

The Wilson Marriage Centre Nursery, Little Learners

Wilson Marriage Centre, Barrack Street, COLCHESTER, Essex, CO1 2LR

Inspection date	17/11/2014
Previous inspection date	18/11/2008

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

- Teaching and learning is very good as staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, they plan interesting activities that support children's individual development needs across all areas of learning.
- Children and babies form secure emotional attachments with staff and show high levels of confidence within the nursery. They enthusiastically explore their environment and participate in activities with enjoyment.
- Staff develop successful partnerships with parents, working together effectively to promote children's development and well-being.
- Staff have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in regard to the safeguarding and welfare requirements, including child protection issues.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for older children to write for a purpose, such as for display in the nursery and learn that print carries meaning have not been fully embraced in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Staff do not always make the best possible use of snack time routines to extend children's already good self-help skills.

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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children.
- The inspector viewed a sample of children's development records.
- The inspector saw evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff, self-evaluation, risk assessment and policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and from their responses to questionnaires obtained by the nursery.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full report

Information about the setting

The Wilson Marriage Centre Nursery, Little Learners was registered in 1999 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is situated in a purpose-built premises on the site of an adult community college in Colchester, Essex. It is run and managed by Essex County Council Adult Community Learning. The nursery serves the children of parents attending courses in the college and the local community. It operates from two playrooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, two staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 4 and five staff hold a qualification at level 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, during term times. Opening times are from 9.15am to 3.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 60 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend older children's literacy skills by giving them greater opportunities to practise their early writing, for example, by encouraging them to write captions and labels for display, both indoors and outside
- increase opportunities for children to be involved in the preparation and serving of their own snacks to further enhance their good self-help skills.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. They take great care to ensure that children's individual needs, enthusiasms and interests are known and catered for. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff complete regular assessments, including the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. Staff use robust observation and assessment to monitor children's progress across the seven areas of learning and identify what they need to learn next. This supports children's development as they move onto the next steps in their learning. Parents are invited for regular meetings and good levels of information are shared about their children's daily routines and activities through a range of appropriate methods. Parents are also encouraged to regularly share information about children's achievements at home. This means that children benefit from an effective shared

approach to their learning and development. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive high levels of support. Their key persons are extremely knowledgeable about each child's background and circumstances. Visual prompts, photographs and timelines are used effectively to ensure that children take a full and active part in all aspects of the provision. Key persons also gather useful words from home languages to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. An interesting blend of adult-led experiences and activities that children choose for themselves are available each day. Children enthusiastically engage in all that is on offer and thrive as they choose whether to play in the indoor or outdoor play areas. Babies and toddlers have access to stimulating toys and sensory materials, such as shaving foam and paint, that keeps them absorbed and intrigued in purposeful play. Older children develop a keen interest in the natural world as they hunt for mini-beasts in the outdoor area. They show great curiosity and delight in showing staff and visitors the insects or slugs they find. Staff successfully use these spontaneous events to extend learning by asking questions and providing additional tools for investigation. This means that children acquire new knowledge and develop their exploratory skills, as they use words to describe and magnifiers to examine the creatures they find.

Children are effectively gaining the skills they need for future learning, in readiness for starting school. Children know when it is time to listen carefully to adults and staff take every opportunity to develop language and vocabulary through effective questioning and exploration of the sound of words and letters. Children choose to look at books for enjoyment. In addition, staff are skilled at keeping children enthralled when they are telling stories. Children clearly become involved in the characters and show excitement when trying to predict what will happen next. There are some labels in the indoor environment, so that children are starting to understand that print carries meaning. Older children are learning to form letters correctly when writing their names. However, there is room to enhance children's emerging literacy even more, by encouraging them to write captions and labels for display, both indoors and outside. Children are motivated to become creative and extend their mathematical skills. The role-play area is frequently changed to encourage children to act out real life or imaginary scenarios. For example, children explore the shoe shop, and match and sort the footwear into pairs. They measure each other's feet, talk about shoe sizes and count out money when they use the till. Trips out into the local area promote children's understanding of the world and the community around them.

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

Children are supported well as they make the move from home to starting at the nursery. Staff are very affectionate and provide plenty of cuddles for babies and children who need reassurance as part of the settling-in process. An effective key-person system and sound deployment of staff, help children to build secure bonds and a sense of emotional security. Each individual child's needs are consistently well-considered and staff take time to offer additional support when parents are starting new college courses. Parents say that this gives them extra reassurance and enables them to be totally confident that their children

are happy and closely supervised, while they study. Staff support children as they move between rooms, because settling-in times are organised to ensure they become familiar with their new carers and surroundings. Supportive arrangements also exist between the nursery and the local schools to support children's smooth transfer into full-time education. Information is shared with teaching staff, when they visit the nursery. Furthermore, staff plan activities to emotionally prepare children for the changes ahead. This means that children get to know their reception teachers and staff help to reduce any anxieties that they may have.

