

Inspection of Little Badgers Preschool

Scout Association 79th Reading, Scout Hall, Armour Hill, Reading RG31 6JH

Inspection date: 24 April 2023

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

All children attending the pre-school demonstrate that they are happy and feel safe. They enter the pre-school with confidence after being warmly welcomed by staff. Children play and explore with ease. They make their own decisions in play and clearly enjoy what is on offer. Overall, staff place a good focus on supporting children's communication and language development. All children, including those with additional funding, are very well supported by staff.

Children have daily access to the outdoor areas. Outside, they show excitement as they feel and explore the different textures, such as mud, wooden logs and leaves, sand and water. Children of all ages are seen concentrating well as they explore with tools, dig and fill containers and create 'mud muffins'. These learning opportunities help to strengthen their imagination and small physical skills, which in turn supports their early writing skills. Children benefit from a wide range of opportunities and experiences that help to broaden their knowledge and skills. Staff plan and talk to them about various topics to build on what they already know. For instance, as part of their eco ethos, children help make compost by recycling their food waste, and then use it to grow peas and create a wormery.

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

- Managers and staff work well together to create an exciting and child-friendly environment for the children. Staff support children's love of outside learning and successfully build on what they already know about the world. For example, the children become inquisitive as they hunt for bugs and learn about habitats of animals and what they need to live.
- Managers and staff know the children in their care well. They have an effective approach to identifying and supporting children's needs. This includes working with parents and professionals as required. Overall, staff target children's learning well, which helps them to prevent the risk of children falling behind. However, at times, some staff do not ensure that the younger children are as fully engaged and supported as the older children, to help them benefit from the learning opportunities.
- Staff help children to learn words and build on their vocabulary well at the pre-school and at home. For example, they sing and read books to children and encourage parents to borrow story sacks from the lending library. Staff talk to and engage purposefully with children. Together they enjoy games, which helps children to use their spoken language well. For instance, as they play hide and seek, children and staff talk to each other about where would be a good hiding place. However, at times, staff do not give children sufficient time to think and respond to questions.
- Children's health and independence are promoted well. For example, children

wash their hands self-sufficiently and all ages manage to get ready for outside play with minimal support. This promotes children's self-care skills in preparation for school.

- Children behave well and enjoy each other's company. For example, they are heard giggling and chattering together as they enjoy popping bubbles and when playing imaginative games. Children are keen to assist staff and are seen helping to get the tables ready for lunch and sweeping the floor. Staff give children regular praise and encouragement, which supports children's self-confidence skills well.
- Staff have developed strong partnerships with parents. Parents speak highly of staff and the curriculum they provide. They comment that their children have 'flourished throughout, while being at the pre-school', that staff are 'brilliant and provide the best care' and their 'children are happy and safe'. Others explained that they 'couldn't be any happier with the pre-school'.
- Staff comment that they are well supported and that they feel very much part of the team. Staff benefit from yearly appraisals and training opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills. The management team are positive and clearly committed to enhancing the quality of education for all children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. Staff create a welcoming and safe environment for the children and are well deployed to meet their health and well-being. All staff have completed safeguarding training. This has helped them to ensure that they are confident in the signs and indicators of abuse. Staff understand how to make a referral if concerned about a child, including escalating concerns to the relevant outside agencies if needed. Robust recruitment and induction procedures are in place and help to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- make the most of existing opportunities to fully promote opportunities to help develop children's thinking and problem-solving skills
- monitor staff practice more closely so that support and guidance for staff can focus more precisely on raising the quality of the curriculum and teaching.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY487802
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10280383
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	49
Name of registered person	Evans, Rachel Anne
Registered person unique reference number	RP516232
Telephone number	07500807870
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Badgers Preschool registered in 2015. It operates from a Scout hall in Reading, Berkshire. The pre-school opens on weekdays from 9am to 4pm, during term time only. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are eight members of staff, seven of whom hold suitable childcare qualifications from level 3 to level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracy Bartholomew

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 management team joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- One of the managers and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a planned small-group activity.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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