

Little Oaks Pre-School

Adeyfield Community Centre, Queens Square, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 4EW



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

7 February 2017

10 October 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The quality of teaching is variable. Activities are not consistently well planned. Children are not always provided with enough challenge according to their abilities and interests to help them make good progress in their learning.
- Staff's assessments of children's learning are not consistent in precisely identifying their next steps in learning. For example, gaps in children's speech and language development are not closing quickly enough.
- The provider and manager have not yet fully implemented a carefully targeted programme of support and mentoring for all staff, in order to further raise the quality of teaching.
- The self-evaluation process to improve the overall practice is not yet fully implemented and monitored to ensure that priorities for improvement are identified and addressed.

It has the following strengths

- The provider, manager and staff have successfully addressed all actions raised at their previous inspection. For example, staff supervise children during their play and they now ensure that any hazardous items are kept safely away from them.
- Children happily play with the activities and resources on offer. These generally cover various areas of learning. Staff praise and encourage children during their play and routines. This helps to promote their self-esteem.
- Staff are very aware of children's individual dietary requirements. Children are provided with healthy meals.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage the provider must:

	Due Date
■ improve the planning of activities to ensure children are provided with purposeful play and challenges according to their abilities and following their current interests, in order to support their good progress	24/03/2017
■ ensure that the assessments of all children's progress accurately identify the next steps in their learning so that these precisely inform future planning	24/03/2017
■ ensure any gaps in children's learning are quickly identified and addressed to help them make good progress.	24/03/2017

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

- monitor staff practice through effective supervision meetings to identify and implement further professional development needs
- improve self-evaluation so that targets for development are prioritised, well known, implemented and monitored to show the impact on the overall quality of practice.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector completed joint observations with the provider and with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and the manager. She looked at children's records, the safeguarding policy and evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Since the last inspection, staff have increased their knowledge about their responsibilities to safeguard children. They demonstrate a suitable understanding of possible signs that children may be at risk. Staff know the action to take to report such concerns. Suitable recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to help ensure that all adults are suitable to work with children. The provider and manager have worked with the local authority and continue to move forward with this support. However, they have not identified weaknesses in the support for teaching and learning. The manager has completed training to support her in her role. Staff inductions are carried out so that they understand their roles and responsibilities. The manager has started to do supervisions of staff practice to discuss their work with children. However, these are not yet clearly focused and embedded to help make a positive impact on children's learning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Since the last inspection, staff gather information about what children can already do from parents. They use this along with their own observations in their initial planning. However, staff do not always precisely analyse the information gained from their observations and assessments. Consequently, staff do not have a deep understanding of children's precise learning needs. At times, staff use some effective teaching strategies. However, on occasions, staff take on a supervisory role rather than being actively engaged in helping children's learning. Some planned group sessions do not always effectively support the learning needs of some children. For example, children who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are less engaged. Older children enjoy playing card games to help promote their mathematical development. Babies have fun exploring interactive toys and staff are attentive to their needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Staff use effective strategies to help children to behave well. For example, sand timers are used to support children's understanding about the passing of time when waiting for a turn on popular toys. A key-person system is in place to help children feel secure. Parents say that their children settle well. Staff obtain information from parents about the methods used at home to soothe, comfort and care for their babies. Children are able to sleep or rest according to their needs. They benefit from regular opportunities to be active and engage in physical play, such as riding bikes and playing with bats and balls. Staff remind children how to keep themselves safe during routines and play. For example, they explain the need to walk indoors.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Some children are not always supported to make the best possible progress in learning. This includes children who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs. Children are gaining some of the skills needed for their next stage in learning, including school. For example, they demonstrate appropriate social skills and their early mathematical skills are developing.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY392996
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1077175
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Tracy Ann Hart
Registered person unique reference number	RP909768
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2016
Telephone number	01442 252 030

Little Oaks Pre-School was registered in 2009. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday for 46 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

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