

Little Smarties

Two Cedars, Fairmount Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 7AQ

Inspection date	14/05/2014
Previous inspection date	19/02/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children are highly motivated, eager to learn and are progressing exceptionally well in all areas of learning and development. This is because staff are knowledgeable and are able to clearly identify and meet children individual needs and interests effectively.
- There is a well-established key-person system and through home visits before the children start at the setting, they are able to form secure attachments with the staff. This helps to promote children's well-being extremely well.
- The owners, management and staff have an exceptional awareness and understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding requirements; as a result, there are robust systems to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with the children.
- There are excellent partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals. As a result, information sharing is excellent and all adults involved with the children are able to contribute exceptionally well to their learning and development.

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 play rooms, the baby unit and the garden.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the early years professional.
- The inspector checked the evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector had discussions with the owners, the managers, staff, the children and parents.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including children's records, safeguarding procedures and the setting's policies and procedures.

Inspector

Hilary Tierney

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Smarties is privately owned and registered in 2005. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery operates from a large detached property in a residential area close to Cheltenham town centre, in Gloucestershire. Children are cared for in age-appropriate rooms in the main building on both floors, which include a sensory room and toilets. There is a separate purpose-built baby unit in the rear garden. Children also have access to a double-decker bus to the side of the property, which contains the soft play area and on the top deck is the staff room. The enclosed rear garden area has an area with a low-impact surface and the rest is covered with astro turf for all-weather use. There are a few steps to the main entrance, within the ground floor areas and garden, and stairs to the first floor. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, all year round except for bank holidays and a week over the Christmas period. The nursery has two pygmy goats in an enclosure in the rear garden. The owners, who live next door, have chickens which children are able to see. There are currently 137 children in the early years age range on roll. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery offers funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 26 members of staff who work directly with the children, of whom 14 hold an appropriate early years qualification to National Vocational Qualification level 3. Three staff, including the joint managers hold a level 5 qualification and one has achieved a level 6 childcare qualification. All staff hold a first aid qualification. The owner has achieved Early Years Professional Status. The nursery also employs two cooks and a cleaner.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to develop opportunities for children to increase their independence in particular during meal times.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are progressing exceptionally well in all areas of learning and development. The nursery is highly interesting, stimulating, bright and welcoming. It provides an exciting environment where children can develop and explore safely and confidently. The knowledgeable, caring staff carry out detailed informative observations on their key children. This means they are able to clearly identify children's starting points, interests and next steps for learning. Staff have an exceptional awareness and focus on communication and language, personal, social and emotional and physical development

for the children. This results in staff constantly talking to children and asking a range of open questions to help them think, learn and solve problems. All children have easy access to books, both inside and outside the building. They have excellent opportunities to look at books alone and with the staff. The preschool children thoroughly enjoy story-making sessions and sit fully engaged in the session. They enjoy being able to contribute to each part of the story. The younger children enjoy songs and rhymes and have cosy book corners in their part of the nursery where they can easily access books to look at alone and with staff. This helps to contribute to the development of children's early language and literacy skills. All children have lovely experiences outside to make marks with painting and drawing offered. Children enjoy free drawing on a large piece of paper on the floor outside.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well. They are sociable, eager to learn and demonstrate they enjoy their time at the nursery. All children are well behaved and are learning through clear explanations from the staff about how to share and take turns. Children demonstrate they feel safe, secure and are developing in their confidence as they interact with each other and the staff. Children are able to develop their physical skills exceptionally well as they have regular access to the outside play spaces. They enjoy playing in the mud kitchen, mixing and filling containers, which also helps them explore the concepts of mathematical development. Children enjoy exploring the sensory garden and the textures available from the logs, fir cones, stones and shells. Children enjoy learning about growing and digging in their special area, where they can find bugs, worms and insects. Staff remind children as they interact about leaving the worms in the ground, because that is where they live. This helps children understand about living things. All children have excellent opportunities to explore textures such as dough, corn flour mix, sand and water. The younger children enjoy exploring dried pasta and rice; they sit fully engaged in the activity learning about quantities as they pour the rice and pasta from one container to another. The member of staff interacts when necessary to help challenge children such as asking them 'how does it feel?' and she repeats the words back to children to help them the use of correct language. Children acquire excellent skills, attitudes and dispositions they require to help them prepare for school or their next stage of learning.

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

Children are happy, confident and settle quickly into the nursery. This is because there is an exceptionally well-established key-person system, which helps children to form secure attachments. Young children are cared for in the separate purpose-built baby unit, where warm and caring staff care for them. Children demonstrate they feel safe and secure and enjoy a range of activities that are challenging and interesting for them to explore and learn. For example, the young children enjoy being able to wander and crawl between the inside and outside areas, so they can develop their play outdoors. The older children enjoy seeing their siblings playing outside and are able to come into the baby unit to play with them. The older children are very well behaved and understand the rules of the nursery, such as taking their shoes off when they go into the baby unit.

