

Little Vicarage Pre-school

Vicarage Park C of E Primary School, Vicarage Drive, KENDAL, Cumbria, LA9 5BP

Inspection date

15/12/2014

Previous inspection date

04/01/2012

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

- Children form positive bonds and close attachments to the staff because they are caring, friendly and approachable, which means that children are well supported to settle into the pre-school environment and their emotional well-being is fostered.
- Staff use good monitoring, planning and assessment methods to provide a range of interesting and stimulating learning opportunities. They encourage children to select activities independently so that their learning is purposeful and reflects their interests.
- Comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures are fully understood by the staff, who place a high level of importance on ensuring children are safe and secure at all times.
- Staff are supported well in their continuous professional development and through effective performance management. As a result, staff's knowledge of early years including safeguarding is very good.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor play area is not used to its maximum effect to help promote children's knowledge and understanding of the features of their own natural environment, including growing plants and observing living things.
- Strategies to encourage parents to share information and promote children's learning at home are not always successful. As a result, staff do not have a full and clear picture of what children do at home, to inform their planning.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the premises.
- The inspector observed children playing in the two pre-school rooms and the outdoor play area.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, the staff and the children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents of the early years children attending the setting.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, the planning documentation, and the systems for the monitoring of children's progress.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and the qualifications of staff working with children, the policies and procedures for the pre-school, and the documented self-evaluation systems that support the service.

Inspector

Carys Millican

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Vicarage Pre-school was re-registered in 2011 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is managed by a voluntary management committee and operates from self-contained bungalow within the grounds of Vicarage Park School in Kendal, Cumbria. The pre-school serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas south of the town. It opens Monday to Friday from 9am until 3pm, during term times only. Children attend a variety of sessions and they are cared for in two rooms and an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 38 children in the early years age range on roll. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are currently four staff employed at the pre-school who all hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and level 3, including the manager who holds Early Years Teacher Status. The pre-school supports a number of children with special educational needs/or disabilities. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and staff work closely with the local authority and the host school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the outdoor play area, for example, by developing more natural areas where children can explore and investigate and grow and observe living things
- strengthen the strategies used to engage parents more in their children's learning and to encourage them to share information about what children do at home.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are enthusiastic and highly motivated in their play. This is because staff have high expectations for the children and they are enthusiastic in their approach to teaching. Staff provide interesting and stimulating activities that engage children's curiosity and attention. They take the time to get to know the children from the very first session they attend. This means that they can offer them appropriate activities on starting that meet their interest and any individualised support they require. Children are active learners and are willing to have a go at doing things for themselves. For example, staff place an assortment of pipe cleaners and pieces of tissue paper on a table. As children wander from one room to the next they see the table and sit down to explore the materials. Then independently they collect scissors and glue from the writing area and take them back to the table. Children scrunch up tissue paper and glue it to the pipe cleaner, piece after piece. 'Look at my rainbow bracelet', one child says to member of staff, 'Wow, that's

lovely, how did you make it? The child clearly explains how she made it replying to the questions used by the member of staff to extend her communication and language skills. Children make choices and decisions in their play, and confidently help themselves from a range of resources. In the quiet room children create a stage out of blocks and between them they decide what they will do and how they will make it. As a result, they problem solve and think critically for themselves. The quality of teaching is good and staff support children well because they use methods that match individual children's learning. As a result, children make good progress. Staff know the children and have a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children are well supported in developing the necessary skills required for effective learning. Staff constantly praise children in all that they do. Therefore, their self-esteem and self-confidence is well promoted and children become more confident and motivated to learn. Children take part in discussions and they benefit from the good questioning techniques staff consistently use. Staff challenge children well. They ask them questions but give children time to answer before answering for them. Therefore, children think for themselves and solve simple problems. Children listen to instructions and help to tidy away the resources before snack and meal times. They learn social skills, manners, and patience as they learn to share and take turns in group activities, such as during circle time and when playing outside. Children's independence is effectively promoted. They are encouraged to make their own choices and decisions about what they do and learn to put on their coats, shoes and hats when going outside. Children develop a sense of belonging because their artwork is creatively displayed throughout the pre-school rooms. This helps children to feel valued and respected by others. Photographs and pictures showing the children playing in different areas prompt discussions about past experiences. Children's physical development is promoted outdoors and they benefit from the opportunity to move freely from one area to another. They play under the canopy and use the hard surface to pedal wheeled toys and play ball games. Children enjoy making marks on walls and chalk boards using warm water and sit at tables to create Christmas crafts. There is a wooden climbing frame and slide for children to use to further develop their physical skills and take risks for themselves. However, the play area does not help to support children's strong exploratory impulse and interest in investigating the features of a natural environment. Therefore, observations and discussions of animals and plants are not as well addressed as other areas of learning.

Staff establish good partnership working with parents. They gather all the required information about the children when starting pre-school which enables staff to complete a full assessment of children's needs. The planning follows children's interests and the next steps in their learning. Staff value and encourage parents' role in their children's learning. However, even though staff take the time to speak with parents on arrival and at collection times, strategies to encourage parents to share information about what children do at home are not always successful. Staff provide parents with written journals containing evidence to support progress checks and children's developmental achievements. The information is supplemented by photographs, observations and assessments of children learning, including the progress check which is completed between the ages of two and three years. Staff observe and assess children's development and keep detailed records of children's progress and use their current interests to inform the planning of children's next steps. The manager, staff and children

all contribute to the planning process, which is also shared with parents. Relationships with parents are good. The staff operate an open door policy so parents are confident to approach staff for advice and support. Staff are fully aware of the importance of supporting parents in obtaining further help from other professionals or multi-agency workers when required. Staff then work closely with other professionals to help children improve in their development and to reach their full potential in readiness for school. Children with special educational needs and disabilities are supported well by well trained staff who work in partnership with the health professionals to support children in the pre-school. Together they complement the strategies implemented by health professionals to help children to progress in their development.

