

Inspection of Little Dragons Pre School

The Unit, c/o St Georges Primary School, Clarence Road, PORTLAND, Dorset DT5 2BD

Inspection date: 11 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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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 arrive at the pre-school excited for the day to begin. They are happy and settled, forming secure emotional attachments with their key person and staff. They show high levels of confidence as they explore the well-resourced environment indoors and outdoors. Children are extremely well behaved and attentive. For example, older children are seen putting a reassuring arm around younger ones as they choose their favourite song and dance to the music.

Children benefit from a broad and varied curriculum, which supports them to make good progress in their learning. They hear a wide range of words to build on their vocabulary and show perseverance and determination to dress independently for outside play. Managers and staff have high expectations of the children and are committed to providing the best possible support. They work in close partnership with a range of professionals to meet children's individual needs successfully.

The pre-school remained open for most of the time during the COVID-19 pandemic. For those children that could not attend, staff remained in contact to help support parents with their children's learning at home.

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

- Staff use open-ended questions and discussion to help children think. Staff encourage children to use their imagination and share their ideas. For example, children enjoy exploring outside to find bugs and insects. They love climbing trees to develop their physical skills. Children explore the pretend snow and investigate the 'craters' made from tinfoil. During this time, staff support children's communication and language well as they repeat words and increase children's vocabulary.
- Outside children work well together to balance along planks of wood and develop good hand-to-eye coordination. They explore a map of the world to find different places, including countries they have visited on holiday, as they learn about the world.
- Children demonstrate high levels of focus and concentrate for extended periods. They have an excellent understanding of expectations for behaviour, and play is inspirationally harmonious. For example, when choosing which activities they want to play with, children work extremely well with one another. They skilfully help each other carry boxes of resources and set up activities. Children have a positive attitude to learning, engaging in all activities with great enthusiasm and interest. Children have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They use their language exceptionally well and independently access resources, such as a sand timer, to help them negotiate with one another to share toys and resources.

- Staff know the children extremely well. They find out what children already know and can do, and identify those who need additional support at the earliest opportunity. The special educational needs coordinator works closely with the manager, staff and external agencies to plan and implement effective strategies of support and guidance, which have a positive impact on children's progress and learning.
- Children enjoy a good balance of child-initiated play and adult-led activities. They follow instructions well. However, staff do not consistently organise adult-led group activities as effectively as they could, to support all children to participate fully and share their ideas.
- Children benefit from a strong focus on healthy eating. They enjoy meals prepared on site from fresh ingredients or a packed lunch from home. Children enjoy regular exercise and play outdoors. They take part in active sessions of yoga and dance.
- The manager supports staff professional development well. Staff have good training opportunities. They have completed courses which have focused on building children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children's confidence has grown and they have high self-esteem. Staff constantly reflect on their practice and make positive changes to the environment, to meet children's learning needs. For example, they have introduced a music area which has encouraged children's imagination and creativity.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents speak highly of staff and the care that they provide for their children. Staff share information with parents about their children's development to fully promote continuity in meeting their needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and are aware of their role and responsibilities to keep children safe. They can identify the signs or symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date and know the correct reporting procedure to follow, including whistleblowing if they were concerned about the conduct of a colleague. The manager follows clear recruitment procedures and continues to assess staff suitability, for example through support and coaching. They complete risk assessments to ensure that the environment is safe and secure, and children have a safe place to play.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation of group activities to provide more opportunities for quieter, less-confident children to contribute and participate more fully.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY273825
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10062659
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Little Dragons Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904567
Telephone number	01305 826 167
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Dragons Pre School registered in 2003 and operates from a self-contained building at St Georges Primary School on the Isle of Portland, Dorset. It is open every weekday during school term time, from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years. It employs seven members of staff to work with the children. One member of staff is qualified to level 5 and most other members of staff are qualified to level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Heimsoth

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, deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum and the impact this has on children.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager carried out a joint observation with the inspector and had a follow-up discussion about children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.

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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