Children are supervised extremely well at all times and staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are kept safe, both inside and outside. All staff show considerable care and concern for the children in their care. They interact with the children and talk to them constantly reminding them to be kind to each other and to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Staff actively promote equality and diversity in the nursery. They acknowledge and provide support for children who have dual languages and those who require extra support. This means that all children are supported very well to help them reach their full potential.

The highly stimulating environment and resources help to promote children's interests and provide challenges for them as they play. Children enjoy exploring the world around them and have excellent opportunities to explore the outside area. For example, children have regular opportunities in the garden to paint, draw, ride bicycles, run, climb and help to grow plants. In addition they explore natural materials, such as logs, stones, soil and water in the sensory garden, learning more about the natural world around them. The double-decker bus to the side of the property provides a stimulating experience for children with a soft play area and opportunities to pretend to drive the bus. Children enjoy sitting in the driver's seat and turning the steering wheel. Staff encourage children to talk about where they are taking everyone as they drive. Children enjoy bug hunting and use magnifying glasses purposefully to look at the insects and worms they find. The staff talk to children about what they have found and ask open questions such as 'how big is it?' 'where do you think it is going?' to challenge children's thinking.

Children are encouraged to learn about healthy lifestyles. They are all encouraged, through clear guidance from staff, to understand why they need to wash hands before eating, after using the toilet and being outside. For example, the youngest children know when staff mention snack time that they need to wash their hands. The preschool children also have good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to have some involvement in the preparation of meal times, such as being able to pour their own drinks. Staff do not comprehensively provide worthwhile opportunities for children to increase their independence and learning, such as by preparing the table for meals with plates and cutlery and encouraging them to serve themselves food. Staff are extremely good role models and children see them washing their hands and wearing aprons before serving food so they learn meticulous hygiene practices. The staff adhere to excellent nappy changing procedures, including wearing gloves, aprons and cleaning the mats thoroughly after use to reduce risks of cross infection.

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

The owners, management and staff all demonstrate they have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Robust risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly and cover all aspects of the nursery to keep children safe. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children and through clear explanations all children are beginning to learn about how to keep themselves safe. For example, when a child carrying a container with water spills it on the floor, staff immediately clear it up telling the child that it needs to be wiped up as someone could slip

on the floor. The procedures to safeguard children are strong and well embedded. Clear policies and procedures are known and understood by all staff who implement them consistently.

Both managers are highly motivated and inspirational to ensure that the staff provide high-quality childcare. As a result, the team of staff are highly motivated, have an exceptionally strong drive to improve and staff turnover is very low. The team work extremely well together to ensure the needs of all the children are met effectively. There are highly effective systems to ensure the performance of staff is monitored regularly. These include peer and manager observations, regular staff appraisals and effective identification of training needs. All these contribute to maintain exceedingly high-quality childcare. There are regular checks completed on staff suitability to help ensure the safety of the children in the nursery. Regular staff meetings and the exchanging of ideas contribute to the evaluation process. All staff recognise that evaluation is ongoing. This results in the evaluation of practice being highly effective and the nursery's strengths and areas to improve are clearly identifiable.

The knowledgeable staff and managers have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. As a result, they carry out detailed, clear observations, assessments and planning around children's individual needs and interests. Staff are able to recognise the children who require extra support and extension from these detailed observations and through the progress checks at age two assessments. Through the regular sharing of information gained from the observations, both staff and parents are able to support children's learning extremely effectively.

There are strong partnerships with all parents, other providers and agencies. Staff arrange home visits for new children and this helps children to settle quickly as they are able to meet their key person. There is an open door policy for all parents. They receive detailed information from their child's key person when they collect their child. Regular parents' evenings, questionnaires, newsletters and information evenings all help to keep parents very well informed. Daily records of children's routines are shared to support continuity and consistency of care. Parents speak very highly of the staff, the quality of care and the approachability of both staff, managers and the owners. Links with other early years settings, such as nurseries and pre-schools that children attend are well established, which means all adults are able to contribute to children's learning and development. Links with the local schools have been developed very well. As a result the reception teachers visit the children in the nursery so they can get to know the children who will be moving to their school. Children are therefore very well prepared for their transitions, such as moving to the next stage in the nursery or school.

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	EY319325
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	914900
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	137
Name of provider	G & G Partners Partnership
Date of previous inspection	19/02/2009
Telephone number	01242 577581

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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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