

Little Learners Nursery School

The Old Manse, 14 Lumley Avenue, SKEGNESS, Lincolnshire, PE25 2AP

Inspection date	01/08/2014
Previous inspection date	14/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The quality and consistency of teaching is exceptional as staff have an excellent knowledge of how children learn. This is supported through the precise and highly accurate assessment and planning that is in place for individual children.
- Practice in this nursery school is truly worthy of dissemination to other providers. Leadership is inspirational and drives the pursuit of excellence in all of the nursery school's activities. Therefore, children's needs are exceptionally well met.
- Children behave in an exemplary manner because they have secure boundaries and routines, so they understand fully what is expected of them. Consequently, they become confident, responsible and independent individuals who have very high levels of self-esteem.
- Babies and children are continually nurtured and flourish in this wonderful environment. Staff are caring, dedicated and motivated, and fully understand each child's individual needs. Staff form excellent bonds with children, so they settle well and develop confidence as they engage in an excellent variety of activities in this extremely well-resourced nursery.
- Partnership with parents and other professionals are highly effective and fully support all children's needs, making this a truly inclusive nursery. This makes children's transitions a seamless and positive experience.
- The nursery has a robust recruitment process. Excellent inductions, appraisals and supervisions ensure staff continue to fulfil their roles extremely well. Staff have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding procedures and, as a result, keep children safe.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the premises and observed children playing in the playrooms and outdoor area.
- The inspector met with the provider and spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
The inspector looked at and discussed children's assessment records, the self-evaluation process, planning documentation, evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Jane Rushby

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Learners Nursery School has been registered since 2008 and operates from converted premises in Skegness, Lincolnshire. The nursery is accessible to all, as there are ramps to the doors and a lift has been installed. There are two rooms on the ground floor for children aged two-to-four years and a further two rooms on the first floor for children aged birth-to-two years, with a separate sleep room. There are toilet and nappy changing facilities on both levels. There is a kitchen, staff area and disabled toilet facilities on the third floor. The nursery is open each weekday, from 8am to 6pm including bank holidays, and will additionally provide a Saturday service, from 9am until 4pm, during the summer season, where there is demand. The nursery is closed during the Christmas period. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the property. The nursery serves Skegness and the surrounding areas. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 53 children from birth to eight years at any one time and there are currently 130 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery keeps tropical fish, a guinea pig and chickens as pets. The nursery employs 26 staff, all of whom hold a minimum National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3. Seven of the staff hold qualifications at level 5 or above. One member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status and Early Years Professional status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider the further development of the excellent outdoor planting areas for the younger children, so that they develop an even greater understanding of growth, decay and changes over time.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Inspirational managers and staff have a very secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and an excellent understanding of how children learn through their play. Staff have high expectations of themselves and children, and provide a wealth of challenging and imaginative play and learning experiences. For example, outdoors, children use real tools, nails and pieces of wood to build and create for their own purpose. Therefore, enables children to work together, problem solve and turn take. The children measure with spirit levels and ensure that the nails have been hammered into the

wood and are not sticking out. Children take calculated risks in a supervised environment. Children make rapid progress in their learning because of the extremely high quality of teaching that is delivered through a vast range of experiences that excite and motivate them. The quality and consistency of teaching is exceptional, as staff have an excellent knowledge of how children learn. This is supported through the precise and highly accurate assessment and planning that is in place for individual children. Staff are committed to gaining a thorough knowledge and understanding of each individual child. They work with parents from the start, to gain detailed information about the child and carry out initial observations that enable them to establish a starting point for the child's learning and development. Robust observation and planning supports staff's exceptional ongoing understanding of children's individual stages of development. The nursery has a rigorous assessment system that enables children's progress to be tracked. This helps staff to see if progress is as expected, or above or below that typical for children's age and stage of development. Consequently, any gaps in learning, which may indicate that children are at risk of falling behind, are addressed through early intervention programmes, so that gaps rapidly close. The nursery provides innovative educational programmes. Therefore, children thoroughly enjoy stimulating and imaginative experiences that are exceptionally well planned and are supported by high-quality teaching. Through these experiences children develop a very positive attitude to learning. Children throughout the nursery are very well motivated and very eager to join in activities. They demonstrate a high level of engagement in both planned activities and in their independent play. This attitude provides children with the fundamental foundation upon which to support their future learning. Individual children's next steps in learning are clearly identified and support each child to reach their full potential.

