

Inspection of Early Learners Nursery - St. Helens

Early Learners Nursery, Irwin Road, St. Helens, Lancashire WA9 3UG

Inspection date: 16 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and show that they feel safe in their nursery. Babies and children show they have strong bonds with the caring staff. For example, children are spontaneously affectionate towards staff throughout their day. Older children ask for cuddles and staff comfort babies by rocking them and singing to them.

Children benefit from the large outdoor spaces which they use daily. Toddlers giggle with delight as they play hide-and-seek with their friends around the wooden tepee. Older children confidently manage the large climbing frame. Children have ample space to run around in the fresh air. This supports the development of their physical skills and overall well-being.

Children develop their independence as they progress through the nursery in readiness for their eventual move up to school. They increasingly manage their own self-care needs such as using the toilet and washing their hands. Children serve their own meals and learn to eat using cutlery.

Staff understand that children have missed out on socialising and developing essential social skills due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, staff make it a priority to help children to develop their social skills, including learning how to express their emotions. Children become increasingly aware of how their behaviour affects others and generally behave very well.

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

- Staff plan a broad and interesting curriculum based on what children know, can do and what they need to learn next. Staff are ambitious for all children and children's attitudes towards their learning are positive. The systems in place for monitoring and assessing children's development are effective. This enables staff to tailor activities to children's needs and to take account of children's individual interests and learning styles. Any gaps in children's learning and development are quickly identified and addressed.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, children who have English as an additional language and children in receipt of additional funding are especially well supported. Staff ensure that additional funding is targeted to support the specific needs of individual children. Staff work well with a range of agencies to ensure that all children have the support that they need. Consequently, all children make good progress in relation to their individual starting points.
- Staff engage children of all ages in rhymes, singing and reading stories. Staff make stories even more engaging for young children by using interesting props. For example, staff tell a story about hunting a bear and use real grass, plants

and coloured water to enhance the description in the story. However, staff do not always use an extensive vocabulary when interacting with children. This means that children do not consistently hear and practise new words which could help them to become even more fluent communicators.

- Relationships with parents are effective. Parents receive a range of information about their children's learning and the progress that they are making. Parents comment favourably on the online application used for information sharing and mention that the 'real time' updates about their children's day offer extra reassurance. Staff enable parents to access to a wide range of resources so that they can continue to support their children's learning at home. Staff also ensure that all families have access to necessary information in their home languages.
- Children learn about other countries and cultures to support their understanding of the world around them. For example, children learn about the native wildlife and different types of housing in China while celebrating Chinese New Year. Pre-school aged children have 'pen pals' in other nurseries with whom they correspond. They send and receive letters detailing the different things that they like to eat and like to do. This helps children to understand how they are unique and to learn about difference and similarity. Consequently, children are supported to become prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Managers support staff's well-being very effectively. Staff feel valued and are committed to bringing their best efforts to their roles. Managers ensure that staff access training across a wide range of topics. However, training for staff who work predominantly in the pre-school room is not focussed sharply enough on how to implement the curriculum for maximum impact for all children. As a result, the quality of education is not consistently maintained to the same high standards demonstrated in other areas of the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff have a thorough understanding of a range of safeguarding issues including extremism and radicalisation. Staff speak with confidence about the indicators of abuse and know the procedures which they must follow if they have a concern about a child. Staff understand the significance of persistent absence and how it may relate to safeguarding concerns. Staff understand what they must do if they are concerned about the actions or behaviour of a colleague. The premises are safe and secure. Risk assessments are in place to ensure that children remain safe in all areas of the setting and when on outings. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the support provided for improving staff's practice, especially in the pre-school room, to ensure that the quality of education is maintained at the highest level for all children
- support all staff to model extensive vocabulary to enable children to consistently hear and practise new words.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2544898
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10215502
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	73
Number of children on roll	117
Name of registered person	Early Learners Nursery (St Helens) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2544897
Telephone number	01744817771
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Early Learners Nursery, St. Helens registered in 2019. It opens Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year excluding bank holidays. It is closed for one week between Christmas and New Year. The nursery is one of five settings owned by the company. The nursery employs 18 childcare staff who have childcare and teaching qualifications ranging from level 2 to level 6. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Amy Johnson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic on the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- A learning walk was carried out with the manager and area manager. The inspector discussed the curriculum intent for the setting with the managers and room leaders.
- Observations of staff interacting with children were made in each room of the setting.
- Lunch time routines and care practices were observed by the inspector with each age group of children.
- Children spoke to the inspector throughout the day.
- The inspector held discussions with staff in each room of the setting.
- Two joint observations were carried out by the manager and the inspector.
- Meetings were held at appropriate times with management and leaders.
- A sample of documentation was viewed including suitability checks, and these were taken into account by the inspector.

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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