Children behave well because staff are good role models with a consistent approach to managing behaviour. Staff ensure that children learn about taking turns and understand the importance of demonstrating kind and respectful attitudes towards others. Children's understanding of right and wrong is also promoted sensitively through gentle reminders to care for their environment and the equipment. Staff use plenty of praise and encouragement to boost confidence and self-esteem. Children talk about their own safety and the safety of others as they play. They comment that others need to be careful outside on the climbing equipment in case they slip. In addition, they are involved in routine activities, which develop their understanding of safety. For example, they know about the importance of tidying away the toys so that others don't trip. Children also regularly practise fire drills so they can swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency and take part in activities and outings that raise their awareness of road safety.

Children thrive because they are developing a good awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They have plenty of opportunities for fresh air and exercise using a variety of physical play apparatus. Babies and toddlers benefit from learning important physical skills of crawling, standing and walking, climbing and balancing. Children learn to make healthy choices in what they eat. Staff provide opportunities for children to talk about nutritious food and they are well aware of any allergies or special dietary requirements to meet individual children's needs. Children are closely supported at lunchtimes when they eat packed sandwiches, supplied by parents. Babies and toddlers eagerly sit at the meal table displaying self-confidence and enjoyment in the company of others. However, the organisation of the snack time routine provides too few opportunities for older children to help to prepare and serve their own food. For example, staff serve the fruit into bowls and pour drinks for the children. Nonetheless, children are developing their independent skills in other ways. For example, they successfully learn to put on their coats and shoes before going outside to play and independently wash their hands prior to eating. Staff ensure that nappy changing and toilet training is hygienically and sensitively undertaken to ensure that children and babies can preserve their dignity. Staff also recognise when children are tired and space is provided in quiet restful areas, so that they can sleep peacefully and undisturbed.

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

Management and staff have a very secure understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are effective safeguarding arrangements in place. Rigorous recruitment and induction procedures ensure the staff are suitable to work with children.

All staff complete safeguarding training and know the action to take and who to contact if they have any concerns about a child's welfare or well-being. Staff give children's safety a high priority and are vigilant regarding security. There is a controlled entry system with an intercom and security camera to prevent the risk of unauthorised access. Staff check that the premises are safe every day. In addition, detailed risk assessments and routine safety checks of equipment and resources contribute significantly to children's safety.

The manager leads and deploys a well-qualified staff team. She leads by positive example and regularly works alongside her staff, enabling her to assess their performance and monitor the quality of the educational programme. The ongoing self-evaluation system is used well to identify the areas for further development. Furthermore, regular meetings and appraisals ensure that all staff have a clear drive for positive improvement and there are well-targeted action plans for further training, that particularly benefit children. Parental questionnaires are provided and carefully analysed. This information is taken into account to help to identify strengths and prioritise development that will improve the quality of provision for all children. The management has acted on the recommendations set at the last inspection with very effective results. The arrangements for observation and assessment have been improved to ensure that staff always identify children's next steps in learning. In addition, staff now gather and share more information with parents, to ensure they are more knowledgeable about children's needs and starting points from the outset. Children's individual development records are routinely reviewed, and achievements are carefully tracked to ensure that any gaps in learning are appropriately followed up. As a result, early intervention is promptly secured to ensure that no child is left behind.

Staff promote very positive relationships with parents and carers. Key persons make themselves available to give feedback to parents each day and noticeboards and newsletters keep parents informed about special events. For example, parents are invited into the nursery for story times and also join the children on picnics in the castle grounds. Parents also receive a handbook with a wealth of information about the nursery and have access to the policies and procedures. Parents are invited to discuss their children's progress records and make contributions to the development records. Without exception, parents spoken to on the day of the inspection are very happy with the service they receive. They are particularly complimentary about the warm, secure relationships staff have with children. Staff are proactive in establishing good relationships with nearby schools and other early years providers. This means that there is consistency in children's learning and they settle into reception classes with confidence. The special educational needs coordinator liaises effectively with parents, key persons and outside agencies to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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	650154
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	855634
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	60
Name of provider	Adult Community Learning, The Wilson Marriage Centre
Date of previous inspection	18/11/2008
Telephone number	01206 793810

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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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