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

The key-person system is firmly established in the pre-school. Therefore, children benefit from the warm and caring relationships in place which ensures they feel safe and secure. Children are confident to ask staff for help when they need it, for example, when putting on dressing-up clothes. Staff explain how to put their head in first then their arms and the rest will follow. Staff establish close partnership working with parents in order to support their children through the settling-in process. As a result, children are happy and they quickly develop a close bond and a secure relationship with their key person. Children's emotional well-being and social skills are effectively promoted. They feel welcome as they are warmly greeted by staff on arrival and collect their name card and place it on the board. Staff are good role models and encourage positive behaviour management strategies right for the start of any arrangements. Staff are deployed effectively to support children as they play. As a result, children engage well with staff and their peers. They learn about acceptable behaviour, and learn to tolerate others younger than themselves. Consequently, children behave well and they are well prepared for their future move onto school.

The pre-school is warm, welcoming and inviting. Staff are calm, caring and show respect for everyone. Therefore, they create a positive and inclusive environment where everyone is welcomed. Parents and visitors are warmly invited into the pre-school building to speak to staff for as long as they wish to. Parents praise the staff for their support during settling-in times, especially for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children begin to understand how to keep themselves and other children safe and learn to consider the feelings of others. Staff use positive methods with the children and explain to them why some things they do or say may hurt others or themselves. Staff consider children's safety and well-being when furnishing and organising the play areas. They ensure that children can move freely around the tables and sufficient space is placed between each activity to allow children to move around easily. The play areas are well organised, inviting, and well-resourced with a good range of high quality toys and materials. Staff deploy themselves well to supervise children while they are using both rooms and outdoors.

Children learn about basic health and hygiene practices. They understand why they must

wash their hands before eating and why their hands need to be clean. Children are supported well in developing their independence and self-help skills. For example, they serve themselves at meal times and pour their own drinks. Meal times are used to help children to learn the importance of sitting down and eating properly together, which also provides an opportunity to reinforce social skills and manners. Staff promote children's independence well in readiness for school. Staff help children to learn to keep themselves safe both indoors and outside. For example, they ask children to help to tidy up toys at various points during the day and they remind children to be careful where they walk in the craft room. Staff are vigilant in maintaining a safe environment and quickly sweep up any spills of water and pretend snow before children slip or fall. Children explore cultural festivals with staff throughout the year and engage in activities which look at similarities and differences among themselves. For example, they completed several charts recording different eye and hair colour, and their height. Children also learn about the community in which they live. They go for walks in the school grounds and visit local shops and places of interest.

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

The manager and staff work well together as a team. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding and welfare requirements. All staff have attended training in safeguarding children and child protection. They demonstrate a secure understanding of the procedures to follow if they were concerned about any child in their care. Staff are fully aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and have on display the appropriate persons to contact. Staff attend regular staff meetings where they discuss safeguarding issues and other childcare issues, such as first aid and the review of all policies and procedures. The manager and deputy are fully aware of the procedures to follow and who to contact if an allegation is made against them or another staff member. As a result, children's welfare, safety and well-being are effectively promoted. All visitors arriving at the pre-school have their identity checked and their attendance is recorded. Un-vetted persons are never left unsupervised with the children. There are robust processes in place for the selection and safe recruitment of new staff. These include a full and detailed induction and ongoing suitability checks which are completed regularly throughout the year. Staff have a good understanding of the importance of risk management. Written risk assessments are in place and these are reviewed regularly to reflect current needs. The manager has risk assessed all the areas children use to ensure all potential hazards are minimised. Staff keep accurate records of accidents, medication administration and attendance, which helps staff to protect children and promote their welfare. The professional development of all staff is effectively promoted and the observation of staff working at the pre-school is used to inform the supervision process. Staff have a wealth of experience between them and continue to develop the pre-school provision. They set high standards for themselves and have high expectations for the children. As a result, staff are effectively meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The manager, staff, committee, parents and children are provided with opportunities to contribute to the self-evaluation process. They use staff meetings, discussions with parents and children, and written questionnaires, to inform the self-evaluation process. The manager and staff look to the local authority development worker for advice to improve the pre-school provision and maintain continuous development of their working practices. This ensures that the staff team continue to provide good quality care, and teaching and learning for all the children attending the pre-school. Staff maintain action plans with the support of the local authority worker, which highlight targeted areas that they wish to improve. All previous recommendations have been addressed and this has successfully improved staff understanding of the safeguarding procedure, the self-evaluation of the service and the provision of resources to help children understand about the difference and diversity of the world around them.

Staff work in partnership with a number of health professionals, who specialise in supporting children and families. Staff have a good understanding of the help these professionals can offer. Therefore, they have the expertise to work with parents in seeking support from them in the future. Staff understand the importance of establishing and maintaining good links with the other settings children attend. Therefore, staff make sure that they share information with these providers to ensure continuity of care and learning. Parents feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress and express a high regard for the service they provide. The parents report that the staff and the pre-school are 'wonderful' and 'fantastic'. They state that the children love attending and always tell them what they have been doing and how much they have enjoyed themselves.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY427454
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	852785
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	38
Name of provider	Little Vicarage Pre-School Ltd
Date of previous inspection	04/01/2012
Telephone number	01539 738269

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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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