

Inspection date

1 December 2015

Previous inspection date

5 October 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is inadequate

- The provider has a poor understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Ofsted have not been notified of changes to committee members to enable them to carry out the additional required suitability checks for these individuals in a timely manner to assure children's safety.
- The use of self-evaluation is not yet sharply focused on effectively identifying that the pre-school meets all of the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Staff have not yet explored further strategies for extending the partnership with providers of other settings that children attend.
- Staff do not make the most of the wealth of initial information obtained about children's learning to fully support the identification of children's precise learning needs from a very early stage.

It has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching is strong. Staff have a secure understanding of how to support children's learning and development. They plan fun and stimulating activities that engage children at all times.
- Staff consistently use simple sign language for all children and skilfully adapt activities for disabled children and those with special educational needs. There is a strong ethos of working in partnership with parents and specialist professionals. This ensures that all children make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The effective key-person system enables the dedicated staff team to form secure and trusting relationships with children and parents. They take a special interest in their lives. Children settle quickly, are confident and thoroughly enjoy sharing photographs of themselves and their family. This also helps children to learn about each other's uniqueness.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
■ provide Ofsted with the required information to enable suitability checks to be completed in a timely manner.	31/12/2015

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

- review the current evaluation system in place to ensure that all legal requirements are met
- strengthen the partnerships with other early years providers where children attend to support continuity in children's learning, particularly exploring further ways to overcome any barriers in communication
- utilise the initial information obtained when children begin attending to plan even more precisely for their continued progress from a very early stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during indoor and outdoor activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children during the inspection, when appropriate.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and provider, and looked at relevant documentation, such as the nursery's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of the committee members and staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector took account of the written views of parents and spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection.

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is inadequate

The arrangements for safeguarding children are not effective. The provider has not made appropriate arrangements to inform Ofsted of changes to committee members within the required timescale. However, Disclosure and Barring Service checks have been carried out on a majority of these individuals. Staff have a secure knowledge of how to promptly meet children's needs in the event of a child protection concern. Clear arrangements for staff supervision and opportunities for regular training help to promote good outcomes for all children. The manager closely reviews the range of learning activities and children's progress. However, self-evaluation methods do not successfully identify breaches in requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The well-qualified manager and enthusiastic team of staff have a strong drive to enhance children's learning. Staff promote children's communication and language development very well. Whole-group time is a positive experience. Children's confidence is enhanced as they speak out loud and use complex sentences to talk about the items they have brought from home. As children begin writing their own names, staff support them to link letters and sounds. Children's thinking skills are extended as they respond to staff's probing questions. They learn to match quantities of items to numbers. All children have a strong explorative impulse. They explore different ways of rotating a transparent ball containing beads to make various sounds as the beads move around. Staff immediately capture children's attention through their interactive and exciting storytelling. Home learning packs help parents to extend their children's learning at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

Children's safety and well-being are not adequately protected. The provider does not understand her legal responsibilities. There is a real sense of community spirit within this welcoming pre-school. Children behave well as staff provide them with consistent clear guidance. They have wonderful opportunities to learn the habits of a healthy lifestyle. For instance, they plant and nurture a selection of fruit and vegetables in the pre-school allotment. Furthermore, weekly cooking activities introduce them to a wide range of healthy nutritious foods which they cook and taste. Staff help them to learn about the positive effects of exercise on their bodies after dancing. They provide good opportunities for children to develop strong physical skills, outdoors in the fresh air. Children demonstrate their perseverance as they learn to roll two hoola-hoops at the same time. They are motivated to keep on trying, through trial and error, as staff praise them for their genuine achievements. Children demonstrate a real sense of responsibility as they help to tidy away activities and wash up their own plates and cups following snack.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress in relation to their starting points. Secure partnerships with local schools that children move on to support them to make a seamless move. Staff adopt the same teaching methods used within local schools to create a consistent approach to children's learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402244
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	855421
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	18
Name of provider	Little Chestnuts Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2011
Telephone number	07901 880914

Little Chestnuts Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from the village hall and is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including the manager who holds an early years qualification at level 5. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are 9am until 12 noon and 12 noon until 3pm. It offers a breakfast club from 8am until 9am. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports disabled children and those with special educational needs. The pre-school has strong links with the local village school.

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