

# Inspection of Little Learners

47-50 Ettrick Grove, Sunderland SR3 4AW

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Inspection date: 17 October 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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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 are kind, caring and nurturing towards children. They build secure bonds and help children to feel safe. Overall, children are happy and settled in the nursery. They explore the environment with interest and are keen to join in with activities. For instance, babies and young children move closer to staff as they start to sing nursery rhymes. Toddlers show excitement outdoors and play imaginatively with dinosaurs. Staff extend their play and regularly model new words to extend children's vocabulary. Staff have high expectations for children. Older children benefit from the structured group times and are prepared to start school.

Staff effectively support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They provide regular focused groups and work in partnership with parents and the special educational needs coordinator in the nursery. The manager uses extra funding to offer children a wide range of activities that broaden their experiences. Children show enjoyment as they learn about other cultures and places in the world. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the manager and staff team have focused on supporting children's personal, social and emotional development, as well as their communication and language skills. This has helped children to develop their social skills, and their behaviour is positive.

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

- The manager and staff team provide children with a challenging and interesting curriculum that builds on their prior learning. Children are supported to have secure foundations for future learning, and staff know them very well. They plan activities that are based on children's interests and use assessments of their development to provide the right levels of challenge. Children show enthusiasm and are engaged in their learning.
- Staff focus on supporting children to develop good communication and language skills. For example, there are consistent strategies used throughout the nursery to boost new words and listening skills. Babies enjoy copying staff's actions as they sing. Young children enjoy listening to stories and become familiar with them. This is extended for older children as they talk about the author and illustrator of the book.
- A strength of the nursery is the curriculum for mathematical development. Staff use mathematical language appropriately throughout children's play and learning. Older children enjoy using the interactive board to count the number of animals and find the corresponding numeral. The manager has supported staff to build on this area of children's learning, and they participated in the COVID-recovery programme.
- Children enjoy spending time outdoors and developing good physical skills. Older children are encouraged to use stilts and practise throwing balls into hoops.

Young children and babies benefit from a separate, safe space to explore. However, there are times when staff interrupt children when they are engaged in learning outdoors, and some staff's teaching is less focused.

- Children benefit from healthy, freshly prepared meals and snacks each day. Staff encourage them to try new foods and talk to them about being healthy. Children begin to develop good levels of independence and self-confidence. Staff support them to begin to use the toilet and ensure they wash their hands throughout the day.
- Partnership working is effective in the nursery. Staff work with other professionals who are involved with children to promote continuity of learning. Teachers are invited into the setting to help children prepare to move on to school. Staff regularly hold meetings with parents to discuss children's development with them, so they feel included in their child's journey. Parents and grandparents are very happy with the care their children receive and are 'pleased with how much their speech has developed since they started'.
- Staff spend time getting to know children and families before they start. This helps them to meet their care needs and follow babies' individual routines to promote continuity. Staff work exceptionally hard to comfort younger babies. However, the baby room is large and busy, which means some who are new to the setting become unsettled. Senior staff effectively communicate children's specific medical needs to their team. This promotes continuity of care.
- The provider and manager show commitment to providing good-quality care for children. They support staff to develop their skills and offer a range of professional development opportunities. Staff say they are happy here and feel valued. The provider prioritises staff's positive emotional well-being. They have regular supervision sessions and access to health and well-being support.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider and manager, who is also the designated lead for safeguarding, ensure staff have clear procedures to follow to keep children safe. Staff benefit from regular training to help them maintain an up-to-date knowledge of child protection. Staff are confident to discuss signs and symptoms of abuse, including potential signs of county lines and neglect. They know how to make accurate records and report concerns swiftly. This helps to keep children safe from harm. Recruitment is robust. The manager and provider have safer recruitment training and use a range of methods to verify applicants' suitability to work with children. In addition, they regularly monitor existing staff members' Disclosure and Barring Service checks on the online service.

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

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

- enhance staff's teaching when they are outdoors to enable children to continue to access the full curriculum if they prefer to learn there
- reflect on the size of the baby room and consider the impact this has for younger babies, particularly those who are new or settling in.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY538502
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10313006
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	88
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	127
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Learners Sunderland Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP538501
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5285951
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 October 2018

## Information about this early years setting

Little Learners registered in 2016 and is located in Sunderland. The nursery employs 25 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds early years professional status, one holds early years teacher status, two members of staff have appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, and the majority of the remaining staff hold an appropriate level 3 qualification. The nursery opens from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and a week at Christmas time. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. Children with SEND attend.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Michelle Lorains

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A joint observation was completed by the manager and inspector indoors during a focused group activity.
- The inspector held a discussion with the manager and provider in relation to the leadership and management of the nursery. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of recruitment, staff's qualifications and their suitability to work with children. She discussed children's learning and development with the staff team and nursery manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents and obtained feedback for the 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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