

Little Springs Early Years Academy

Western Springs Primary School, Springfields Estate, RUGELEY, Staffordshire, WS15 2PD

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

04/11/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

1

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 plan and provide a good variety of learning opportunities, utilising their teaching skills to support children of all abilities. Consequently, children are engaged and motivated learners who make good progress and are well prepared for their next stage in learning, such as school.
- Children thrive in a nursery where their needs are put first. Key persons work very closely with parents and other professionals and as a result, children benefit from very strong continuity of care.
- Staff implement rigorous safeguarding policies and procedures, assuring children's safety, security and well-being.
- Leadership and management is good. Managers effectively evaluate the provision, taking account of the views of parents, children, staff and external agencies. This informs decision making, in order to promote continuous improvement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Information gained from parents about children's existing skills on entry to the setting, are not fully effective in supporting initial assessments of children's abilities.
- Observations of staff practice do not fully support the development of staff's teaching and children's learning opportunities, to their full potential.

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 three playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of an activity outdoors, with the Early Years Professional.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and spoke with staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation and a range of policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of the 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 and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Sharon Lea

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Springs Early Years Academy was registered in 2005 on the Early Years Register. It operates from the pre-school building and the pre-school nursery room within Western Springs County Primary School. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The setting is managed by an early years committee. It serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The setting employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status. The setting opens Monday to Friday, for 47 weeks of the year, from 8am until 5.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 83 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting has good links with Western Springs Primary School and receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- collect additional information from parents about children's existing skills on entry to the setting, for example, by extending the current All about me document and use this information to help make initial assessments and plan for each unique child
- enhance the existing observations of staff practice, to focus more specifically on the quality of teaching and learning, in order to maximise staff development and children's progress to its full potential.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at nursery and quickly engage in play activities in an environment, which is interesting and stimulating. Staff have a good understanding of how to implement the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are well deployed, enthusiastic and eager to help all children settle into the nursery. The quality of teaching is good. Observations of children playing and assessments of their progress assist in the planning of a broad range of fun and challenging play experiences and activities. Planned activities provide different levels of challenge, enabling all children to participate at a level that supports their current stage of development. Regular tracking of each child's progress ensures that any need for additional support for children can be identified and acted upon promptly. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated opportunities. This enables children to participate in structured learning

experiences, and to have some control on developing their own play and learning. Therefore, children are motivated and active learners who are well prepared for the next stage in their learning, such as school.

Children's communication skills are promoted well by staff who encourage older children to share their thoughts and ideas. For example, during activities and mealtimes they initiate discussion about events at home. This encourages children to talk as well as listen to others. At story time, staff give children good opportunities and encouragement to predict what may happen next, promoting their critical thinking and understanding. When the story is finished, staff ask children to recall events and to explain aspects of the story, such as 'Why did the rain go through the bear's helmet?' Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well by staff, who obtain key words from their home language from parents. Younger children are supported to develop speaking and listening skills through activities, such as naming animals and making animal sounds. Children recognise their written names on coat pegs and when they self-register. The provision and easy access to writing tools encourages children to make marks and practise their early writing skills. In the baby room, many opportunities are provided to explore sensory materials. These encourage baby's exploratory skills and support them in developing small physical skills. Young babies form close attachments with key staff who know and understand them well. Staff use lively voices and model words when interacting with babies as they play with a good range of age appropriate resources. Through this, babies are happy and their individual needs are well met. Children have daily access to the outside play area where they enthusiastically pursue energetic play and show enjoyment in being physically active. They thoroughly enjoy developing large physical skills in the digging area, where they fill containers and make mud pies, which they then bake in the popular mud kitchen. Children delight at finding worms wriggling in the soil they have dug and staff use this opportunity to promote children's mathematical skills of counting. Children learn about the community in which they live, as they make trips into the local community and further afield. They also participate in various celebrations throughout the year, such as Christmas and Halloween. Children learn mathematical skills through adult-led activities involving the use of numbers and counting. They learn about quantities as they experiment with water, filling and emptying containers. They develop an understanding of technology when they show interest in technological toys with buttons and play on the computer. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for the next steps in learning, including when they transfer into school.

