

Learning Bears Pre-School

The Methodist Church Hall, Green End Road, Sawtry, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 5XA

Inspection date

12/06/2014

Previous inspection date

21/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Staff provide a welcoming, warm and caring environment in which to care for children. This helps to promote children's sense of security and belonging, and supports their emotional well-being. Parents speak highly of the pre-school.
- Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures, ensuring that effective risk assessment minimises potential risks to children. As a result, children's safety is promoted.
- Children have opportunities to develop their independence skills through routine activities, such as snack time.
- The manager and staff are committed and enthusiastic about how they can improve the provision for children.

It is not yet good because

- Observations of children are not consistently used to inform planning. As a result, experiences are not always focused on children's individual next steps.
- The quality of teaching and staff's interactions with children varies. This means children's attention can waiver, and some children miss opportunities to develop and extend their learning further.
- Staff are not always making effective use of the immediate outdoor space, to provide a stimulating and well-resourced learning environment.

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 room used and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision and spoke to staff throughout the inspection when appropriate.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Laura Waller

Full report

Information about the setting

Learning Bears Pre-School re-registered under new management in 2008 on the Early Years Register and is privately owned. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It operates from the Methodist church hall, in the village of Sawtry. It has use of one large room, an enclosed outdoor area and associated facilities. A ramp to the main entrance at the front of the building means the premises is accessible. There are currently 21 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years range. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The provision is open four days a week, term time only, 9am until 3pm, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is able to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support all children to make good progress by using information gathered from observations effectively, in order to plan suitably challenging experiences in relation to their next steps
- improve the consistency and quality of teaching methods used by staff, such as questioning techniques, so that children receive good support during activities to help them make good progress.

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

- develop further the range of resources and play experiences provided for children in the outdoor environment, to ensure children's learning and development is fully optimised at this time.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff at the pre-school have sufficient awareness of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements. Observations and planning is in place and broadly covers all the areas of learning. The majority of staff are able to discuss children's development and make observations. However, this information does not always cascade into the planning. Consequently, children's next steps are not always purposeful and do

not always focus on individual areas of interest. This means some experiences lack challenge and do not fully engage all children. Staff have a reasonable understanding of how children learn best and demonstrate suitable teaching skills which support children as they learn. For example, some staff ask open-ended questions which encourage children to think critically. However, the use of these good teaching methods is inconsistent and, therefore, staff do not always support all children sufficiently to make the most of the activities provided. As a result, some children miss opportunities to develop and extend their learning further, and they do not make good progress.

Within the pre-school, there are plenty of visual aids which depict the different areas of learning, creating a warm and stimulating environment. Every effort has been made since the last inspection to improve the opportunities for children to choose their activities. All resources are labelled with pictures and words, and a book has been created, so children can request activities that are not displayed. This means children can make independent choices in their play. Children benefit from being able to move freely between resources, which are set up on various tables and places throughout the indoor environment. Children are generally occupied and happy. Children have access to a computer, which they use independently and with confidence to make marks and complete simple programs. This develops their awareness of everyday technology. Children enjoy books and, through activities, such as painting and drawing, they engage in activities to promote their early writing skills. This contributes to promoting children's literacy development and readiness for school. The children are able to access a large role play area, which is currently set up as a cafe. They engage in conversation pretending to take orders and making tea for each other. A variety of craft materials are available for children to use to stick on their pictures. Children are encouraged to use scissors safely to cut out shapes to create, design and express their own ideas through art. This sufficiently promotes their development in expressive arts and design. Children use a variety of small world resources, such as dolls houses and emergency services vehicles, to play imaginatively, showing the ability to manage turn taking for themselves. Children demonstrate good physical skills. They learn to move their bodies with control and coordination as they climb, balance and jump off the climbing frame available within the indoor environment. Children enjoy playing in the sand helping them understand the properties of natural materials. Staff use this opportunity to promote mathematical language as they fill jugs with sand using cups and spoons. As a result, children develop a sufficient understanding of mathematical concepts, such as 'more than' or 'less than'. Staff plan adult-led activities, for example using paint to promote the understanding of mixing colours and circle time to promote counting. However, the quality of some teaching is variable and does not always ignite or engage children's interest. Consequently, some children occasionally become bored or disengaged, and this impacts upon their learning. Also, some groups are too large, which makes it difficult to meet every child's needs.

Suitable arrangements are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff find out about the language children use at home from their parents, when they start attending the pre-school. Therefore, they are aware of their backgrounds and language they may use. Staff understand that support from outside agencies can help a child's development and know how to access this if it is needed. For example, children with identified speech and language needs are observed, and strategy forms are put in place with set targets.

Staff then monitor these to see if the input from outside agencies is required. Staff work closely with parents, they are asked to complete an 'All about me form' which is used to help settle their child into nursery and assess a starting point for their learning and development. Daily verbal feedback is given to parents about their child's well-being and weekly written 'All about my week forms' are provided detailing what activities their children have participated in and any special achievements they have attained. In addition, parents are invited to attend parents' meetings where key persons share their child's learning journal and discuss any emerging needs. Parents spoken to on the day of inspection, describe how they are happy with the way the pre-school keep them informed of their child's achievements.

