

Inspection of Little Pioneers Nursery and Pre School Cheltenham Park

Unit 4 Corinthian Park, Corinthian Way, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 6UP

Inspection date: 14 May 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

The setting shows a strong commitment to environmental responsibility and enriches the curriculum with diverse, hands-on experiences. Children actively recycle and conserve water through the daily role of 'water warrior'. Older children take on helper roles, such as setting up snack tables, to build a sense of responsibility. Children develop intergenerational connection, communication and language skills and a deep understanding of different eras as staff take them on fortnightly visits to a local nursing home. A child-friendly 'mini medics' course promotes children's awareness of emergency services while developing their independence, confidence and basic first-aid skills.

Leaders plan and implement a curriculum that promotes independence and prepares children for future learning by building confidence, strong relationships and early communication skills. Staff act as positive role models, creating a nurturing environment where children form secure attachments and feel confident to explore. They respond quickly to children's learning needs, including those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and refresh resources promptly to inspire exploratory play. Staff build on children's interests, such as junk modelling and imaginative animal play, by extending their ideas in meaningful ways. For example, they add transparent materials to create a pool for toy animals.

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

- Children enjoy outdoor play. For example, older children use crates and boxes for imaginative play and play games, such as hide and seek. While these activities promote confidence and creativity, some staff struggle to fully support children's unstructured play and hesitate to engage at the right moments. As a result, louder children dominate play, and quieter children sometimes stand and watch from the sidelines. This inconsistency means that children do not always receive the same quality of teaching outdoors as they do indoors.
- Staff effectively model language, extending children's ideas, and use praise to build children's confidence and self-esteem. They listen attentively, respond thoughtfully and support children's language development through clear, simple speech, repetition and simple signing. Open-ended questions and real-world connections, such as discussing travel experiences while exploring brochures, stimulate meaningful conversation with children and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Children learn about a wide range of cultures, communities and ways of life that are outside their own experiences.
- Children generally behave well. Younger children demonstrate kindness to their friends. For example, they fan each other to cool down. Older children sit quietly and listen at group times in preparation for school. However, on occasions, staff tell children not to do something without explaining why and children receive

mixed messages about behaviour expectations. This limits children's ability to learn self-regulation or understand the consequences of their actions.

- Staff thoughtfully support children's physical development. Older children build finger dexterity, skilfully using scissors and glue sticks. Younger children develop fine motor skills as they make marks with water and brushes on chalkboards and strengthen their large muscles by shaking a parachute. Babies learn to feed themselves with minimal support.
- Babies demonstrate a close attachment to their key person. They sit near to staff and lean in for a cuddle. Interactions from staff are warm and loving. Staff use simple one-word interactions to build on language, and babies display and engage in repeated play. For example, they stack and knock down items. Staff offer babies a warm and nurturing environment to play and learn.
- Staff support children's self-help skills and independence. For example, during nappy changing time, children climb the steps to the changing mat on their own and staff remain close by to ensure their safety. Staff give children plenty of time to do things for themselves. Once finished, children are encouraged to wash their hands, promoting their independence and awareness of good hygiene.
- The leadership team organises regular staff meetings and are reflective in their practice. For example, they regularly review their safeguarding procedures and take steps to ensure that any concerns about adults are reported to the relevant agencies promptly. Staff work well as a team. They support each other and feel that they receive good support for their well-being from leaders.
- Staff build strong partnerships with parents, schools and external professionals to ensure consistent support for children's learning and development. Leaders gather feedback from parents and staff to drive continuous improvement. For example, in response to parent input, the setting now places folders in crates outside rooms, allowing parents to take home their children's artwork.

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:

- support staff to plan more effectively for outdoor play and enhance the range of experiences and learning opportunities that older children receive
- ensure that staff consistently explain the reasons behind behaviour expectations to help children understand the consequences of their actions and support their development of self-regulation.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2653060
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10397502
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	104
Number of children on roll	168
Name of registered person	The Midcounties Co-Operative Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900862
Telephone number	0800 9540669
Date of previous inspection	4 August 2023

Information about this early years setting

Little Pioneers Nursery and Pre School Cheltenham Park registered in August 2021. It operates in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The nursery employs 25 members of childcare staff. Of these, one member of staff holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6, 13 staff are qualified at level 3, three are qualified at level 2 and eight are unqualified. The nursery opens all year round from 7am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. The setting offers government funded places.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Gwyneth Keen

Inspection activities

- The manager, deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity in the pre-school room with the manager.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025