Parents share information about their child's personality, interests and basic skills on entry through an All about me document. This enables the key person to meet the needs of the child from the outset. However, there is scope to extend the existing All about me document completed with parents, to include additional information about children's existing skills on entry to the setting, to support staff in making their initial assessments and planning for children. Staff share information with parents about the topics and activities their children are participating in each day. This enables them to share in conversation with their children and to extend this learning at home if they choose. Parents receive regular updates of their child's day at nursery through verbal exchanges and in daily diary sheets for younger children. Parent meetings are held twice yearly, to share progress and to discuss next steps in learning. Staff also complete the required progress checks for children between the ages of two and three years, when appropriate.

This two-way sharing of information helps to keep everyone informed and up to date about the children's individual needs. In the pre-school and nursery rooms, children have home learning journals, with activities to do at home with their parents. In addition, a book-lending scheme is in place, to further support home learning. Children benefit from this shared approach to learning and make good progress as a result.

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

The nursery has a very strong, caring and nurturing ethos and staff place a high level of importance upon children being happy and emotionally secure. Children quickly and happily settle into the nursery, through carefully planned settling-in sessions, which are flexible to meet the unique needs of each child. All children have their own key person who is identified by children themselves as the person that they naturally develop a personal attachment to. Parents comment that they have excellent relationships with all staff who they feel are warm, caring and friendly. As a result, children have strong and secure emotional attachments with staff. This enables them to enjoy their time in the nursery and make good progress in all areas of their development and learning. When children are ready to move on to the next room in the nursery, information is shared between key persons and children are supported during visits to their new room. Equally, when children move on to school, this is also supported to an extremely high standard. Teachers are invited to visit children in the nursery and detailed information is shared, with parental consent. Staff visit the host school with children for lunches and a range of activities, helping them to become familiar with the school environment. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who may need additional support, particularly benefit from this. Staff provide special books containing photographs of the schools that children will be moving on to. In addition, staff attend stay and play sessions with the children in their new schools. This ensures that all children are effectively supported and that their move to school will be a highly positive one.

Children have a wealth of opportunities to develop their independence in self-help skills. This is because staff have high expectations of children and recognise when they are ready to take responsibility, such as managing their own hygiene needs when using the bathroom or washing their hands. Children have their own coat pegs, supporting even the youngest children to independently hang up or collect their coat for outdoor play. Babies are supported as soon as they are ready to feed themselves using cutlery and older children to serve their own snacks and drinks. The learning environment enables children of all ages to independently select resources of their choice, supporting them to extend their play and their developing imagination. Storage boxes and drawers are at child-height and labelled with both words and pictures, aiding children of all ages and abilities to identify the resources they need. Positive behaviour is highly evident and children happily play games together and sit in friendship groups at mealtimes. They use exceptionally good manners, such as, excuse me, please and thank-you, evidently due to the extremely positive role modelling of the staff, who demonstrate high levels of respect towards one another. Lots of positive praise is evident and children beam with delight as their efforts are rewarded with a high five or a sticker. Golden rules, which promote kindness and respect, underpin behaviour expectations. In addition, behaviour management systems

where children aim to keep their name on the star, rather than moving to the cloud, supports children in self-managing their own behaviour. As a result, children are polite and respectful, and develop high levels of self-esteem. These personal skills in managing their emotions and developing positive relationships support children extremely well towards the next stage of their learning, such as school.

