

Inspection date

14 May 2018

Previous inspection date

13 November 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

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

- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of a change to the nominated individual.
- At times, activities are not sufficiently well organised to meet the learning needs of the very youngest children consistently.
- Monitoring of staff professional practice is not rigorous enough to focus on ways to extend staff knowledge and teaching skills even further.

It has the following strengths

- Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported. Staff use a range of effective teaching strategies to support children's developing English. For example, they repeat newly introduced words and use signs and visual cues to support children's understanding.
- The outdoor and indoor environments are interesting and stimulating for children. They demonstrate high levels of involvement and sustained interest in a range of activities. Children are confident and motivated learners and make good progress in their learning.
- The manager is enthusiastic and passionate about providing high-quality childcare. She knows the nursery well and is committed to improving practice continually to help children gain high levels of achievement.
- Children form strong bonds and attachments with staff and other children. Staff support their personal, social and emotional development with effective praise and encouragement.

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 knowledge and understanding of the notification requirements.	25/05/2018

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

- sharpen the planning of adult-led activities to take even more account of the needs of the very youngest children
- embed monitoring practices further to support staff to raise the quality of their practice to the highest levels.

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 the manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through reading the written feedback provided.

Inspector

Jemma Hudson

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The provider has failed to inform Ofsted of changes to the nominated person. However, they have demonstrated a robust response to this error and are keen to improve practice. The manager has identified key priorities with realistic targets to make improvements swiftly. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff understand how to report any concerns they have about children's well-being and safety. The manager supervises staff effectively and provides good support for their professional development. For example, staff meet with the manager and attend regular training. Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff form strong bonds with parents and encourage them to share in their children's learning. Parents comment on the high quality of care that their children receive.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Children are happy, self-assured and confident learners who enjoy their time at this welcoming nursery. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn. They engage in meaningful conversations with the children and they speak clearly to them. Staff join in with children's play, listen to their ideas and question them well to promote their thinking skills. Staff offer plenty of opportunities for children to learn about the natural world. For example, children observe the life cycle of butterflies and enjoy listening to a well-known and relevant story to support their learning. Staff build on children's early writing skills well. Children have a wide range of opportunities to explore making marks and practise their early writing skills. For instance, they practise writing their names and fill in tally charts during a group ball game.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

The key-person system is effective. Children develop strong attachments to staff and build secure friendships with their peers. Consequently, their emotional well-being is very well supported. Children are able to follow routines well. They know about handwashing before meals and are as independent as possible, appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children behave well. They play cooperatively together, sharing toys and taking turns. Staff help to promote children's good health. They ensure that children have regular opportunities to enjoy and learn about the benefits of fresh air and exercise. Staff talk to children about healthy foods. This helps to promote their physical health and well-being effectively.

Outcomes for children are good

All children achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. Children enjoy whole-group activities. They enthusiastically join in with familiar action rhymes during singing sessions. Children who speak English as an additional language enjoy the opportunity to sing in their home language. Children develop confidence and high levels of self-esteem. They acquire the skills and attitudes that promote future learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY268807
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	1104117
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	Essex County Council
Registered person unique reference number	RP901507
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2014
Telephone number	01245 216959

Little Learners registered in 2004. It is managed by Essex County Council, Adult Education Services. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4, one at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery opens Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language.

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