

Inspection of Little Smarties Academy

Little Smarties Academy, 363 Rocky Lane, Great Barr, BIRMINGHAM B42 1NG

Inspection date: 4 July 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

Staff provide children and parents with a warm welcome to the nursery. Children form close bonds with the staff who are nurturing and attentive to their needs. Children and babies show that they feel happy and safe with the staff at the nursery. Staff are always ready to offer a cuddle and reassurance when children need it. Babies confidently play and explore. Older children have good social skills.

The manager and staff place a strong emphasis on children making decisions and leading their own play. They have designed the learning environment with a wide range of open-ended resources that allow children to decide how they will use them. Pre-school children access props that represent characters and key features from books. They create their own story lines. For example, they explain how a whale will swallow objects as it swims in the sea.

All children including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. Babies access books and know how to handle them. They carefully turn the pages, lift flaps and respond to the images. They understand that on the last page of the book is a mirror where they can see themselves. Two-year-old children sit sensibly on the carpet while they eat their snack.

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

- The manager shows strong leadership and strives to continually improve the nursery. She has focused well on working with parents to invite them back into the nursery following the COVID-19 pandemic. She has plans to develop the outdoor provision for children to extend their understanding of the world.
- Staff feel well supported in their roles and the manager cares for their well-being. The manager provides staff with ongoing supervision and many opportunities to continue their professional development. Recent training has helped staff to extend their skills in supporting children with SEND and for children's outdoor learning.
- The manager and staff have implemented a progressive curriculum. Staff teaching successfully supports children to gain knowledge and skills over time that prepares them well for school. They have designed the learning environment very well to reflect this, particularly for children's physical development. The manager monitors staff practice. However, this is not as precise as possible to identify where staff need further support in their planning and teaching to provide children with the best possible learning experiences.
- Overall, staff support children's independence well. Pre-school children pour their own drinks and manage their personal care routines. However, staff do not provide babies and two-year-old children with consistent messages to fully

support them to manage everyday tasks for themselves. At times, they rush some parts of the daily routines and do not give children the opportunity to try tasks for themselves.

- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works well in partnership with staff, parents and outside agencies to ensure that children with SEND receive the support they need. She has worked with staff to develop a consistent approach to supporting children with language delay.
- Staff have a secure knowledge of the children in their key groups. They use their knowledge of children's hobbies and experiences at home to engage them in conversations. Pre-school children talk about their fishing experiences and model how to use a fishing reel. They demonstrate the moves they have learned at gymnastics. Staff value children's voice and listen attentively to them.
- Staff are positive role models and provide children with clear guidance for their behaviour. Two-year-old children learn about the range of feelings they have and staff support them to manage their emotions. Staff teach pre-school children how to keep themselves and others safe. Children learn that they must carry chairs with the legs down so they don't hurt anyone.
- Parent partnership working is strong. The manager and staff work closely with parents to keep them informed about their child's progress and the plans for their learning. Parents are very pleased with the service provided and how their children enjoy attending.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager provides staff with thorough training to understand their responsibility to keep children safe. Staff understand about completing checks on sleeping children and how to reduce risks. They carry out risk assessment of the resources available to children, so they are confident these do not pose any risk. Staff hold paediatric first-aid qualifications and implement effective procedures when children have accidents. The manager and staff understand about a wide range of signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. This includes taking the required action in the event of an allegation about a member of staff. The manager follows safe recruitment procedures to check the suitability of staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend the monitoring of staffs planning and teaching to provide further support, so that their teaching is matched precisely to children's learning needs
- provide the younger children with consistent messages about the expectations so that they are fully supported to complete everyday tasks for themselves.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY152795
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10295332
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	Ahmed, Tasmiya
Registered person unique reference number	RP512376
Telephone number	0121 358 0481
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Smarties Academy registered in 2002. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a qualification at level 7 and six staff hold early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anne Dyoss

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 setting.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- 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 interacted with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- 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 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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