Staff interaction with children and babies is of a consistently high standard. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's communication and language and, as a result, the quality of teaching and learning is exceptional. The nursery has staff trained in speech and language support, and implements language and communication programmes, such as 'Every Child a Talker'. Staff consistently praise very young children for the words they say, and model words to reinforce the child's understanding of the spoken language. Babies and young toddlers revel in the homely environment, where they test out their confidence and build very strong relationships with the adults. The younger babies use large areas of paper and paint to make marks using their feet and hands. They delight in the songs and rhymes sung by staff, often spontaneously, and they join in with gestures and movements. Children learn to care for living things and about where food comes from because they grow vegetables and flowers, and learn about caring for the chickens, which they have in the outdoor area. They use the eggs they collect from the chickens in their baking activity, where children are encouraged to use weighing scales and measuring jugs, to measure out ingredients for making their cake. This contributes extremely well towards their skills for the future and in preparation for their move on to full-time school. All aspects of children's physical development are promoted. Children enjoy an activity making hot chocolate and toasting marshmallows over the fire pit. Children are clearly aware of safety and the boundaries set for this activity. Children are able to make choices and are encouraged to have a go at toasting their own marshmallows. There are some excellent conversations between the children about the fire being hot and the risk of getting burnt. They are very aware that they need to stay safe and be careful. They are also aware that the steam from the kettle is hot. They confidently discuss healthy foods

and describe appropriate portion size. Overall, excellent use is made of outdoor resources to support all aspects of children's learning and development. However, the provider has identified scope to develop the planting areas for the younger children, so that they develop an even greater understanding of growth, decay and changes over time. Staff provide a wealth of opportunities for children to develop both their fine motor skills and gross motor skills. Resources to develop early writing skills are freely available both indoors and outdoors. The environment is skilfully arranged to enable children to move freely within the nursery and to the outdoor area. Careful consideration has been given by the management and staff to children's developing social skills. Cosy corners are developed to allow children quiet time, for example, to snuggle with a staff member to look at books. Small groups of children engage together, developing imaginative play.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well as staff work closely with their families and other professionals, such as speech and language therapists. The pre-school make suggestions about how parents can support their children at home. For example, by providing parents with home learning packs and story sacks. Parents receive regular, highly-comprehensive feedback that helps them to feel included in their child's learning. For example, they are provided with both daily feedback and more detailed periodic written reports showing them what their children have achieved. They are invited to attend parents' meetings with their child's key person on a regular basis. In addition, they have easy access to a broad range of information about activities and learning objectives within the setting. Consequently, they are fully included and are helped to understand how to support their children's learning at home. The required progress check for children between the ages of two and three is completed appropriately, to plan for the next steps in children's learning and to share relevant information with all relevant partners. Strong links with the schools children will later attend ensure that children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. When teachers visit the nursery, the comprehensive records of children's learning and development are shared to promote the continuity of learning.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

There is an exceptionally strong emphasis by the management team and all staff on the care and well-being of children. A highly effective key-person system ensures that all children settle quickly, and they clearly demonstrate that they feel very safe and secure. A calm and caring atmosphere creates a positive learning environment for all, where children are highly valued as individuals. Careful consideration is made to the allocation of each child's key person. This supports extremely close bonds between children and staff, providing a strong base for children to develop their independence and to explore. Home visits are offered to get to know children and their families from the outset. In addition, parents acknowledge and appreciate the warm welcome and ongoing support that they receive. All children show a strong sense of belonging within the setting and settle well because staff have an excellent knowledge of their individual likes, needs and routines. They work very closely with parents from the outset to gather all the relevant information. They ensure that this is regularly updated to reflect any changes. Transitions from room to room and from one setting to another are exceedingly well managed, as practitioners have established very positive partnerships with parents, other providers, and local pre-schools

and schools. Therefore, children feel confident and this helps establish close relationships with new people.

