

Inspection of Little Rays Outdoor Learning Pre-School, Forest School And Out Of School Clubs

Godalming Town FC, Wey Court, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3JE

Inspection date: 10 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children play in a secure indoor environment. However, at times, the use of risk assessments is not fully effective. On occasion, staff do not promptly identify and remove all risks in the outdoor environment before children go outside. Nevertheless, staff supervise and watch children well as they play. There are more than enough staff to meet the adult-to-child ratio requirements. This reduces the impact on children's safety.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise. They play in the outdoor area, where staff provide a range of opportunities. Children create their own mixtures in the mud kitchen. They add herbs and seeds, working cooperatively together to make their 'dinner.' However, the quality of teaching is not consistent across the setting. Staff do not always provide activities that meet children's developmental needs.

Children behave well and show good attitudes to learning. For instance, young children climb up the steps of the ladder to reach the top level of the garden. This helps build on their resilience and physical skills. Children are confident and independent and can make their needs known. Children are happy and enjoy playing with their friends. They help each other dress and undress. They are proud to show off the fastenings on their clothing as they get changed when they come in from outside.

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

- Staff pay careful attention to children, ensuring that they are safe when they play outdoors. However, on occasion, they do not identify possible hazards in the outdoor area quickly enough. Through discussions, managers understand the potential risks identified. They are keen to take steps to improve the implementation of their risk assessment procedures. Staff ensure that children have an awareness of risk through their regular participation in forest school activities.
- Required information and records, such as staff files, were not easily accessible at the time of the inspection, and they were not always stored appropriately. There is no monitoring system to ensure that records are comprehensive. As a result, it is difficult to find all requested information.
- The managers place a focus on staff's well-being, particularly on improving their confidence, and staff speak positively about the support they receive. Managers have regular meetings with staff. However, these are not always focused sufficiently on improving staff's overall effectiveness and consistency of teaching and learning across the setting. Consequently, there are occasions when the quality of teaching children receive is variable.

- Staff do not always provide a curriculum that meets the individual needs of all children. For example, staff question children but sometimes do not wait for the response before answering for them. In addition, some activities are not developmentally appropriate for the youngest children. For example, sometimes, staff want children to write letters in the flour, and children are happier to make handprints.
- Where teaching is stronger, staff positively support children's communication and language skills. For example, staff engage children in conversation as they play alongside them. They help children develop mathematical language as they talk about the shape of the volcanoes they are creating.
- Staff have a good knowledge of their key children. They form caring relationships with them and get to know their family make up through their 'All About me' documentation completed at the settling-in visits. Staff ensure children wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. They provide a well-balanced diet for children, including a variety of fruit and vegetables. This helps children to learn how they can live healthy lifestyles.
- Children behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. For instance, young children climb up the steps of the ladder to reach the top level of the garden. This helps build on their resilience and physical skills. They show high levels of concentration and enjoyment as they jump up and down in the puddles made by the rain.
- Parents report how pleased they are with the care their children receive. They receive regular feedback about their children's learning through weekly newsletters. They have discussions with key persons about how they can continue to support their children's learning at home. Parents state that they value the flexibility the setting provides with regard to their children's settling-in sessions.
- The manager builds links with other professionals. For example, teachers from local schools have the opportunity to visit the pre-school to meet children in their own environment. This helps with transitions into reception class.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have knowledge of the possible signs and indicators that may suggest that a child may be at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow if concerned about the practice of a colleague. This helps to safeguard children. All staff have paediatric first-aid training. This helps to ensure they are familiar with the process to follow in the event of an accident. Regular headcounts take place as the children transition to the outside area. The manager ensures that safer recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that those working with children are suitable to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and

Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
improve staff's skills in carrying out risk assessments in the outdoor area, to ensure that hazards are identified as swiftly as possible	24/01/2023
ensure all required documentation, including staff and children's records, are complete and easily accessible	24/01/2023
ensure that teaching practice is consistent across the setting, both inside and out, by providing coaching and role modelling to develop less-experienced staff so that all children receive good-quality teaching at all times.	07/02/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY486974
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10266473
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	2 to 11
Total number of places	35
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Little Rays Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP534406
Telephone number	07968067679
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Rays Outdoor Learning Pre-School, Forest School and Out of School Clubs registered in 2015. It is located in Godalming, Surrey and operates from Monday to Friday, during term time. The pre-school is open from 9.30am to 2.30pm, the breakfast club is open from 8am to 9am, and the after-school club is open from 3pm to 6pm. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are 9 staff employed to work with the children, six of whom hold appropriate qualifications at level 2 and level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lindsay Osman

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the provision and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an outdoor activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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