

Inspection of Little Learners Pre-school

The Deering Centre, Crossbrook Street, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross EN8 8LU

Inspection date: 12 July 2023

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

Children show strong and nurturing relationships with staff at this warm and welcoming setting. They arrive happy and are eager to explore the rich range of activities on offer. Children have a positive attitude to learning and show high levels of enjoyment and curiosity. They are fascinated to find two snails in the garden. Staff immediately embrace this opportunity to teach children to be respectful of living things. Children examine the snails with a magnifying glass, and this motivates them to ask questions, such as 'where are the snail's teeth?'. They compare the difference between the sizes of the snails and learn how mucus helps the snails to move.

Children are keen to use different media to make marks. The writing shed provokes children to explore writing at different heights and angles to challenge their dexterity. Children are beginning to understand the behavioural boundaries in place to keep themselves and other's safe. They quickly respond to staff's gentle reminders to use their walking feet indoors. Children make independent choices of where they prefer to play. The inviting outdoor environment motivates children to assess their own risks and develop good physical skills. Children confidently balance on raised beams and ride tricycles, avoiding obstacles. Mealtimes are a sociable experience where children are responsible and independent individuals. They know to clear away after themselves and wash up their plate when they have finished.

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

- Staff create a sequenced curriculum that focuses on children's evolving interests. They know the children who they care for well and what they need to learn next to support them to make good progress. Staff are particularly skilful in precisely recognising when not to interfere in children's chosen play, so that they do not interrupt children's thoughts or stop their flow of play. The experienced manager visits local settings to share her knowledge to support outcomes for other children.
- Overall, most children benefit from a language-rich environment. Staff engage children in conversations as they play, model language well, and frequently use sign language that children understand. However, not all children who speak English as an additional language are supported as effectively. Staff do not consistently promote children's home language.
- Staff have opportunities to complete training using a variety of methods to meet their individual learning style. Recent training has had a positive impact on helping children to understand how to manage their behaviour to respect others. The dedicated manager works as part of the staff team. She conducts informal observations on staff practice and identifies areas for their development. This

enables her to swiftly share these with staff so that they can continue to raise the quality of their practice. However, these arrangements do not enable the manager to precisely monitor staff's long-term progression to ensure that their teaching is of the highest level.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported and make good progress in relation to their starting points. The special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and experienced in her role. She works in partnership with external agencies and parents to implement agreed strategies. Any emerging concerns about children's learning and development are sensitively shared with children's parents and extra support is obtained where needed.
- Positive partnerships are in place with the host school and all schools that children move on to. Children's teachers visit the setting to help to build early bonds with children and obtain essential information from staff to support children's continuity of learning. This also has a positive impact on children's emotional well-being.
- The effective key-person system helps children to swiftly settle in to the setting when they first begin attending. The manager and children's key person build early bonds with children during home visits and flexible settling-in sessions. This helps children to feel safe and secure from an early stage when they first begin attending.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the setting. They appreciate the high level of communication that they receive from staff, and are extremely pleased with their children's progress. Parents explain how their children are excited to attend, and describe the staff as 'very friendly' and 'helpful'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a secure understanding of how to keep children safe. All staff receive regular safeguarding training. They speak knowledgeably about the whistle-blowing policy and wider safeguarding issues, such as cuckooing and the signs that could indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Staff and the designated safeguarding leads are clear about their roles in reporting child protection concerns. The manager implements robust recruitment and ongoing vetting procedures to ensure that 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:

- enhance opportunities for children to hear and use their home language
- strengthen the existing arrangements for monitoring the professional development of staff.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2622640
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10295611
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	28
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Little Learners Pre-school CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2622638
Telephone number	01992 621357
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Learners Pre-school re-registered in 2021 and is run by charity trustees. The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including the manager who holds a qualification at level 7. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3pm, Monday and Tuesday, and from 7.45am until 3pm, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, during term time only. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

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 provider.
- The inspector and manager completed a learning walk across all areas of the setting to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and the manager. The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors. She assessed the impact that this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting and their first-aid certificates.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.

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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