The nursery has an exceptionally strong and caring ethos that puts the child at the centre of everything they do. Staff are constantly thinking of children's well-being, acting as very caring and positive role models for children. Staff show genuine interest in and pleasure at being with the children. They make a point of saying 'hello' to children that have come in to nursery while they have been on lunch and engage them in conversation as they clearly pleased to see them. The nursery provides strong daily routines that contribute to children's rapid development in their social, emotional, physical and communicative development. Staff are extremely considerate and take time to inform children about care routines that are required, such as nappy changes, in order to maintain both their physical and emotional well-being. Children learn about personal hygiene through practical routines and this helps them to be independent in their self-care when they move on to school. Children's safety is given high priority, without restricting their independent exploration, because staff are vigilant at all times, ensuring children are well supervised and kept safe. Through first-class teaching, children are encouraged to risk assess for themselves and to consider the needs of others. They develop their understanding of equality and diversity through a range of resources, activities and positive images within their environment. Practitioners give the utmost regard to the safety of children and ensure that resources and equipment are appropriate to their individual needs. Extreme care and consideration is given to the presentation of activities both, indoors and outdoors, providing a consistently highly stimulating learning environment for children. They are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and learn about the importance of exercise as they use the outdoor space and equipment, including climbing, den-building, forest-school and beach-school activities. Rigorous risk assessments are recorded and in place, and daily checks to minimise risks to children are carried out across the setting. Children are care for appropriately following any minor accidents and staff deal sensitively with any bumps they have received. Comprehensive records are kept of any accidents, as are records of medicines given. These are consistently shared with parents.

Parents comment on how happy their children are to be at the nursery with their friends. Children behave in an exemplary manner because they have secure boundaries and routines, so they understand fully what is expected of them. Consequently, they become confident, responsible and independent individuals who have very high levels of self-esteem. They are supported by staff who are consistent, positive role models. Older babies show an excellent understanding of taking turns and staff enthusiastically praise children to reinforce kind behaviour. Children develop excellent negotiating skills and can manage situations that arise independently, reinforcing the need to take turns without the need for staff intervention. For example, they freely share the hammer to knock the nails into the wood. Outdoor learning and activities are available every day, regardless of the weather conditions, so that children can enjoy play in all its guises. Children show a clear knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy, as they are encouraged to make choices about the food they eat and are able to recognise that some food choices are healthier than others. The highly experienced cook works closely with parents and staff to ensure that dietary needs and preferences are catered for when planning meals. Children enjoy the social experiences of meal times, as staff ensure that these are opportunities to

engage with children in social conversation and use good manners as part of the holistic experience.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Inspirational management by a strong, cohesive and highly skilled management team very closely support, encourage and monitor the whole team extremely well. This ensures that there is a very effective and professional staff team in place. They have rigorous induction and performance management procedures that are extremely well implemented and closely monitor the quality of provision. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures help to check that all adults are suitable to work with children. The appraisal and supervision process is effective. Peer observations have been introduced recently to further support staff in their provision of high-quality practice. There is a highly qualified staff team. They use their knowledge to lead and role model excellent teaching practice to each other. For example, skills in forest-school teaching have been shared with all staff, so they are all well equipped to support children in their outdoor activities. This continual cycle of professional development is reflected in inspirational teaching and extremely positive outcomes for all children. The provider strives for excellence amongst her staff and, as a consequence, staff morale is very high.

The safety of children is paramount. The safeguarding procedures are exemplary and are clearly understood by all staff. Through attending training, staff are extremely confident about the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. There are very good relationships with the specialist professionals, involved with children that attend the nursery, and they have strong links with the local schools that the children move on to. The views of parents and children are sought to enable the management to consider changes that bring about beneficial improvement for all children. Self-evaluation of the provision is robust and actively contributes to the high quality of the nursery. Change is brought about through the clear development plans. There are clear risk assessments in place for the premises and staff carry out regular audits. For example, they regularly check the fire alarms and equipment. The nursery has a fire evacuation plan in place and regular evacuation procedures are practiced with the children. All documentation needed for the smooth running of the nursery is in place and of a high standard. An annual review of all policies and procedures ensures that staff have a consistent understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Parents comment on how they trust the nursery implicitly and have total confidence in leaving their children in the setting.

Staff have attended specific training to provide enhanced provision for all children that supports their language and communication development. Partnerships with external agencies are highly focussed. As a result, children's individual needs are met extremely well and when needed, systems for early intervention are rigorous. The nursery works tirelessly to ensure that the children in their care receive the help and support they may require to fulfil their learning and potential. Both carers and professionals comment on the exceptional progress children have made while being in the nursery. Highly skilled staff form very strong partnerships with parents, who value the service highly. Comments from

parents are extremely positive. They state that they feel fully informed and included in their child's care and learning at all times, and benefit from regular verbal and written feedback. Parents are invited to attend meetings about their children's progress on a regular basis and to participate in the future development of the setting.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY359229
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	983585
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	53
Number of children on roll	130
Name of provider	Margaret Blades and Marie Walker Partnership
Date of previous inspection	14/01/2009
Telephone number	01754 765158

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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