

Inspection of Little Shipmates Pre-School

Waterside Primary School, Southampton SO45 6ET

Inspection date: 15 November 2024

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 are welcomed into the setting by staff who are friendly and nurturing. They enjoy spending time with their friends and choosing activities that are engaging and exciting. For example, children mix their own paints and use the easels outside to make colourful pictures.

Children choose to play inside or outdoors, and staff carefully plan experiences to move children's learning on. For example, children use litter pickers to pick up leaves in the garden. This helps them develop the small muscles in their hands and wrists, which in turn supports them to use tongs to pick up their fruit at snack time.

Children understand the behaviour expectations of the setting and staff gently support them using phrases such as 'kind hands'. Staff use sign language and pictures to support communication when needed. For example, some staff wear lanyards with key pictures of everyday items. This helps support children's language and helps them to express their wishes. Children are encouraged to problem-solve. For example, babies are supported by staff to find their own cups with their photo on. This promotes children's independence and encourages them to access resources by themselves.

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

- Children are physically active across the setting and have access to outside areas that are safe and engaging. For example, babies roll balls with staff and explore a slide with their support. This helps them to develop a range of skills to progress their physical development.
- Staff mostly support children's language and communication development effectively during activities, discussions and by asking questions. However, this is not always consistent across the whole staff team. For example, there are times when children are not given enough time to respond or staff do not support them to extend language or learn new vocabulary.
- Staff work closely with parents when their child moves on to their next stage of learning. For example, transition packs including stories and puppets are shared with families to help children understand what is coming next.
- Staff are skilled at promoting an environment where children are curious to learn and enjoy trying new experiences. This helps children to develop a positive attitude to learning and builds their self-esteem. For example, children are praised with 'wow moments' for achieving something new, such as taking their first steps or using cutlery to eat their lunch.
- Children are supported by staff to recognise how they are feeling and manage their emotions. Staff speak in a kind and gentle manner to children and provide

calm spaces such as a sensory room to support children if they are feeling overwhelmed or need some additional support. This helps children to feel safe and secure and build a positive relationship with their key person.

- Children in the pre-school regularly visit the local care home to spend time visiting the residents to play games and chat about their day. Staff use this experience to help provide children with a sense of belonging in the local community and teach the importance of being kind.
- Staff are fully supported by leaders to keep up to date with training that will improve their practice and is appropriate to their role. Effective systems are in place to allow staff to work with other organisations, such as other settings, to share ideas and good practice.
- Leaders have a clear vision of the setting and work closely with staff and parents to provide a service that is high quality and inclusive for all children. Staff feel listened to and a valued member of the team. This encourages a positive working environment where everyone has shared values and is keen to develop a service that has children at the heart of everything they do.
- Funding is used effectively to ensure children who need extra support are provided with resources and experiences that will promote their development and move their learning on. Leaders work closely with parents and staff when making these decisions, and this promotes a positive culture of partnership working.

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:

- build on staff's understanding of the importance of providing opportunities to extend children's communication and language.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY543492
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10368552
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	72
Number of children on roll	106
Name of registered person	Little Shipmates Group Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903282
Telephone number	02380 840971
Date of previous inspection	26 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Little Shipmates Pre-School registered in 2017. It is one of six nurseries privately owned and managed by Little Shipmates Group Limited. The nursery operates from a purpose-built building within the grounds of Waterside Primary School in Hythe, Hampshire. The pre-school opens from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round except for Christmas and bank holidays. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. A team of 32 staff works with the children. Of these, 30 hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 and above. One senior staff member holds a level 6 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lucy Short

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting, and they discussed the early years curriculum.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and the children.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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