

Inspection of The Salvation Army Little Eden

Gillingham Baptist Church, Green Street, Gillingham ME7 5TJ

Inspection date: 21 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

Children excitedly wait for the doors to be opened, ready to start their day. They are warmly greeted into the setting by staff with open arms and a big smile. Staff are attentive to children's emotional needs, supporting them through times of transition.

All children benefit from extra-curricular activities, such as a dancing lesson, that complement children's all-round learning opportunities. They have plenty of opportunities to make connections with their local community. They make regular visits to the local church and library. This helps children to learn about the wider world they live in. Children enjoy positive experiences that help them to learn about differences and similarities between themselves and others. Staff emphasise the importance of promoting an inclusive environment. This gives children a sense of belonging.

Children's curiosities are sparked when they learn about the living things they have grown in their environment. For example, children revisit the beans they had been growing, looking at the height of the plant and how far the roots had developed down into the glass jar. Children's attitudes to learning are positive. They persevere at the tasks they have chosen in order to achieve their intended outcome. Staff praise and acknowledge children's efforts, giving them a sense of pride.

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

- The manager is a devoted professional, who leads an equally dedicated team. They put the needs of the children and families they care for at the forefront of all that they do. The manager is passionate about making a difference to the lives of the children by giving them opportunities to succeed.
- The manager has a clear vision for the children who use her setting. The curriculum intent is well designed and ambitious for all children. The curriculum focuses on children becoming confident and independent learners. This helps children make good progress and ensures they are well prepared for their future learning.
- Children get involved in the routine of the setting from the moment they arrive. For example, children find their own named pictures to self-register and correctly place them in their key-person boxes, which are provided. This helps children to feel more confident and secure in their daily environment.
- Staff have put in place a gradual approach to settling-in sessions. They build up their sessions until children are ready to start. This develops both the confidence of the child and their parents.
- Children who speak English as additional language are well supported. Staff use

vocabulary from the home language of each child to create connections to the English language. They make good use of further aids to support communication, such as Makaton and visual displays, to strengthen language development.

- Staff positively interact with children. They model language, broaden vocabulary and encourage children to extend their own ideas. For instance, children at the play dough table are invited to see what they can create and then to reflect on what they have made. Children are proud of their creations.
- Parents speak highly of the staff team at the setting. They report that their children are happy and settled in their care. However, staff do not always make sure that parents are fully aware of who their child's key person is. This has an impact on how well parents are kept informed about their child's learning and development, to help them to continue their learning at home.
- The environment is well planned with the children as the sole focus. Children independently select from an array of resources available. This supports children to make their own choices throughout the day.
- Children are reminded regularly about the expected rules and boundaries of the setting, to support behaviour management. For example, children are reminded to use 'walking feet'. However, there are some inconsistencies in the explanations staff give to children. Staff do not always help children to fully understand the reasons why they must not do something or the consequences of their actions.
- The manager values her well-established members of staff. She acknowledges the pressures and workload on her staff. The manager fosters a supportive working atmosphere, prioritising staff's mental health and well-being.
- The manager uses additional funding well to improve the outcomes for children. The experiences provided to children ensure that they have a wide range of exciting opportunities available to them. This supports children's personal and social development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have secure knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe from harm. Staff work collaboratively with professionals to improve the outcomes for children. Staff attend regular safeguarding training to keep up to date with issues such as radicalisation. Staff are fully aware of the whistle-blowing policy and what to do should there be an allegation against a member of staff. The management team have robust procedures in place for the recruitment of new staff to ensure they are suitable for their role. Thorough risk assessments are completed to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the key-person systems in place to provide all parents with regular updates on their child's learning and development, to help them continue their learning at home
- build on staff's knowledge of how to support children to understand the consequences of their actions, to further improve how they manage their behaviour.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY492200
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10285399
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Salvation Army Trustee Company (The)
Registered person unique reference number	RP903315
Telephone number	07872 403 917
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Salvation Army Little Eden registered in 2005. It is located in Gillingham, Kent. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday, from 9am until 3.30pm and Friday, from 9am until midday, term-time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are four members of staff who all hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The manager holds early years professional status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Abigail Towell

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 manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to/communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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