

Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)

King George Playing Field, Cage Lane, Boxted, Colchester, Essex, CO4 5RE



Inspection date	4 February 2016
Previous inspection date	12 May 2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff have a good knowledge of how children learn. They support children's communication and language skills consistently well. Staff get down to children's level, speak clearly and add new words into their vocabulary.
- Staff provide a well-resourced environment indoors and outside. Children develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem as they independently select resources and are praised regularly by staff for their achievements.
- Staff form effective partnerships with parents. They regularly update them on their children's progress and actively include their views in assessments of their children's development. Parents are supported to effectively extend children's learning at home.
- Staff support children to settle well at the pre-school. They liaise closely with parents about children's likes, interests and care routines before they start. Staff stay nearby and provide children with reassurance, gradually building their confidence in exploring the environment.
- The management team is committed to improving outcomes for children. Their robust checking of children's progress ensures that any gaps in learning are identified swiftly and the appropriate support implemented in a timely way.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff sometimes miss opportunities to further promote children's problem-solving skills.
- Although managers meet all staff regularly, their monitoring of staff practice is not sharply focused enough on teaching to help ensure an even higher quality of teaching throughout the pre-school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide children with more opportunities to think for themselves about why things happen, how things work and to come up with their own solutions
- undertake more rigorous evaluation of staff teaching practice and use the information to improve the quality of teaching to the highest level.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the deputy manager of the pre-school.
- The inspector held a meeting with the pre-school manager and the office manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the pre-school's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Daniella Tyler

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff can identify the possible indicators of abuse and know the appropriate action to take if they have concerns about a child. They monitor children's attendance and follow up any issues that give them cause for concern. The management team regularly evaluates the quality of care and education they provide. They accurately identify their strengths and set themselves challenging but achievable targets for improvement. Staff have developed successful partnerships with the other early years settings children attend. They regularly share information about children's progress, providing children with a high level of consistency in their learning. The management team holds regular meetings with staff to discuss any worries or concerns they have. Staff are offered regular training to meet the needs of children and for their own professional development.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The well-qualified staff get to know children through regular observations and accurate assessments of what they can do. Staff use this information effectively, to plan activities that derive from children's interests and are based around their learning needs. Children are provided with many opportunities to develop their literacy skills. They sit and look at books with each other and enjoy staff enthusiastically reading to them. Staff promote children's understanding of the world around them. One example of this is when children eagerly engage in a birdwatching activity that helps to develop their understanding of animals and where they live. Staff are skilled at adapting their practice to meet the needs of younger children and older, more-able children. They model activities and promote children's confidence to practise these for themselves. Staff support disabled children and those with special educational needs well. They regularly liaise with parents and professionals to implement consistent, effective support to meet children's needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children form warm, caring bonds with their key person, staff and each other. They show they feel happy, safe and secure in the care of staff. They develop high levels of independence. Even the youngest children are encouraged to attend to their own personal care needs and help to set-up activities. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They set clear, age-appropriate boundaries and gently remind children of these throughout the day. Children are supported to share and understand the effects their actions can have on others. Children are provided with healthy snacks. They are encouraged to try new foods from around the world. This helps to develop their understanding of different cultures and ways of life. Children have many opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise. They have daily access to the outdoor area, and take part in physical games and dancing.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress given their starting points and capabilities. Children are supported well in building on their listening and attention skills. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning, including school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY400589
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	860183
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	74
Name of provider	Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)
Date of previous inspection	12 May 2010
Telephone number	01206 273226

Little Owls Preschool (Boxted) was registered in 2009. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including the manager who holds Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school also employs an office manager. It opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 3.15pm with an early-bird session from 8.45am to 9.15am. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports disabled children and those with special educational needs.

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