

Inspection of Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)

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

Inspection date: 9 December 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children demonstrate that they are happy and secure as they eagerly take part in a variety of activities. They show pride in getting things right and determination to keep trying if they get something wrong. Children are kind and helpful. For example, they help staff carry items to the table from the kitchen and say 'sorry' to friends if they almost bump into them. Children demonstrate their growing independence. From a young age, children are encouraged to peel their own fruit at snack and to pour their own drinks from jugs. They politely use 'please' and 'thank you' when they speak to staff and other children. Children delight in cooking imaginary cakes and sharing them. They laugh as they tell staff the funny combinations of flavours, such as 'jam and toast pies'. Staff participate in children's play and pretend to eat the creations, talking about the different textures and ingredients.

Children eagerly explore making marks and tell staff their meaning. They begin to write the first letter of their name and recognise other words that begin with the same letter. Children use this skill throughout the setting. For example, they recognise their name label on their coat peg, and their plate and cup at snack time. Children enthusiastically scoop different ingredients into paper bags to make 'reindeer food'. Older children carefully label their bag with their name and younger children concentrate as they make marks to copy staff's writing.

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

- The manager consults with staff, children and parents to help identify areas to improve. She reviews the progress children make with each key person to help focus their activity planning and teaching. The manager uses training, staff meetings and effective supervision arrangements help staff to reflect on their practice and continually improve their skills.
- Staff provide interesting opportunities for children to explore different cultures and languages. For example, they introduce Italian foods at snack time and teach children about the words that children in Italy would use for cheese and fruit. Children are keen to try panettone bread and talk about special foods they have had at home.
- Children are confident and capable learners. They are developing the key skills that will help prepare them for when they make the move on to school. Children develop good social skills and form friendships. They enjoy large-group activities, such as reading stories, singing and dancing.
- Staff teach children how to play shape-sorting board games. They explain the rules and encourage children to play fairly. For example, staff remind children to take just one turn and to be honest about the shapes they roll with the dice. Staff also use this opportunity to teach children the names of different shapes

and help them practise their counting skills.

- Children practise their physical skills energetically outside. They climb the pirate ship, jump on and off huge tyres and pedal tricycles up and down. Staff talk to children about how their bodies work and encourage them to notice how they feel after dancing vigorously.
- Staff promote children's love of stories well. They read with clarity and enthusiasm, pausing to ask children questions about the illustrations and what they think might happen next. Children respond with enthusiasm and share their ideas about the characters' actions and feelings.
- Parents report feeling supported by staff and praise their work with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to support children's development. They comment on how settled their children are and the variety of activities they enjoy during their time at the pre-school. However, staff do not currently provide parents with enough guidance to extend their children's learning at home.
- Staff engage children earnestly in conversations. They listen to children's thoughts and ask pertinent questions about their recent special experiences, such as a trip to the cinema.
- In a focused teaching activity, children are encouraged to explore the effects of vinegar on bicarbonate of soda snowmen. However, sometimes staff do not provide clear enough explanations about concepts that are new, to ensure all children's full understanding. For example, staff do not make clear the difference between children's past experiences of melting ice and the new process of reacting and dissolving.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and business manager implement robust recruitment procedures and ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. They ensure that all staff receive child protection training to help them understand their role in keeping children safe. As a result, staff have a good knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. They understand the procedures for reporting any concerns about a child's welfare or an adult's behaviour.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff skills so they consistently provide clear information to children, particularly when introducing new concepts, to help build on children's existing knowledge and enhance their understanding further
- enhance arrangements for sharing suggestions for children's next steps with parents to maximise children's progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY400589
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10074337
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	58
Name of registered person	Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)
Registered person unique reference number	RP904081
Telephone number	01206 273226
Date of previous inspection	4 February 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Owls Preschool (Boxted) registered in 2009. The pre-school employs 11 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 a business manager. It opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Oakley

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 manager took the inspector on a walk around the premises to explain how the early years provision and curriculum is organised.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.
- The manager completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.

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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