Babies and children enjoy fresh air and exercise frequently, using the well-designed outdoor areas. Each area provides different levels of challenge and opportunities, supporting their developing physical skills and confidence as they play on a variety of equipment. Staff promote children taking part in physical exercise and play games together. For example, they use a large dice, supporting the children to count the number of dots. They then do a corresponding number of exercises, such as star jumps, counting as they do each one. This supports children in carrying out physical exercise in a fun way and helps to develop their mathematical skills in relation to numbers and counting. Opportunities for fresh air and exercise are extended using the host school's playing fields and woodland area, where staff are beginning to deliver forest school activities to children. Children are supported in developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a number of ways. For example, outdoors they learn how to use challenging equipment, such as cargo nets safely. Indoors, children are reminded why they should sit appropriately on their chairs, to prevent them hurting themselves. Children of all ages are supported to understand the importance of tidying away after themselves, to ensure that trip and fall hazards are kept to a minimum. Staff support children well in understanding the importance of a healthy diet through topics and discussions. The nursery has recently acquired an allotment, with the aim of growing fresh fruit and vegetables to support children in understanding how living things grow and how to take care of them. In addition, they will be able to eat their produce, further developing their understanding of healthy choices. A healthy, balanced menu is provided by the nursery cook and guidance for parents who opt to provide their child with a packed lunch is provided through the nursery packed lunch policy. The cook ensures that children have a wide variety of meals, to meet their dietary requirements and enable them to try new foods. In addition, her menus identify all of the ingredients used, which keeps parents fully informed regarding what their children are eating and helps to support their specific dietary requirements.

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

The management team have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that the nursery meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a robust recruitment procedure for new staff that is followed by a thorough induction and probation period. This ensures staff are familiar with the nursery's policies and procedures so they comply with expectations for good working practice. Staff continue to be monitored through regular one-to-one meetings and annual appraisals, to support their professional development and to help improve outcomes for children. Peer observations are used as a way to review and feedback on one another's direct practice with children. However, these do not fully maximise staff development and children's progress, as the focus on the quality of teaching and learning is not yet fully emphasised.

Staff work very well as a team and share with each other any knowledge they gain through attendance on courses, so that they all work cooperatively and consistently. Staff all attend first-aid training so they can manage children's illness and accidents well. Through child protection training, they learn to identify the types of injuries that may not be accidents and other signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff are knowledgeable about the action they must take to safeguard the welfare of any child in their care.

Staff regularly update their knowledge of early years care and practice through training. Management ensure that staff identify the purpose of the training they attend and afterwards, how they will implement what they have learnt into their practice. This supports staff to be reflective practitioners and ensures that training attended is purposeful and impacts positively upon the learning experiences for children. The whole staff team constantly reflect on their practice and invite the views of parents and children. Parents complete an annual questionnaire that also has questions for parents to complete with the children, for example, 'Do you like the activities?' and 'Do you feel safe at nursery?' Management also seek the views of other professionals, who come into the nursery to support individual children, on how well staff work with them and support the children's needs. The Early Years Professional is instrumental in monitoring the planning and learning programme, to establish how effective it is in meeting children's learning needs, and where improvements can be made. The staff team are committed to constantly improving the quality of care and learning for children and evaluate what they are doing constantly. They complete an annual audit, which contributes to their improvement planning for the year ahead and may then lead to audits and action plans for specific rooms in the nursery or provision for areas of learning, such as mathematics. Management have developed a system to track the progress of individual and groups of children. This has identified that children's skills in listening and attention on entry to the nursery are as not as well developed as they should be. As a result, management are implementing measures with staff, to close this gap in learning. These measures reflect the commitment of management and staff to provide the best possible provision and outcomes for the children in their care.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the nursery and with what their children are learning by contributing information about what they are interested in at home and by joining in with activities. Monthly stay and play sessions enable parents to participate in activities with their children and experience the nursery routine. This enriches the learning for children as they see strong relationships with the key people in their lives, as their parents take part. Parents report that they are very happy with the standard of care that their children receive and the visible progress that they are making in their learning. Parents receive regular newsletters and other information is posted on the noticeboards. The nursery has a social media page, which is used solely to share activity ideas for parents to do with their children at home. Staff also offer frequent updates on their children's progress and their next steps in learning, enabling parents to support learning at home. Staff from the nursery provide baby massage and yoga sessions for parents and children at the local children's centre. They also work closely with a range of other professionals, such as speech and language therapists who come into the nursery to support individual children. Attendance at cluster meetings organised by the local authority provides opportunities to receive updated information on early years initiatives

and networking with staff from other settings. Management and staff are proactive in visiting other settings to gain good practice ideas and sharing their own good practice when visited by staff from other settings. Highly effective partnerships with the host school are also well established and these help staff to meet children's needs effectively.

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	EY286263
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	870763
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	83
Name of provider	Western Springs Primary School Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01889 256007

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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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