

# Inspection of Little Hands Pre-School Nursery

Dengie Community Hall, Dengie Close, Witham, Essex CM8 1DJ

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Inspection date: 6 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is inadequate**

Weaknesses in staff's knowledge of child protection mean that some staff are unable to identify and report concerns they may have about children. This does not promote children's welfare or safety. Nevertheless, children are warmly welcomed into the setting by familiar staff. Managers have designed a curriculum that focuses on children building strong attachments with staff. Children who are new to the setting receive plenty of support from their key person to help them settle. This supports children's emotional well-being. Staff provide clear explanations to help children understand what is expected. They provide clear routines throughout the day, which helps all children to feel secure and settle quickly into their learning.

Children enjoy being physically active in the outdoor environment. They develop strength and coordination as they move around on the ride-on wheeled toys. Children squeal with delight as staff play a game of chase around the garden with them. Young children are starting to explore mathematical concepts. For example, as children play with their cars in some guttering, staff help the children investigate what happens when they lower one end of the pipe. Children discover that their cars roll down at speed. Other children notice the excitement and join in with the activity.

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

- The managers have recently updated the setting's policies and procedures and shared these with parents. They share children's information and progress electronically with parents through an online platform. However, managers are not aware of all their responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation, regarding storing information online.
- Managers have identified children's communication and language as an area of focus. Staff take time to read stories to children. They alter the tone of their voice to help engage them. Staff and children share conversations throughout activities, and this helps children to develop their communication and listening skills. However, staff do not consistently introduce children to new words to broaden their vocabulary.
- Children receive the support they need to become independent and manage their own self-care needs. For example, staff help children to understand the importance of good hygiene practice, such as washing their hands before they eat. Children are encouraged to pour their own drinks at snack time. When they have finished, children understand that they need to wash their cups in warm, soapy water.
- Children behave well. New children are starting to learn the routines of the day as staff provide support and guidance. Staff encourage children to use good manners, such as please and thank you. They offer plenty of praise and

encouragement to children, which helps to boost their self-esteem and confidence. Children are learning how to share and take turns with each other as staff provide timely reminders of the setting rules, such as 'kind hands'. Staff eat their lunch with children which helps contribute to children's understanding of good table manners and provides a positive social time.

- Children enjoy experimenting with mark making as they practise their early writing skills. For example, they use large chalks to make lines and circles on the hard surface area. Other children spend time transporting water from the water tray to the chalkboard. They find some paintbrushes to make marks on the chalkboard.
- Children are encouraged to play with play dough. Staff understand that this helps to build children's hand strength that they later need for early writing. Children roll, pull, squash and cut the dough, using rolling pins, scissors, and a multi-tool plastic cutter. Staff tell the children that they have different rolling pins as one makes them flat and one can make patterns.
- Parents talk positively about their children's experiences in the setting. Staff regularly share information with them about what their children are learning through an online platform. This helps parents to continue to support their children's learning at home.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider has worked with the local authority to meet the recent actions raised by Ofsted. Safeguarding policies are now in line with the local safeguarding partners. Although the managers ensure that staff complete safeguarding training, they have not ensured that staff's knowledge has been retained. Staff are not confident in identifying safeguarding issues. For example, most staff have little understanding of safeguarding concerns, such as county lines or radicalisation. This means they are not able to identify when a child may be at risk of harm.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	<b>Due date</b>
improve knowledge and understanding of responsibilities under the Data Protection Legislation	04/10/2023
ensure that all staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty and county lines.	04/10/2023

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

- support staff to introduce new words to children to broaden their vocabulary and develop their language even further.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	203764
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10304727
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	32
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Hands Pre-School Nursery Partnership
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP909270
<b>Telephone number</b>	01376 511194
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 September 2021

## Information about this early years setting

Little Hands Pre-School Nursery registered in 1994. It employs 10 members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 2 or above, including one member of staff who holds qualified teacher status. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 9am until 2.55pm, term time only. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Shelly McDougall

## 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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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