

Little Learners Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY417494
Inspection date	02/06/2011
Inspector	Janet Keeling

Setting address	Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School, Occupation Road, CORBY, Northamptonshire, NN17 1EE
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Little Learners Childcare registered in 2010. The setting operates from facilities within the old school building which is located in the grounds of Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School in Corby, Northamptonshire. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is registered to provide nursery sessions and out of school care. The setting serves children and families from the local and surrounding areas.

The setting is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. A maximum of 62 children from birth to under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. Currently there are 67 children on roll, of whom, 66 are within the early years age group. The setting is in receipt of funding for early years education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are 13 members of staff who work directly with the children. Of whom, nine hold National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at level 3 and two hold National Vocational Qualifications at level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children blossom and thoroughly enjoy their time at this welcoming and stimulating setting. They make excellent progress in their learning and development as they engage in a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities. Staff are focussed, work well as a team and offer a fully inclusive service where the uniqueness of every child is recognised and celebrated. A successful key person system is in place which fosters highly effective relationships with children, their parents and other agencies. As a result, children's individual needs are identified and met exceptionally well. The manager and staff embrace the process of self-evaluation and demonstrate an excellent commitment and ability towards the sustained and continuous improvement of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- enhancing the two way flow of information with parents by maximising opportunities to fully engage them in their child's ongoing learning, with particular regard to how they contribute to their child's learning folders.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Excellent priority is given to safeguarding children. There are rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures in place to check the suitability of staff and adults working with the children. Staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues and are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child in their care. Detailed risk assessments are completed. They cover all aspects of the learning environment and outings, ensuring risks to children are fully minimised. Children's health, safety and well-being are further enhanced by the effective maintenance of records and the consistent implementation of policies and procedures. The environment is inspiring, well organised and provides wonderful learning opportunities for all children. Staff are deployed effectively throughout the sessions to ensure children are supervised safely at all times. Good quality resources and equipment are clearly labelled and allow children easy access. Outstanding outcomes for children are attributed to the excellent use of time, space and resources.

The manager has a very clear vision for the setting and demonstrates an inspiring commitment to further enhance the quality of the early years provision. For example, the staff use feedback from parent questionnaires and have an effective self-evaluation system in place to monitor and evaluate the quality and standards of the setting. Monthly team meetings provide valuable opportunities for staff to discuss children's interests and share good practice, while yearly staff appraisals encourage the continued professional development of all staff. Methods to promote equality and diversity thread through the whole setting. This is successfully achieved through planned activities, role play equipment and through open discussion between staff and children. There is a shared vision for inclusive practice, ensuring that every child is fully included and integrated into the life of the setting. Staff are focussed, work extremely well as a team and are committed towards continuing their own skills. They regularly attend relevant training courses to improve their knowledge and skills. Consequently, children's care and well-being is further enhanced.

Partnerships with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents receive excellent quality information about the running of the setting before their child starts which includes policies and procedures. Staff dedicate time getting to know children and their families. This is successfully achieved through home visits, effective settling-in procedures, the implementation of the key person system and informal discussions each day. Consequently, excellent relationships are fostered which ensure children settle well and feel secure. Parents access a wealth of ongoing information regarding the setting through the use of a parents' notice board and regular newsletters. They also see many examples of their children's work and photographs attractively displayed around the playrooms. Parents speak highly of the setting and feedback from parents during the inspection is excellent. Comments include, 'staff are very friendly, approachable and supportive', 'our children are happy and enjoy being at the setting' and 'I would highly recommend the setting to other parents'.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

There is a welcoming atmosphere within the setting where all children are happy, eager to learn and have excellent opportunities to make choices about their own learning and play. They freely access a wide range of exciting activities and quality resources which fully support their individual needs and interests. Babies are cared for in a calm and stimulating environment where they actively explore their surroundings with great interest and curiosity. They develop very secure relationships with staff who cherish each child's individuality and uniqueness. All children are valued and treated with equal concern, with any specific requirements being sensitively met through discussion with parents and other professionals. Staff have an exceptional knowledge of children's individual needs and interests as they observe and record information about their learning on a daily basis. Information gained is evaluated and used to inform future planning. Children's learning is meticulously documented in their individual 'learning journey folders'. These contain both written and photographic information of a child's learning and achievements. However, staff have not yet fully maximised opportunities to fully engage parents in their child's learning journeys. Children's learning folders are accessible in the playrooms and are available for parents to see at any time.

Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals as they engage in a stimulating range of first hand learning experiences. For example, they learn to care for the pet degu and plant sunflowers, tomatoes and carrots. They explore their natural environment as they hunt for spiders in the bark area and dig for worms in the soil. Children in the pre-school and toddler rooms develop a love for books as they listen to well-told stories and enjoy looking at books with their friends. While babies snuggle down next to a member of staff and enjoy looking through picture books together. They chuckle with delight as they look through their 'all about me books' which contain photographs of their family and friends. Children are also encouraged to choose a library book each week which they take home and share with their family. Children's ability to develop early writing skills is fostered very successfully, with many opportunities to draw, paint, make marks in different media and practise emergent writing during role play. There is great excitement as children explore a large tray of shaving foam. They use their fingers to swirl the foam around and chuckle with delight as they make patterns.

Children have developed a true sense of identity, play in harmony together and take pride in their own achievements. They enjoy music, singing and exploring the box of musical instruments. There is great excitement as children in the toddler room tunefully sing, 'Wind the Bobbin Up'. They express their ideas creatively through their drawings and craft work and adore imaginary play where they use an extensive range of props to extend their experiences. In the role play area children explore their hospital scene. They chat happily together and cooperate well as they take turns with equipment. In the creative area children enjoy playing with the dough. They vigorously roll and shape the dough and then experiment with a range of tools. All children relish daily outdoor play activities. Older children skilfully pedal bikes and enjoy the challenges of the stepping stones and balancing beams, while babies thoroughly enjoy exploring the sand, water and wooden

bricks. Children benefit from visits into the local community where they go to the local shop and purchase ingredients for their cooking activities.

Children are polite, well mannered and show respect for each other. They are actively and consistently praised by staff for their efforts and achievements and, as a result, their confidence and self-esteem are carefully fostered. Children learn to take responsibility for their own safety by playing in a safe and supportive environment. Older children understand how to evacuate the premises in an emergency and are gently reminded how to use equipment safely while playing. Babies are calmly and safely evacuated through the use of an evacuation cot. Children develop an understanding of the wider world as they access a wide range of resources that are representative of diversity and also celebrate cultural festival throughout the year. They are successfully encouraged to develop their personal hygiene skills, such as using the toilet independently and understand when and why they need to wash their hands. They enjoy healthy meals and snacks which are freshly prepared by the cook each day. Pre-school and toddler children freely access drinking water from the water machines, while babies are offered drinks regularly to ensure they remain hydrated. Overall, children successfully demonstrate that they are acquiring excellent skills that will help them in the future and prepare them for their transition into school.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met