

Inspection of Little Gem's

Priory C of E Primary School, Queens Road, London SW19 8LX

Inspection date: 25 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 receive care from very warm and affectionate staff, who support them well with their learning. They have a key person who forms strong attachments to help them feel safe and secure. Children behave well, including when playing outside. They play happily with their friends and show high levels of confidence. This is evident, for example when children volunteer to sing their favourite nursery songs in front of their friends and adults. They receive lots of praise and encouragement, which further boosts their self-esteem.

Children make independent decisions about their play. They enjoy looking at books and singing songs, which helps to promote their language skills. Children also delight in imaginative play with staff and their peers. For example, they pretend to cook and eat 'sushi' in the home corner. Outside, children become engaged in popular activities, such as water and sand play, which provide them with tactile experiences. They develop their physical skills, such as when using ride-on toys. Children enjoy numerous outings to new places, such as a farm, an aquarium, a theatre and the local library. These learning opportunities increase children's knowledge and sense of the world around them.

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

- The highly dedicated provider has created a welcoming and inclusive environment. She has worked hard to build a strong partnership with schools that children will attend, particularly the host school. This stands out as an area of strong practice which helps to secure a smooth transition for the children who are moving on to the next stage of their education.
- Parents comment very positively about staff and how they support their children's learning. For example, they report significant progress in their children's speech and counting skills since joining the nursery. Parents find the communication is highly effective, which keeps them fully up to date on what their children are learning. The strong partnership between parents and staff benefits children well.
- Staff find that they receive good levels of support and guidance to develop their teaching practice. For example, following training, they have increased their knowledge of how to use natural resources to support children's early mathematical skills. This has resulted in children showing more interest in this particular area of learning.
- Staff observe and assess children's learning regularly to help them plan an ambitious curriculum. They also make use of the information gained to provide additional support for children who have additional learning needs. However, there are times when staff do not adapt planned activities consistently to support all children's learning as fully as possible.

- The provider supports staff to promote children's understanding of letters and sounds. She acknowledges that they can do more to develop children's early writing skills, particularly the older ones, in preparation for school.
- Staff promote children's good behaviour. They remind children gently that 'sharing is caring' during play. Children respond positively to this.
- Children are motivated to play because staff have high expectations for them. They concentrate well at their chosen activities and persevere with a task. This is evident, for example when children build a 'tower' and a 'crane' using toy bricks.
- Staff develop children's love of books. They read a wide range of books with enthusiasm and animation. Consequently, young and older children look at books with pleasure. These sessions also expand children's increasing vocabulary.
- At snack and mealtimes, staff engage children in meaningful conversations about healthy eating. This builds on children's understanding of the effects food has on their bodies.
- The provider is committed to evaluating their practice for children and their families. She has identified priorities for continuous improvements, such as to review the curriculum for expressive arts and design. This is to further promote children's curiosity and imagination.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider follows robust recruitment procedures to determine staff's initial suitability to work in the nursery. She has put systems in place to check that staff continue to be suitable to work with children. The provider takes her role as the designated safeguarding lead seriously. She ensures that staff gain a secure understanding of the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. As a result, staff are confident about safeguarding issues and how to report them to relevant agencies. Staff supervise children well to help keep them safe throughout the day.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- differentiate planned activities to help children to make the best progress in the next phase of their learning
- make more effective use of opportunities to enable children, particularly the older ones, to practise their early writing skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2647646
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10301189
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 3
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	18
Name of registered person	Vary, Gemma
Registered person unique reference number	2647645
Telephone number	07837214147
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Gem's registered in 2021 and is located in the London Borough of Merton. The nursery is open from 7am until 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, all year round, excluding bank holidays. There are 11 staff members, including the provider. Of these, five hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3. The provider receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marisol Hernandez-Garn

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The inspector observed children's play during indoor and outdoor activities. She spoke with staff and interacted with the children at appropriate times.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider to discuss leadership and management matters. She looked at a sample of documentation, including evidence of staff suitability checks and training records.
- The provider showed the inspector around the nursery and explained their early years curriculum. She conducted a joint observation of a planned activity with the inspector and evaluated the impact this has on children's learning.
- Parents spoke with the inspector to share their views on the quality of the provision. Some parents left written feedback which was taken into account.

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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