

Inspection of Little Barn Owls Pre-School Ltd

Lings Forum Leisure Centre, Weston Favell Centre, Northampton,
Northamptonshire NN3 8JR

Inspection date: 22 June 2022

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are greeted by friendly and caring staff. They settle well and enthusiastically access the range of activities planned for the day. However, staff interactions with children are variable and children do not receive consistent support to develop their critical-thinking skills. At times, staff do offer children some appropriate support. For example, as children pretend to make a barbecue out of toy bricks, staff support their learning by saying 'be careful, the fire is hot, hot, hot'. They ask children to consider safety, asking 'what do we need to do around a fire?' Children respond 'be careful', but staff do not extend this further to encourage children to consider the consequences.

Children develop their self-help skills to prepare them for their transition to school. During snack time, they pour their own drinks and make choices as to what they would like to eat. Some children independently use the toilet and wash their hands. However, they are not always supported with high-quality interactions to further support their knowledge and understanding, for example, about why they need to wash their hands.

In small groups, children enjoy sharing a book with staff. However, during larger group times, some children become distracted. When this happens, staff do not use effective techniques to re-engage them or promote positive behaviour. For example, staff tell children to take part, but do not consider why they are distracted or how they can encourage their interest.

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

- Staff do not use their interactions to fully extend children's learning and thinking skills. For example, interactions during snack time are limited and focused on routine questions, such as 'would you like a drink', 'do you want any more' and 'have you finished'.
- Staff implement some appropriate hygiene practices when changing nappies. For instance, they wear gloves and aprons to protect themselves and children from the risk of cross-infection. However, not all aspects of hygiene are considered. For example, used nappies are not disposed of immediately. Instead, they are stored in children's bags in the playroom.
- Generally, children behave well. On occasion, staff encourage children to consider why they should not run inside. Nevertheless, staff do not consistently provide children with explanations. This means that children do not fully understand the expectations and the possible consequences of their actions. Similarly, practices to acknowledge and promote positive behaviour are not fully embedded. For example, staff hand out stickers during group time. However, praise and acknowledgement of effort is not embedded throughout the day.

- Staff make use of observation and assessment. As a result, staff know children's level of development and what they would like them to learn next. However, staff do not consistently engage children to further extend their learning and development.
- Children have opportunities to learn about nature. They visit the local shops to purchase seeds, which they plant, water and watch grow. For example, they have planted a beanstalk in the outdoor play area. As a result, children learn how to care for plants and the world around them.
- The manager supports staff through team and one-to-one meetings. However, this support does not focus sharply enough on strengthening and monitoring staff practice. This means that staff are not provided with the coaching and training to support high-quality teaching and interactions with children.
- Information is shared with parents and carers regularly. For example, staff communicate verbally with parents on a daily basis. Parents' evenings provide time for more in-depth conversation regarding children's learning and development. Progress checks for children between the age of two and three years are discussed, and parents are encouraged to share these with their health visitor. Parents report that they are happy with the service provided by the setting and comment that staff are 'very caring'.
- Following the COVID-19 pandemic, staff acknowledge the impact on children's communication and language development. Staff are beginning to work in conjunction with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to support the individual needs of children. Nevertheless, staff do not always understand the importance of supporting children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language during play. Likewise, staff do not fully recognise how this supports children to feel valued and to develop a sense of belonging.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand the signs and symptoms of abuse and other safeguarding concerns. They know who to contact should they have a concern about a child's welfare. Staff are familiar with their safeguarding policy and the role of the designated safeguarding lead. They are vigilant to potential concerns, such as existing injuries that children may attend with. Staff implement appropriate records to monitor and report concerns as and when they arise. Security measures are in place to ensure that unauthorised visitors cannot access the setting. Staff implement processes to ensure that children are collected only by adults who have permission to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
provide staff with training, coaching and mentoring to develop their skills when they interact with children so that they challenge children to think and help them to understand more	31/07/2022
dispose of used nappies appropriately to minimise the risks of illness and infections.	31/07/2022

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

- develop the behaviour management strategies so that staff have a consistent approach to better support children's understanding of positive behaviour
- further support children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language in play and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2555613
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10205558
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	12
Name of registered person	Little Barn Owls Pre-School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP541912
Telephone number	07735039546
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Little Barn Owls Pre-School registered in 2019. The pre-school operates between 9.05am and 3pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. The pre-school employs three members of staff. Of these, two members of staff hold an appropriate qualification at level 3. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Mel Walker

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager guided the inspector around the provision during a learning walk.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity together.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation.
- The inspector spoke to parents to gain their views of the setting.
- The inspector spoke to staff 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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