

Winner 2010

Nursery World Awards 2010: Organisations - Nursery of the Year

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WINNER: Little Learners Nursery School, Skegness, Lincolnshire



The 'vision and energy' of nursery owner and manager Marie Walker led judges to declare Little Learners the clear winner. Her vision is shared by the well-qualified staff team who are passionate about their work. Judges commented, 'They have established an inspiring and aesthetically pleasing learning environment. The adults' imagination and creativity foster these qualities in the children, who have genuine choices and real responsibilities. Their individual preoccupations are welcomed, celebrated and extended sensitively from the start.'

Staff are guided by their insightful observations of the children's interests. The youngest children were found to have exceptionally well-supported opportunities for exploration and expression in an engaging, beautiful and well cared-for environment. The innovative provision includes the use of crockery and real food in the role play areas, the opportunity to cook on a fire pit in the garden and the building of a small house using various authentic techniques. This leads to a high level of imaginative play and deep learning across all areas of

the curriculum, indoors and out. The older children also have the opportunity to spend whole days at a unique beach school, established along the lines of forest schools.

There is an emphasis on a healthy diet. Children help themselves to snacks, and mealtimes are social occasions shared by staff who are skilled in establishing high standards of behaviour, including consideration of others.

Staff are encouraged to extend their qualifications and skills. The nursery also contributes to the professional development of visiting colleagues as well as students.

Judges concluded that, 'Little Learners is an exciting and inspiring place to be, with imaginative plans for future development. The nursery is a real community of learning that makes a powerful contribution to the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing and development of the children.'

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Blossom House Kindergarten, Stratford St Mary, Suffolk

Judges found staff to be 'responsive and thoughtful' and the nursery has good systems of planning, based on careful observation and close contact with families. Transitions are carefully managed at every stage and relationships with parents are very good.

FINALISTS

Seabrook Day Nursery, Luton, Bedfordshire

Sparklers Private Nursery, Gretna, Dumfries and Galloway

Young Friends Nursery, Hove, East Sussex

CRITERION

Open to registered settings offering full daycare (private, voluntary or maintained sector)

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