individual dietary requirements. Children eat well and clearly enjoy their food. However, not all children are supported to develop good personal hygiene practices. For example, rather than take toddlers to wash their hands in the bathroom prior to and after lunch, staff put anti-bacterial gel onto children's hands. There are no discussions about keeping healthy and the impact this has on their overall well-being. While these children wait for their lunch to be served, they begin to drink from their friend's beaker cups. Staff do not see that this is happening and when it is pointed out to them by the inspector they do not remove the cups to prevent the possible spread of infection. Children are beginning to learn some safe practices as staff discuss with them how they need to ride their bikes in the same direction in the garden to prevent accidents. They discuss with children the need to go slowly as the surfaces in the garden are wet and maybe slippery. Children enjoy their time in the garden and staff ensure that they are dressed appropriately for the weather. Toddlers are keen to splash in all the puddles in their wellington boots.

Discussions with staff and parents demonstrate that there are positive transition arrangements for children when they move onto a new room within the nursery. They say that this is a gradual settling-in period where children have time to get use to their new

surroundings. Equally, there are positive partnerships with local schools to support older children with their move to school.

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

The registered provider is failing to safeguard children's welfare. She is in breach of a number of specific legal requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provider does not demonstrate a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities to implement robust recruitment and vetting procedures. Therefore, she is not complying with statutory requirements which are in place to help safeguard children. The provider has not always applied for Disclosure and Barring Service checks before allowing new staff to start work. Systems to initiate and confirm staff's suitability through reference requests are also not robust. There are some staff working in the setting who have verbal references only to deem their suitability with no follow up of a written reference. Although the majority of staff have appropriate early years qualifications to work with children, the systems in place to check all aspects of suitability are not secure in promoting the safeguarding of children.

The manager and her staff team have numerous written risk assessment procedures in place to monitor aspects of the inside and outside environment. However, these are not effective in ensuring that all aspects of the environment and the activities provided for children are safe. The manager demonstrated a commitment to reviewing these procedures and acknowledged that certain activities were inappropriate. She demonstrates that she can reflect on practice and raise areas to improve. This was evident during our joint observation of an art activity where she was able to talk about positive outcomes for children and how staff could improve what they offer to children. The manager has appropriate systems in place to offer staff supervision and ongoing professional development. Discussions with staff across the nursery demonstrate that they have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection matters and what procedures should be followed if they had concerns about the welfare of the children. However, self-evaluation overall is not successful in identifying and meeting all requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage this means that there are weaknesses in children's care and learning experiences.

The monitoring and delivery of the educational programmes offered to children is not robust in ensuring that their individual needs are met at all times. This is because the key person system is not fully embedded to support consistent care and learning practices. The result is that some children do not receive consistent quality interactions. The quality of teaching and learning experiences is variable. There are some good small group sessions but larger group sessions are inappropriate as children are not able to focus or benefit from the purpose of the activity. Nevertheless, staff clearly work in partnership with parents to support aspects of children's care and learning. They provide parents with verbal feedback when they arrive to collect their children and they share with them their ongoing progress. Discussions with many parents demonstrate that they value the staff team and say that they provide their children with a warm welcome and always take time

to talk with them.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY306769
<b>Local authority</b>	Harrow
<b>Inspection number</b>	938162
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	60
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	64
<b>Name of provider</b>	The Little Academy Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	05/10/2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8421 2128

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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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