

Little Potters Childcare Services

Little Potters, Littleworth Road, CANNOCK, Staffordshire, WS12 1JD

Inspection date	28/02/2014
Previous inspection date	20/11/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The nursery fails to safeguard children because all the required steps needed to ensure all adults are suitable to work on the premises have not been taken.
- The nursery does not keep a record of the required information with regard to staff vetting and reference checks in order to fully meet requirements and safeguard children.
- Teaching requires improvement because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. Consequently, in some instances, children's individual learning is not fully supported to ensure they make good progress.

It has the following strengths

- Staff work effectively in partnership with parents to support children's individual care and emotional needs. They use some very successful strategies to engage parents to take part in their children's learning in the setting and at home, which helps to support children's learning.

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 two playrooms and outdoor area.
The inspector held discussions with the registered provider and all staff working in the nursery about safeguarding procedures and children's play, learning and care routines.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children to obtain their views.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of a children's activity with the provider.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and reviewed the self-evaluation and improvement plans.

Inspector

Christine Armstrong

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Potters Childcare Services was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register. The nursery is privately owned and managed. It is situated in a refurbished single-storey building in the Cannock area of Staffordshire. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas and is accessible to all children. It operates from detached premises having two main base rooms for children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold early years qualifications, two hold qualifications at level 6, six at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 48 children attending within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three-, and four-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- obtain Disclosure and Barring checks for every person, including staff who undertake cooking duties
- record information about vetting processes that have been completed, including verbal references
- ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good by ensuring staff take into account information that has been gained about the individual learning needs of children when planning activities, so that adult-led activities are well matched to children's abilities and well planned to fully support and extend children's communication skills.

Inspection judgements

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

In some instances, the quality of teaching is good and outstanding. Staff use some very successful strategies to engage parents to take part in their children's learning in the setting and at home, which is a key factor for supporting children's future learning at school. This includes using computer software to alert parents by email that staff have made a new observation of their children's progress or identified their next steps in learning, which they can access by logging onto the system. Parents are also emailed

videos of their children's activities and achievements. For example, in one instance staff videotape a wonderful activity that shows how simple resources, such as, water, bubbles and a hoop can support children's learning. The tape show how children become engaged, fascinated and show excitement as they sit in the water while staff lift the hoop to cover them in a giant bubble. The video shows parents how staff support their children to embrace new experiences and to explore and experiment. It shows how their children learn to lift the hoop themselves to make the bubble through repetition and trial and error. This approach to making children's learning visible to their parents is inspirational and worthy of dissemination. Parents are also encouraged to share information about children's learning at home and this can be logged into the system by parents or staff. This helps staff to achieve accurate assessments of children's achievements.

Throughout the day in both areas of the nursery staff provide a continuous flow of activities that help to capture children's interest and motivation to play. For example, staff take children outdoors where they encourage them to work on a larger scale than indoors. Children use larger brushes and water to paint on the fence, which supports the development of their physical skills. They build and construct using large bricks, which helps to support their awareness of size shape and measure. Staff grow plants with children, which helps children to develop an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time and children's interest in nature and living things is supported as they search for and find small creatures in the garden. In doors children under two years are continually drawn to the water activity centre which fosters their natural curiosity, imagination and drive to experiment and explore. Staff freeze water into the shape of numbers and letters, which stimulates children's interest and awareness of their shape and sounds. This activity also helps to develop children's understanding of liquids and solids and how they can change. In some instances staff effectively model language of thinking and learning, which supports children to develop their vocabulary and critical thinking. For example, when children talk about worms they are painting staff ask them if they can think and remember the name of the other creature they found in the garden. This encourages children to recall that the creature was a centipede who had 100 legs. Throughout the nursery good emphasis is given to supporting children's awareness, interest and use of number through singing and discussions during play.

In some instances, particularly when children have special educational needs and/or disabilities, key persons effectively use the information they gain from their observations, parents and other professionals to plan rich learning experiences and guide their interactions. As a result, some children are supported to make good progress in their development, taking into account their starting points and capabilities. However, teaching requires improvement because this quality of teaching is not consistent. For example, in some instances, some staff working with children over two years plan activities without taking into account information that has been gained about the individual learning needs of children. Consequently, some adult-led activities are not well matched to children's abilities and not well planned to include resources that can stimulate and extend individual children's learning, which leads to some children losing interest. Staff working with children under two years plan particularly well to support children's physical and social development. However, planning is not as well focused to support and extend individual children's communication skills. Therefore, at times some children are not supported to make as much progress as they can.

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

Children's safety is not fully promoted because some of the safeguarding and welfare requirements are not met. This is in relation to the nursery implementing effective recruitment and vetting procedures. Despite this, staff have a clear understanding of how important it is that children develop a secure sense of emotional well-being. For example, when children have short spells away from the nursery staff understand that children may need additional support, such as comforters from home that may have been previously discarded, in order to help them to re-settle into the nursery. Children are also sensitively supported when they first start at the nursery and when they are ready to move up rooms within the nursery, benefiting from tailored experiences that ensure they are fully prepared to make the move and continue on their learning journal. Staff make family books that include photographs of children's families, which support children's sense of well-being and help to reflect the diversity of children and their families who attend the nursery. Children also find out about the lives and cultures of people from around the world by celebrating a range of festivals, such as 'Chinese New Year'. Throughout the nursery children of all ages enjoy a harmonious environment where positive behaviour is affirmed and praised. As a result, children's behaviour is good. Children play cooperatively taking turns and sharing resources. These approaches help children to develop respectful attitudes towards others and provide a clear message that everybody is valued.

Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of how important it is for children to become active. They take all children into the outdoor area on a number of occasions throughout the day, which encourages children to become physically active, riding wheeled toys and climbing and balancing on equipment. In some instances, stimulating and challenging activities are planned that inspire children to challenge themselves to move in new and coordinated ways. For example, once a fortnight children benefit from taking part in physical activities that are led by qualified soccer coaches. This helps children to develop positive attitudes to physical activity and supports their understanding of healthy lifestyles. Key persons work effectively in partnership with parents to help them to recognise and respond well to children's individual need for rest and sleep, which helps to ensure children are able to benefit from the activities that provided in the nursery.

Indoors and outdoors there is a suitable range of resources that are mostly organised well to support children's independence and choice. Staff suitably support and encourage children's independence and self-care skills. For example, children under two years are encouraged to put their paper towel into the bin when they have finished drying their hands after dinner and older children take an active role in tidying toys away, which also helps them to learn to respect and look after their environment. Discussions with parents demonstrate key persons work effectively with them to support children's good health, particularly when children have specific dietary needs. Children develop healthy appetites and they are effectively supported to learn to develop positive attitudes towards tasting new and nutritious foods. Children are suitably supported to know how to keep themselves and others safe because staff capture some spontaneous opportunities to support their understanding as they play. For example, staff remind children about the need to use tools, such as scissors correctly.

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

The inspection was brought forward following a notification made by the nursery to Ofsted that raised concerns about the provider's ability to effectively implement the nursery safeguarding policy. The inspection found that the provider had failed to respond, without delay, to significant concerns about a child in the nursery. The provider also failed to seek advice or gain prior agreement from the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer, before undertaking any type of investigation into the concerns. Therefore, the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage were not met. To address this failure a safeguarding training programme has been implemented. As a result, all staff undertake level 1 training and the provider, who is the designated person and takes the lead role for safeguarding, has undertaken level 2 training. Discussions in staff meetings and supervisions provide further opportunities for staff to secure their understanding. As a result, all staff have a secure knowledge, understanding and commitment, to act without delay, to inform the local child protection agency and to only act upon their advice, in order to safeguard children. However, the nursery continues to fail to safeguard children because the provider has not ensured recruitment and vetting procedures are effectively implemented. Consequently, all the required steps needed to ensure all adults are suitable to work on the premises have not been taken. For example, although the provider has obtained Disclosure and Barring checks for all staff who work with the children she has failed to obtain these checks for her family members who are undertaking cooking duties in the nursery. She has also failed to record all information about other vetting processes, such as verbal references. These are breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Risk assessments, high levels of staff supervision and robust security arrangements help to minimise hazards in the environment. Staff receive training in first aid, which ensures they administer first aid appropriately and inform parents of any accidents. These procedures help to ensure children's health is promoted and benefit from a secure environment.

The provider, who is also the manager, holds an early years degree and continues to undertake training to develop her professional knowledge. As a result, she has a very secure understanding of her responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements and she promotes some very high quality practice within the nursery. This includes the current development of computer software that enables her to monitor some of the good progress children are making and to identify any emerging gaps in children's learning. This software is also beginning to be used to make children's learning more visible to parents, which is supporting partnership working with parents. The provider has also taken steps to further enhance the provision for younger babies by constructing a new baby unit at the bottom of the nursery garden. She is fully aware that recent changes in staffing, due to maternity leave, have led to some aspects of learning being less well planned for that some activities not always well matched to children's individual abilities. She has taken steps to address this by commissioning the guidance and support of an independent early years consultancy agency who have worked with her to evaluate the training needs of staff and make a plan of action. This includes targeted training, support

and coaching to improve staff performance, in order to ensure children are consistently supported to make good progress in their development. However, these plans are still in their infancy and as yet not fully impacting on the quality of teaching.

The nursery develops very positive partnerships with parents. Staff recognise that parents have the best knowledge of their child. They seek, value and act upon parents contributions about their children's care and learning and about the running of the nursery. For example, as a response to recent parental questionnaires the nursery has introduced Marvin the Monkey who goes home with children so that parents can make a record of their child's home experiences that can be shared when they return to nursery. Discussions with parents demonstrate staff are very flexible and eager to make any adaptations or provide any guidance that parents may require. This ensures all parents are supported to be included and involved in their children's care and learning. The nursery works successfully with other professionals to support children and their families, particularly when children have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY448885
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	952176
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	48
Name of provider	Claire Elizabeth Brindley
Date of previous inspection	20/11/2012
Telephone number	01543428484

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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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