

Inspection of The Little Den Day Nursery

Midway Offices, 68 Stone Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6SP

Inspection date: 7 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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

Staff plan exciting learning activities and experiences around children's interests and what they need to learn next. For example, younger babies explore a collection of silver, shiny and reflective everyday objects. They bang items together and ruffle the foil blanket and listen to the noises they can make. Older babies enjoy releasing the toy cars and watching them zoom down the sloped guttering and land in the flour tray. They explore the flour with their fingers and attempt to bury the toy cars in it.

The two-year-old children enjoy making their own large Christmas baubles. They use glue to stick glitter and sparkly pipe cleaners onto the bauble-shaped card. During such activities, children watch the glue dribble from their glue spreaders and explore the sensation of the stickiness of the glue on their fingers.

Pre-school children learn about science and numbers. For example, they watch the colourful, bubbling eruptions that result when baking soda, vinegar and food colouring are combined. They take it in turns to recognise numbers and place the matching number of jewels on the card candy stick. Children listen intently to stories and confidently answer questions. They are happy, confident and very sociable in the nursery.

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

- Staff show great respect and empathy for each other and they work well together. They display a high level of warmth and concern for the welfare of each child in the nursery. Children are emotionally secure. They settle into nursery very quickly and are motivated to explore and learn. However, some staff do not always keep the younger children engaged well enough during the changeover of routines.
- Staff use a range of successful strategies to effectively manage children's behaviour. This includes positively reinforcing children's good behaviour, in order to promote their self-esteem. Children behave well.
- Staff have attended training on how to effectively support children's speaking and listening skills. As a result, pre-school staff implement daily small-group activities that encourage children to develop their speaking and listening skills and to recognise speech sounds.
- Staff continually model clear and concise English as they play and care for children. This helps all children to develop their understanding and use of the spoken word. However, staff do not always fully support children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language to enhance their speaking skills.
- All children have the opportunity to experience physical play that is challenging

and tests their limits. For example, the younger children climb over and manoeuvre the car tyres and use low-level balancing and climbing equipment. Furthermore, staff take the older, most able children to the local outdoor playground. Additionally, all children enjoy regular walks where they can observe farmyard animals. This provides children with plenty of opportunities for fresh air and exercise. This, along with nutritious meals and snacks, helps to ensure that children's health and well-being are fully promoted.

- The special educational needs coordinator has a secure understanding of how to identify and support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). She liaises with the local authority advisers to coordinate extra support for children with SEND. This helps to ensure that these children make the best possible progress.
- Parents spoken to appreciate the positive relationship staff have developed with their child. They feel that they are kept fully informed about their child's progress and how they can support their child's learning at home.
- The manager ensures that all staff receive ongoing supervision and support. This impacts positively on the quality of teaching and learning. The manager regularly reviews the progress of individual and groups of children. She demonstrates how the nursery's curriculum aims to support every child's development across all the areas of learning.
- The management team seeks the views of children, parents and staff. Its members work with other professionals within the local authority and the private sector to evaluate their practice. They use this information to reflect on their performance and improve the overall quality of the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead has undertaken appropriate safeguarding training. Staff have a good understanding of the possible signs of abuse and a strong awareness of their responsibility to protect children from harm. They complete daily visual safety checks to minimise any hazards in the nursery. Staff consistently supervise children to ensure their safety at all times. The management team ensures that there are robust systems in place for the safe recruitment of staff and the monitoring of their ongoing suitability.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance the day-to-day organisation of the nursery so that the younger children are effectively engaged during the changeover of routines
- encourage children who speak English as an additional language to use their home language during their play and learning even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2602593
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10251600
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	0 to 5
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	The Little Den Day Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2602592
Telephone number	01782658847
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Little Den Day Nursery registered in 2020. It is one of three nurseries managed by The Little Den Day Nursery Ltd. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, 7.30am to 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays, one week at Christmas and one week in August. The director of the organisation holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate qualifications at level 6, five hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 and three hold an appropriate qualification at level 2. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Linda Yates

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 her evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across all the areas of the nursery to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and evaluated how well they assess children's progress and plan for the next steps in their learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the director. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and children spoken to on the day.

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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