

Inspection of Little Learners

Beeches Close, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2SB

Inspection date: 6 February 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

This small, homely and welcoming pre-school offers children exciting opportunities to play and learn, both indoors and outdoors. The staff take great care to ensure the environment is fully inclusive and quality resources are readily available for children to self-select and initiate their own learning. The ambitious curriculum is designed around what children already know and interests them, and what they need to learn next. The pre-school aspirations of building children's confidence, independence, communication and regulating emotions underpins all activities provided. The management team are committed to provide good-quality teaching and their passion is shared by the team of experienced staff. Children have established strong and trusting bonds with the staff. They happily arrive and are eager to explore the activities on offer, leaving their parents with ease.

Staff speak respectfully to the children and are calm, nurturing and reassuring role models. They have high expectations for the children and praise them for their efforts and when they demonstrate kindness or manners. Therefore, children's behaviour is good. The team invest time getting to know the children and their family before they attend. They are skilful in their interactions with them and have a sound knowledge of how to promote learning opportunities. Children enjoy spontaneous stories and singing. They enjoy cuddles, and huddle in groups as they listen intently to a favourite story.

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

- The quality of teaching is good. The education programme ensures learning for all participating. This means all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve good outcomes and are prepared for their transition to school and successful future learning.
- The team work closely with parents and value their input in their children's learning. Positive, friendly but professional working relationships have been established. Parents speak highly of the pre-school. They comment that the staff are 'amazing' supportive and that communication is good. They feel totally reassured their children are kept safe and are making good progress.
- Children relish their time outdoors. They can choose where they want to play and flow freely from indoors to the garden. Children show sustained concentration as they scoop mud into bowls. They make marks and patterns using water and brushes. Staff introduce simple mathematical language, such as tiny and large, as children paint and compare size of circles they paint. They explain to visitors to the pre-school the need to wear a helmet to keep safe, when using the bicycles.
- Staff teach children skills they need to be independent. For example, children select fruits, pour drinks and butter toast for snack. They make choices as to

where they will play. Children are confident communicators and ask for help when needed. They learn about personal care through well-planned activities. For example, children wash and dry dolls, enjoying the bubbles and squeezing sponges. They learn what appropriate clothing is needed to keep their babies warm, and use toothbrushes to clean the dolls teeth as they learn the importance of oral hygiene.

- Opportunities are in place to support staff to continue their own professional development and further their qualifications. They understand the importance of training, to enhance the education and care that children receive. Staff speak positively about their roles and genuinely enjoy their time at work.
- The management recognise the importance of developing relationships with other early years settings children also attend. They understand the value of sharing children's learning and progress, to provide continuity when children attend more than one setting, or with other agencies that may be supporting the child.
- Children are supported with their ideas and to initiate their own play. They access quality resources from easily accessible units. Children are busy and mostly engaged in their play. However, they are not always encouraged to develop a deep understanding of how to take care of the things that they use, such as resources, including books, when they have finished with these.
- The session runs smoothly throughout the morning, and children are engrossed in their play and very well supported. However, the organisation when preparing for lunchtime means staff are sometimes busy with other tasks and children are not fully engaged.

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:

- help children to understand how to take more care of their environment and resources, particularly when they are leading their own play
- improve the organisation of transition times to ensure that all children are fully engaged and supported at these times.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY268807
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10368068
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	19
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Essex County Council
Registered person unique reference number	RP901507
Telephone number	01245 216959
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Learners registered in 2004. It is situated in Chelmsford, Essex and is managed by Essex County Council Adult Education Services. There are six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school operates Monday to Friday, 8.30am until 3.30pm, term time only. It provides government funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what it is that the team want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- Parents provided the inspector with written and oral feedback at the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with the staff team during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the pre-school.

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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