

Inspection of Little Tinkers

Scocus Barn, Five Ashes, Mayfield, East Sussex TN20 6JJ

Inspection date: 14 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are settled and happy at this welcoming nursery. There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere and children quickly choose what they want to do when they arrive. They particularly enjoy opportunities to be outdoors and help care for the animals on the farm. Children learn about how to look after rabbits, and they feed and collect eggs from the chickens each day. During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have made full use of the outdoor classrooms and covered areas to help keep children active and safe.

Children are well behaved. They show a positive attitude towards their learning and are eager to join in. Children understand the daily routines and what staff expect of them. They listen well at group times and cooperate with their friends, taking turns to use equipment or share out fruit at snack time. Babies have warm and caring relationships with the staff who look after them. They learn new words when they cuddle up to staff to share a story. Older children confidently express their ideas at group times and tell their friends their news. Staff have high expectations of what all children can achieve, and ensure extra support is offered if needed.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum that builds on their skills. This helps them grow in confidence and become more independent. In the baby room, children learn to sit sociably and feed themselves at mealtimes. When they move up to the larger room, they begin to take responsibility for sharing the snack among their friends. By the time they are in pre-school, children confidently help to prepare vegetables and fruit to eat.
- Staff observe children and get to know them well. They use their good knowledge of children to identify what they need to learn next and help them make good progress. However, staff do not always gather precise information from parents about what children already know and can do before they start at nursery, to ensure assessments can begin at the earliest opportunity.
- Children develop a curiosity about the natural world. They practise their physical skills as well as learning about the world when they help dig the compost or prepare the soil for planting vegetables. Staff teach them to manage risks such as walking across the slippery ground. This helps them develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Staff use a range of strategies to successfully support children's communication and language skills. Children learn simple sign language and benefit from visual timetables. Staff engage them in conversations and introduce new vocabulary as they play. Young children eagerly choose to look at books independently. Older children are excited to retell a favourite story. Children all join in with familiar songs at tidy up time and when they wash their hands.

- Children get along well together and learn to value one another. Staff encourage them to share their experiences from home, such as special events or holidays. Children learn about different lives and communities. They enjoy making mooncakes for Chinese New Year or learning about traditional Caribbean crafts. Children benefit from hearing greetings and songs in other languages, including those that their family speak at home.
- Parents are happy with the nursery and value the caring, friendly staff team. Staff share information with them about what children have done and enjoyed on a daily basis. They also offer parents ideas and suggestions for how to continue learning at home, for instance through the nursery's website. However, during the pandemic, staff have made changes to how information about children's development is shared. As a result, they do not consistently keep all parents fully informed about their child's progress to ensure they are closely involved in children's learning.
- Managers have recognised the need to make and maintain improvements to the organisation of the setting following the most recent visit from Ofsted. They have sought advice and support from the local authority to help them review the provision and ensure all requirements are met. Managers have implemented an effective monitoring system to make sure that sufficient qualified staff are on duty each day. They offer regular support, training and guidance to help the staff develop their skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures. They know how to recognise and report any concerns about a child's welfare. Managers have completed safer recruitment training and conduct thorough checks of new staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children. They keep a record of the checks they make, as required. Staff supervise children effectively, making sure they are always within sight. They monitor children closely while they are sleeping. Managers and staff conduct daily risk assessments of all areas of the environment to ensure that any hazards are identified and removed. Recent repairs have been made to the premises to ensure they are safe and appropriate for use.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- seek more detailed information from parents about what their child can already do and understand when they first start at nursery, to help staff plan for children from the very beginning
- establish a more consistent approach to sharing information with all parents about their child's progress, to ensure they are kept up to date.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY375779
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10213591
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	81
Name of registered person	Hanna, Ellen
Registered person unique reference number	RP512950
Telephone number	01825 830772
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Tinkers registered in 2009 and is located in a converted barn near Five Ashes, East Sussex. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, for 50 weeks a year. There are 13 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, seven hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above, including one member of staff with qualified teacher status. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rebecca James

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- Parents and carers shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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