

Little Merlins Pre-School

Culdrose Community Centre, Hibernia Road, Helston, Cornwall, TR13 8DJ

Inspection date

22/09/2014

Previous inspection date

24/11/2009

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 provide good support for children's personal, social and emotional development, which promotes their well-being successfully.
- Children are actively engaged in a broad and balanced range of purposeful learning activities. As a result, they benefit from good opportunities to develop essential skills for the future.
- The strong partnership with parents and other professionals ensures that the pre-school meets children's individual care and learning needs well.
- Staff follow effective safeguarding procedures and teach children how to keep themselves and others safe.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Although the indoor learning environment provides good opportunities for children to extend their numeracy and literacy skills, outdoors is not as well resourced. Therefore, there are some missed opportunities to promote children's learning.
- Staff do not always differentiate group activities effectively, to consistently challenge the range of children taking part.

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 viewed the premises, toys and equipment.
- The inspector engaged in discussion with children, parents and staff.
- The inspector sampled pre-school documentation and children's records.
- The inspector observed interactions between adults and children.
- The inspector offered the manager an opportunity to complete a joint observation.

Inspector

Jayne Pascoe

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Merlins Pre-School registered in 2000. This committee-run group operates from purpose-built premises attached to a community centre, on the edge of Helston in Cornwall. The pre-school serves the local area and the naval community. A secure area is used for outdoor play activities. The premises are fully accessible. The group opens each weekday during school term times. Sessions operate on Monday to Thursday from 9am until 5pm and on a Friday from 9am to 12pm. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register.

There are currently 27 children in the early years age group on roll. The pre-school provides funded nursery education for children aged two, three and four years. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs seven staff who all hold early years qualifications to at least level 3. The manager is qualified to degree level, the deputy holds Early Years Professional Status and one member of staff is currently working towards a degree.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase the range of resources outdoors, such as letters, numbers, pictorial aids and labelling, in order to extend children's numeracy and literacy skills further
- tailor some group activities more effectively, in order to consistently challenge the range of children attending.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. They know children well and therefore provide a wide range of enjoyable indoor and outdoor learning experiences, based on individual preferences. As a result, children are actively engaged in purposeful and worthwhile activities throughout their time at pre-school. In addition, they make good progress across all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is generally good. Overall, staff plan appropriately challenging activities to support children's specific learning needs. However, during some whole group and child-initiated activities, staff do not always tailor play and learning opportunities effectively. This results in a lack of challenge for some children, in relation to their age or stage of development. As it is the beginning of the term, several children are new to the pre-school and are still settling in. Staff provide high levels of one-to-one support at this time. This helps children to become

confident and establish positive relationships with others, which in turn promotes a sense of belonging. As a result, children acquire good personal and social skills.

Assessment systems are robust. These include chat wheels, which staff use effectively to establish children's individual starting points. Parents contribute to this process, which successfully promotes opportunities for shared learning. Children's learning journeys show that ongoing observations take place and that staff identify appropriate next steps for children's progress. Planning takes account of these next steps and provides regular opportunities for children to work rapidly towards the early learning goals. During adult-led activities, staff interact well to support learning. For example, during use of a range of musical instruments, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary as they describe the different sounds they are able to make. There is evidence that the pre-school is also effective in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because staff work positively with parents and other professionals to implement effective support strategies.

Children are curious, inquisitive and keen to learn. They are confident communicators, who demonstrate good language skills as they contribute equally to group discussion. Very young children express themselves very effectively through facial expression, body language and emerging vocabulary. Staff listen attentively to children and respond enthusiastically, which not only ensures that their individual needs are met, but also promotes their sense of self-worth. Children develop good interpersonal skills. Staff teach children the importance of self-care and provide good opportunities for them to learn to manage their own personal care needs. Children's physical development is promoted well, as staff encourage healthy eating habits. They also encourage children to participate in daily opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise. As a result of these good teaching practices, children develop the key skills required for their next steps in learning.

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

Children form secure relationships with their key person and staff. This promotes their well-being and independence. They also develop friendships with other children. As a result, they are happy, confident and settled. Photographs of the children at play and displays of children's work also help to promote a strong sense of belonging and self-worth. Staff are positive role models. Children follow their good examples and are well mannered, helpful and polite. They also learn to identify and respect people's differences. Staff are attentive and highly responsive to children's individual care needs. They also teach children how to identify and manage everyday risk. For example, they engage children in discussion about how to protect themselves from the heat of the sun and to move carefully to avoid trips and falls. As a result of these good practices, children feel safe and secure.

Children follow good procedures to keep themselves clean and healthy. Posters displayed prominently beside the snack area help staff to reinforce positive messages to children about healthy eating. Children wash their hands regularly and develop independence in using the toilet. They run, jump, climb and slide outdoors as they enjoy fresh air and

physical exercise. This promotes their good health and physical development. The pre-school is organised well to support children in acquiring independence. They are able to help themselves to a wide range of interesting toys, tools and resources. As a result, they learn to share, negotiate and cooperate, in order to initiate and maintain harmonious play. In turn, this helps to support their all-round development and emotional well-being. Labelling of storage units and the use of visual prompts indoors are highly effective in supporting children's recognition of letters and numbers. However, there are few visual prompts in the outdoor play area. As a result, staff miss some opportunities to enhance children's literacy and numeracy development during outdoor play. Positive partnerships with parents and other early years practitioners are in place. As a result, information sharing is good. This is instrumental in meeting children's individual needs and ensures that they are able to move effortlessly onto other early years settings and school.

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

Staff have a very secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, children receive good levels of care and education. Staff also demonstrate a secure understanding of the local safeguarding procedures and are confident to follow these if required. Procedures for staff supervision and for checking the ongoing suitability of staff and committee are robust. Staff are well qualified and demonstrate a good commitment to maintaining ongoing professional development. A good range of written policies and procedures is in place, which helps to maintain consistency in practice across the pre-school and at home. Staff continually assess risks and implement effective procedures to safeguard children. They teach children to keep themselves and others safe from harm through ongoing discussion. As a result, children learn how to identify and manage everyday risk such as handling tools and equipment carefully. Children also participate in regular emergency evacuation procedures to develop their confidence and familiarity.

Staff monitor and assess children's progress well. They provide children with a broad and balanced range of interesting and enjoyable learning experiences. Staff work very positively in partnership with parents to identify appropriate next steps for learning. They successfully link these next steps to future planning. As a result, children benefit from regular opportunities to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Effective partnership working contributes positively to meeting children's specific needs. Staff use effective systems with which to regularly monitor and evaluate their practice, which helps them to identify appropriate areas for future improvement. This currently includes the provision of increased opportunities for sensory play and exploration both indoors and outdoors.

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	102854
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	845856
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	27
Name of provider	Little Merlins Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	24/11/2009
Telephone number	01326 562894

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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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