

Inspection of Little Hands Nursery School - Melbourn

1 The Moor, Melbourn, Royston SG8 6ED

Inspection date: 6 December 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 thoroughly enjoy attending this welcoming and friendly nursery. They show that they feel safe and secure. All children form close relationships with their key person, who knows the children and their families very well. Children display a very strong sense of belonging in the nursery. They play and explore with great confidence and independence. Children behave extremely well. Books and songs help them to manage their feelings and behaviour. Staff are very good role models and encourage the concepts of kindness, courtesy and respect for others. Children learn to share, take turns and play cooperatively with their friends. Babies receive lots of individual attention and enjoy cuddles in familiar and attractive surroundings.

The manager and staff arrange the nursery environment imaginatively and creatively. Children are eager to choose their activity and explore the many exciting resources. For example, they enjoy making their own play dough. They explore how it feels as they create objects. Children eagerly roll, pat and use cutters to make shapes. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise every day. This helps them to develop their physical skills and supports their good health and well-being. Staff expertly support and prepare children for their next stages in learning and for their move to school. They ensure that all children have a happy and enjoyable nursery experience.

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

- The manager is knowledgeable, highly skilled and dedicated to her role. She has regular discussions with her staff. This ensures that she is aware of any pressures of workload affecting their well-being. The manager recognises strengths in the staff's practice and provides them with constructive feedback. Staff work extremely well as a team and say that they feel very well supported.
- Staff support children's communication and language skills well. For example, children eagerly choose a 'Christmas song spoon' and enthusiastically sing the songs together. They take part in group activities that help them to listen, take turns and become confident talkers. However, some group times do not always fully engage and motivate the younger children, so they learn as much as possible.
- Staff plan many activities that promote investigation, exploration and experimentation, with children using all their senses. Children excitedly explore the water tray with lemons, oranges, tea bags and herbs. They also love to explore everyday objects and the many fascinating items on the curiosity shelves.
- The manager and staff encourage children to be respectful and contribute positively to society. They have discussions about people less fortunate than

themselves and collect items for the local food bank. Children enjoy their visits to the local care home and share stories and songs with the residents.

- Staff know the children well and understand their developmental needs and interests. They interact enthusiastically with children's play and learning. However, sometimes they do not make the most of the opportunities that arise to fully extend and challenge children's learning.
- Children's cultural diversity is respected and valued. The manager has attended recent training to support her in providing an inclusive environment for all children. Staff use very effective books and resources to support children's learning about diverse cultures. Children take part in activities to celebrate festivals and special days that are important to the families at the nursery.
- Staff attend specialised training to help them to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They develop strong partnerships with parents, schools, other early years settings and professionals. Staff ensure that all children receive the support they need. They use additional funding well to benefit individual children in their learning and development.
- Parents speak very highly of the staff and they are extremely happy with the nursery provision. Parents have access to the online assessment system, which means they receive continual updates of their children's progress. Parents comment positively on the many opportunities their children have to explore the outdoor area. They describe staff as professional, enthusiastic and very well suited to their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a sound knowledge of how to safeguard children. All staff have undertaken safeguarding training. They know the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child. Staff are confident with the whistle-blowing policy and procedures for reporting allegations. All records required for the safe and efficient management of the nursery are in place. Robust recruitment procedures, staff induction and supervision processes ensure that all staff remain suitable. High staff ratios and good deployment means that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and improve the organisation of group times to engage and motivate younger children, to help extend their concentration and increase their participation
- support staff to make more effective use of spontaneous opportunities to extend and challenge children's learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY485624
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10236605
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 5
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	59
Name of registered person	Little Hands Nursery Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902631
Telephone number	01763 260964
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Hands Nursery School – Melbourn registered in 2015. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff, seven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens on Monday to Friday from 8am to 5.30pm, 51 weeks out of the year. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jacqui Oliver

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting has 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 setting.
- The manager showed the inspector around the areas that children access. They discussed how staff organise the setting and plan the curriculum and experiences for children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents. This included evidence about staff suitability and training.

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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