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

Children and parents are given a warm welcome by staff on arrival. Children generally settle with ease and engage themselves with others in their self-chosen games, activities and imaginative play without needing too much support from the adults. This is attributable to the positive relationships children have formed with the established team of staff. The key person system works appropriately; ensuring children's emotional needs are suitably met. Children show through their body language that they are happy and feel safe. For example, they seek out a familiar face when they become tired or unsettled. Effective transition systems are in place as children become ready to move onto school. The staff liaise with the teachers from the local schools, inviting them into the pre-school and encouraging them to join in with children's activities. As a result, all parties build strong relationships with the children before their move. In addition, staff complete 'Transition forms' to ensure everyone is fully informed of children's individual needs.

Children generally behave well, in line with their stage of development. Staff are clear about their expectations of behaviour from the children and the pre-school rules are clearly displayed. Staff effectively deploy themselves, ensuring children are well supervised at all times. As a result, children are kept safe. Children are helped to consider hazards and learn how to stay safe. For example, children are reminded not to run inside as they might bump into other children or slip and hurt themselves. Staff are calm, respectful and good role models. They praise children's efforts and achievements, building their self-esteem and making them feel good about themselves. Children understand and listen carefully to instruction, as staff promote clear and consistent messages. For example, children readily respond when staff ask them to line up to go outside. This shows their understanding of regular routines and gives them some of the necessary skills in readiness for school.

Children's good health is well-supported; they have access to fresh air and outdoor play every day. There is a small enclosed garden at the side of the building where children are encouraged to be physically active. However, the outdoor resources and appropriate learning experiences in the outdoor environment are limited. As a result, children's learning experiences are not fully optimised at this time. Physical activity is supplemented with walks within the local environment. For example, children walk to the local shops to buy fruit for snack and visit the park to access the large play area. This promotes their

physical well-being and enthusiasm for being outside. Children are provided with healthy snacks that take account of specific dietary needs and allergies. A 'Helper of the day' is chosen to help prepare the snacks for children. They learn about food preparation and the importance of a healthy diet, as well as developing the future life skills of handling knives safely in order to cut fruit. Children demonstrate good independence skills for their age when they collect their own plates and cups in preparation for snack times. Staff encourage children to make their selections from a variety of fruit. Children are able to pour their own drinks. This keeps children involved and interested in what they are eating, helping them to develop self-help skills. In addition, mealtimes are social occasions where staff sit with children and engage in meaningful discussions with children. For example, they discuss favourite foods and meals that children have at home. Staff teach children about good personal hygiene practices. They encourage them to wash and dry their hands thoroughly before meals, and after using the toilet. This helps children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves healthy.

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

The manager and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities under the safeguarding and welfare requirements, meaning that children's welfare is promoted within the pre-school. Suitable recruitment and induction programmes are in place. All staff are appropriately checked to ensure that they are suitable to work within the pre-school. Staff attend safeguarding training and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child's welfare or well-being. They also know the appropriate action to take if they have any concerns about another member of staff's behaviour or practice. Written safeguarding procedures, local guidance and appropriate contact details of professional agencies are in place. The pre-school has a number of written policies and procedures that contribute to safeguarding children. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and daily visual checks are carried out, to ensure the environment is safe and secure. Arrival and departure times are well monitored by staff, to ensure no unauthorised person enters the building and children do not leave unsupervised, helping to keep children safe.

The manager and staff team show commitment to improving the quality of the pre-school, and reasonable improvements have been made since the last inspection. The manager carries out regular supervisions and annual appraisals with staff, to identify training needs and any improvements needed within the pre-school. However, the supervision of staff is not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the quality of teaching is currently too variable to enable all children to make good progress. Planning and assessment documents are monitored weekly by the manager and discussed with the staff. Although weaknesses in planning for children's next steps have been identified, systems are not yet fully in place for the information gathered from observations to inform planning. Consequently, activities and experiences planned are not always purposeful and do not suitably challenge all children.

Partnership working with other providers and professionals are appropriately established,

enabling staff to support individual children's needs effectively. The manager works in partnership with the local authority advisor and welcomes their guidance to support the development of the pre-school. Secure relationships are held with local schools, which helps to ease the transitions in the summer term, providing continuity in the children's care and learning. The pre-school has positive relationships with parents. Parents' views are collected through a questionnaire, which is completed twice a year, and staff speak to parents informally, at the start and end of each day. This is a positive aspect of the pre-school's partnership working. There are displays and newsletters, and access for parents to all policies and procedures that underpin the running of the nursery. Parents spoken to on the day of inspection, speak highly of the pre-school and are happy with the care which their children receive, and have the utmost trust and confidence in the staff.

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	EY382397
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	878859
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	21
Name of provider	Diane Stella Burcham
Date of previous inspection	21/01/2009
Telephone number	07811072670

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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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