

Inspection of Little Oaks Pre School

Grounds of Stella Maris RC Primary School, Parkfield Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5BY

Inspection date: 14 January 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy attending the pre-school. They develop strong friendships and secure bonds with their key persons. Staff warmly welcome children into the pre-school, creating an atmosphere of excitement and belonging. Children communicate enthusiastically and actively participate in activities, such as arts and crafts, outdoor play and educational games that are prepared by staff. They share resources and play cooperatively, fostering teamwork and supporting their social development.

Children learn about the wonders of the natural world around them. For example, They enjoy experimenting with ice and discuss what might make it freeze and what happens when the temperature around it warms up. All children have regular opportunities to practise letters and sounds. The youngest children enjoy listening to familiar sounds in their environment and joining in with action rhymes. Older children re-tell their favourite books to staff and discuss alternate endings to stories. The curriculum is clearly sequenced and builds on what children already know and can do. This prepares them well for their next stage in learning. For example, older children take part in PE lessons as part of their preparations for starting school. They practise getting dressed and undressed independently, which builds their self-help, self-care and positive self-esteem.

Leaders and staff create a caring and supportive environment where children feel safe and valued. They interact positively with all children and are dedicated to ensuring their emotional well-being. This gives children opportunities to make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

- Leaders provide a curriculum that is designed to promote children's independence. Staff provide numerous opportunities to encourage this. For example, older children independently access the toilet throughout the day and confidently prepare their snacks by cutting vegetables. These routines and activities build children's confidence and self-sufficiency.
- Staff support children to develop their mathematical and thinking skills through engaging routines and activities. For example, staff encourage children to count confidently during snack time. They explore mathematical concepts, such as halves and quarters when cutting vegetables.
- Staff guide and support children's communication skills. Children engage in meaningful conversations with their peers and adults throughout the day. This helps children develop strong communication skills, enabling them to express themselves confidently and build positive relationships with peers and adults.
- There is a successful focus on promoting children's literacy skills. Staff use a

variety of methods to encourage children to read. For example, in addition to sharing books with children, they label items such as children's bottles and pegs. This helps children to recognise their written names, which is part of the skills and knowledge that staff intend children to gain in preparation for moving on in their education.

- Staff provide children with a wide variety of activities that support their well-being, both indoors and outdoors. However, they do not consistently implement the setting's behaviour management strategies, which means children are not always clear on what behaviour is expected of them.
- Staff interact well with children and make consistent efforts to enhance their learning experiences. However, planned activities do not always reflect children's interests or needs. As a result, children sometimes lose interest, disengage from activities or choose not to participate, such as during group sessions or other planned experiences. At these times, they do not benefit from the intended learning.
- Overall, there are good arrangements to support children's health. For example, staff help children learn about good hygiene, and children routinely wash their hands before eating. However, staff do not consistently implement the setting's healthy eating policy and oral health promotions. For example, sometimes staff do not do enough to encourage children to choose water to drink as opposed to less healthy alternatives. This does not help all children develop good habits for the future.
- Parents speak highly of the leaders and staff. They appreciate how staff collaborate with other professionals, such as local primary schools, to support children's well-being. This supports smoother transitions and allows children to settle more easily both at home and within the pre-school.
- Leaders provide staff with regular opportunities for professional development through training and supervision. This ensures that staff with lead responsibilities have the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensure that all children make good progress.

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 meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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Develop effective communications with parents and staff about children's good health including oral hygiene and dietary requirements.	13/02/2025
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- support staff to be more consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour
- encourage staff to make better use of their knowledge of children's interests when planning activities
- support staff to be more consistent in implementing the setting's healthy eating policy and procedures.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY364356
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10372129
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	53
Name of registered person	Little Oaks Early Years Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519609
Telephone number	01303 850205
Date of previous inspection	3 April 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Oaks Pre School is one of eight settings run by Little Oaks Early Years Limited. It registered in 2008 and operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Stella Maris Catholic Primary School in Folkestone, Kent. The provider employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. One member of staff and both providers hold early years professional status. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday, during term-time only. Sessions are from 8am until 4pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Toyin Aina

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years foundation stage 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 observed the interactions between staff and the children.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- 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 nursery.

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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