

Little Dragons Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Dragons Pre-school is privately owned. It was registered in November 2006 and, since 2010 it has operated from a new, modern, single story, purpose-designed building in the grounds of St George's Infant School in Amersham, Buckinghamshire. It is open on weekdays from 8am to 6pm during term times. The kitchen facilities are shared with the school, and the pre-school also has access to the school grounds. Little Dragons is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Little Dragons also provides a breakfast club, and after-school care and holiday clubs for children in the local schools and surrounding area. There are 79 children on roll in the pre-school, and a maximum of 40 children aged from two to under five may attend at any one time. In the other groups it is a maximum of 40 children aged two to eight. They may attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for free early education. Little Dragons provides support for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who are learning English as an additional language. Apart from the proprietor there are 14 members of staff who work directly with the children, 13 of which hold a valid Early Years qualification appropriate to their role. This includes the manager, who is working towards a degree. One practitioner has a relevant university degree. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress overall in their learning and development because the proprietor and staff have drive and ambition, and are always seeking ways to improve outcomes for the children. Children are safe, very happy, and enjoy playing in an exciting outside area. Consequently they make great strides in their personal, social and emotional development, and their physical and spoken language skills. Observations and assessments are not yet used sufficiently to plan the next stage in learning, especially in investigations, reading, and numeracy skills. The excellent links with parents, carers, the local school and the community support a family atmosphere, seamless transition between home and pre-school and ensures all children are fully included.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- provide more opportunities for children to become aware of the written word, mathematical vocabulary and to take part in explorative and investigational activities
- review strategies for observing and assessing children so that they are more efficient, and focus planning more sharply on the next steps for learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected from harm and feel extremely safe because there is excellent attention to safeguarding. All staff have been rigorously checked for their suitability to work with children, and statutory training is up-to-date. There are rigorous risk assessments, and attention to the provision of high quality of resources and equipment is very good. The proprietor's drive and the staff's vigilance ensure that children are safe and thrive in a welcoming environment. The leadership and management of the pre-school are good. The proprietor takes a very strong lead and works in tandem with the manager and staff to benefit the children. Their enthusiasm and good self-evaluation has led to high outcomes in children feeling safe, making a positive contribution and healthy lifestyles. This demonstrates the pre-school's good capacity to improve. The outstanding accommodation in the grounds of the local school provides children with excellent facilities and an exciting outdoor area. As a result they make rapid progress in their personal, social, spoken language and physical skills. The inside rooms are light and airy, and equipment is fit for purpose. However, there are some missed opportunities to develop children's awareness of the written English and mathematical vocabulary through investigative and explorative experiences. The mathematics, science and reading areas do not yet fully encourage children to explore, investigate and become more interested in the written word. Planning is good. Weekly staff meetings allow time to discuss children's achievements and plan activities for the following week. As a result, children's interests are used as themes for learning. Observations and assessments of children's progress are very detailed but do not always focus clearly on what they already know, understand and can do. On occasions it is not always clear what the next step for learning should be and how and when this is followed up. This prevents some children from making even faster progress, especially the very capable ones. However, children's 'learning journeys' are delightful and provide parents and carers with valuable information about how well their children are doing. Clear policies and systems ensure that everyone is well informed about the work of Little Dragons Pre-school. Equality and diversity are embedded exceptionally well. Individual needs are catered for, and children with special educational needs and/or physical difficulties, and those with English as an additional language are fully included. Partnerships with other agencies are excellent and the pre-school seeks the support it requires to meet specific needs. Most children make a smooth transition to the next stage of their education because there are excellent links with parents, carers and neighbouring schools. Good communication with all groups is an outstanding basis for these successful relationships and the good start children have to their educational journey.

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

Children particularly enjoy spending time in the excellent outdoor area. This together with staff who take the time to engage with children in a range of

activities enables them to make substantial gains in their personal, social, emotional, physical and spoken language skills. They make good progress in all other areas of learning. All children are included, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in relation to their capabilities and starting points because of the good provision made for them. Children show a strong sense of security and feel safe. They enjoy very good relationships with staff and as a result behave well, are developing independence and eagerly try the activities provided for them. Children are very good at riding bikes and trolleys, and enjoy weaving around obstacles, particularly when an adult acts as traffic controller. The excellent and imaginative outside facilities entice the children, and give them the opportunity to grow in physical strength and skill. Staff are good at talking to the children while they are playing. Adults extend children's learning when they skillfully question them about an activity; for example, how to count how many cups of water it takes to fill a bottle. Creative and imaginative experiences are enhanced when adults encourage children to join in playing with shaving foam and enjoy the tactile experience of smoothing the foam over the table. The children make very good strides in their ability to communicate as they play with the foam and, with the very good lead from an adult, repeat the story about a bear hunt. Children successfully learn about simple hygiene routines and talk about making healthy choices, such as which are the best foods to eat and the importance of cleaning your teeth. The modern facilities promote cleanliness and hygiene because the children can use the taps and toilet flushes without difficulty. They are only too eager to demonstrate the flush sensor and how to operate the taps. The water cooler gives them easy access to drinks and is another way in which they can demonstrate their independence. Children at the pre-school enjoy reading books and are eager for adults to read with them. They are also eager to write. They show that they are interested in number, enjoy building towers with blocks and can talk about two- and three-dimensional shapes. They are curious about the world around them and are eager learners. However, there is not a specific, quiet area set aside for reading, nor are there enough areas or displays which attract the children and encourage them to experiment or investigate, or to be more aware of the written word or mathematical vocabulary. As a result some children, especially the high achievers, do not make as much progress as possible. Visitors to the pre-school, regular contacts with the infants' school and involvement in the community, such as taking part in the Amersham Carnival and Jubilee Celebrations, give children stimulating cultural experiences. These events add considerably to their knowledge and understanding of the world and play an important role in preparing them for future life in society.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	2
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	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2

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