

Inspection of Little Bear Cubs Pre-School

The Kidston Institute, 7 Northaw Road, Northaw, Potters Bar EN6 4NW

Inspection date: 14 November 2024

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 arrive full of enthusiasm and are welcomed by friendly staff. They are clear about the familiar routines, hanging up their coats and changing shoes for slippers. Each child hangs their picture on the tree to mark their arrival at the pre-school. Children have developed secure attachments to staff who are kind and supportive. Staff are on hand to ensure children's needs are met as they settle into their play. Staff speak confidently about the progress children make and work hard to support their learning and development.

Children behave well and engage positively in the wide range of activities available. They respond very well to staff, who give consistently clear expectations about how to be kind and share the toys. Children are involved in creating the pre-school's rules. Consequently, they show a good understanding of them. They behave with genuine kindness and respect for others.

Staff implement a curriculum that offers all children broad and varied experiences. Children enjoy the planned experiences, both inside and outdoors, that challenge and extend their learning. They show enjoyment and delight as they make moon sand landscapes and create 'autumn soup' in the mud kitchen. Staff engage in meaningful conversation, helping children to develop their own ideas, such as making holes in the sand to see where they should dig with their tools.

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

- The exciting and ambitious curriculum helps children to deepen their knowledge. Staff plan activities that spark children's curiosity and creativity. Children take 'trips to the moon in their spaceship' and learn about gravity and the change from day to night. Inspirational staff support children to extend their vocabulary through the use of 'wow' words such as 'astronaut' and 'planets'.
- Staff use effective language to support children's thinking. Children explore mathematical concepts, such as 'most' and 'least', as they scoop and transfer planets from the water into cups.
- Staff support children's play ideas. For example, before boarding the 'spaceship', staff ask children what they would take with them into space, and discuss what food astronauts might eat. This helps to extend children's thinking and creativity, which engages them further in play.
- Children are highly creative. They explore a range of materials as they create models from recyclable materials. Staff talk to children about the colours and materials they choose. During a dance session, children use their developing imagination to go on a 'space walk' and dance at the 'space party'.
- Children are physically active and show high levels of energy outside. They develop their large motor skills and coordination as they use the see-saw and

slide. Children make good use of the wheeled toys, developing coordination and core strength. They fill wheelbarrows with autumn leaves and transport them around the garden.

- The communal garden provides an opportunity for children to learn about habitats and conservation. They take care not to disturb the nesting hedgehogs and look out for resident toads. Community walks further develop children's awareness of the wider world. Children visit the local church to view the Remembrance Day poppies and deliver care packages to the nearby care home.
- Children are developing their independence. They put on their coats and shoes and serve their food at lunch. Staff discuss with children what clothes they might need for the weather to help them understand the change in seasons. Children and staff capture photos of the seasons, which provide a valuable opportunity to understand what each season really means.
- Parents speak highly of the team. They compliment the pre-school communication and regular updates they receive. Parents enjoy home learning with their children and look forward to hearing about the progress children make. The pre-school team has developed effective relationships with other professionals to ensure that children make the progress they are capable of.
- Leaders use evaluation well to measure the effectiveness of the curriculum. Regular supervision and ongoing staff professional development take place for all staff. However, the impact of training that staff attend is not always measured to ensure that improvements in the provision are happening and all children, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are accessing the curriculum in the best way for them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop the evaluation of staff training and measure the impact it has on the quality of teaching, with regard to children with SEND and how well they access the curriculum.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2693245
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10367518
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Little Bear Cubs Pre-School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2693243
Telephone number	07941023388
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Bear Cubs Pre-School registered in 2022 and operates from a hall in Northaw, Potters Bar. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, from 8am to 4pm, term time only. It employs five childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6 and three at level 3. The pre-school provides free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Clare Ford

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning, including the interactions between staff and children.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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