

Little Einsteins Childcare Centre Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	24/09/2009
Inspector	Josie Lever
Setting address	117 Cranbrook Avenue, HULL, HU6 7SS
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Description of the setting

Little Einstein's Childcare Centre Limited was re-registered under a private owner and manager in March 2009. It was formerly known as Hull University Union Day Nursery owned by the Students Union and has been a well-established setting within the local and wider community since 1973. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 51 children under five years old at any one time. It operates from three activity rooms within a purpose built ground floor building on the Hull University campus, situated between Inglemire Lane and Cranbrook Avenue in Kingston-upon-Hull.

The childcare centre is open between Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 5.45pm all year round, except for a week at Christmas and all bank holidays. There are currently 78 children on roll from birth to four years old, 26 of whom are under two years old. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and many children who use English as an additional language. All children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The provision provides places for the children of students and staff of the university and also includes children from the local community. Children are regularly taken for walks around the university campus or to places locally of interest.

There are 16 members of staff, including the manager, who work directly with the children. The majority of these hold relevant childcare qualifications. The setting employs ancillary staff, including a cook and a cleaner.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development because they are well supported by a knowledgeable staff team in order to enjoy and achieve. Children are valued and respected as individuals by staff who are committed to their own ongoing professional development. Positive partnerships exist between staff and parents and good links are well established with professionals in the wider context and other Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) providers. The setting has good systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of its provision and are successful in making and sustaining improvements that impact positively on outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enable older/more able children to develop their self-help skills, for example, serving their own lunch
- display lists of words from home languages used by children in the setting and invite parents and practitioners to contribute to them

- ensure all highchairs are safe and suitable for children's use.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Leaders of the setting are highly motivated to drive and secure improvements to a well-established setting, which changed ownership earlier in the year. For example, all rooms continue to undergo redecoration and refurbishment, which not only improves the aesthetical look of the setting but adds to children's comfort. Some furniture and equipment has been replaced and children's toys have been increased and renewed, with more still on order to provide an even wider range of play choices for children. The garden has been successfully redesigned to make it much more interactive, for example, planting and growing areas, mounded hills to climb, sandpits to dig in and large tractor tyres to climb through. This has had a huge impact on children's enjoyment of their learning outdoors and many children choose to spend much of their time in the garden, which is successfully supported by a free-flow system throughout the day.

The staff team work very well together and demonstrate a commitment towards their ongoing training and professional development, to ensure they meet future changes and learn new skills. For example, the manager of the setting holds a level 4 qualification and three staff are currently working towards an early years foundation degree, including the owner who is very involved on a day to day basis within the setting. This enthusiasm to learning ensures children benefit by the staff's secure knowledge and understanding of meeting children's welfare and development needs and improves outcomes for children. Children's starting points are used successfully in order to plan and prepare for children's progress and development and systems for observing and assessing children's progress successfully identifying the next steps in their learning. The leaders of the setting have implemented an effective computer based monitoring tool, that provides them with an overview of each child's progress attending the setting on a termly basis. They use this information, linking it to the development matters guidance to narrow the achievement gap between the different groups of children's learning and development by providing additional support and challenges.

Children are kept safe and staff are vigilant to their whereabouts in the setting at all times, particularly when they are moving from indoors to outdoors. The setting has in place a range of written policies, procedures and systems that effectively contributes to the safeguarding of children and management of the provision. However, one highchair in the baby room is not safe with exposed foam seating and has not been identified as a hazard. Strong partnerships exist with parents, which ensures they are kept well informed about all aspects of the provision and staff respect parents wishes, for example, by following feeding techniques, such as baby-led weaning. Some of the setting's policies have been translated into other languages, including information on the principles of the EYFS and displayed on parent's notice boards. Positive images and welcome signs around the setting gives children and families a sense of belonging. However, whilst the setting supports a number of families for whom English is an additional language, there is little evidence of words recorded or displayed in the play areas of the different

home languages spoken by children. Partnerships with other professionals are well established and links have been forged with local schools to ensure progression and continuity of care and learning takes place through the exchange of information and smooth transitional arrangements.

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

Warm interaction enables children to play happily and caring relationships foster children's self-esteem. Children make good progress because the staff have a good understanding about how children learn and develop and consequently use resources effectively. They provide a broad range of activities and experiences that are adult-led and child-initiated to help children develop skills for the future. Adults have a good knowledge of each child's background, including those who may need additional help and support in order to provide high quality care. For example, in order to break down barriers in communication with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or English as an additional language, a picture board has been devised to support children's understanding about daily routines and making choices. All areas are accessible and resources are stored at child height to aid independent selection in most areas.

Children take pleasure in looking at books and listening to stories and speak confidently. Babies in particular enjoy interactive lift the flap books, responding with giggles to the noises that adults make. They show an interest in their surroundings as they roll, crawl and move within the free space. They benefit from sensory play experiences, such as playing with water, sand, paint, gloop and a range of natural materials. They respond to the praise and claps from caring adults, which helps to increase their confidence and self-assurance, for example, as they pull themselves up to stand and support themselves for a short while. Children demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene and staying safe through established and well organised routines. They benefit from the provision of healthy meals and snacks and enjoy a sociable lunch together. However, older and more able children have less opportunities to develop their self-help skills, for example, serving themselves.

Children are well behaved and confident in their environment and are interested and active in their learning both indoors and out. All children have very good opportunities to explore creatively and spontaneously from a wide range of creative mediums. For example, toddlers enjoy using their senses as they explore baked beans, squelching them through their fingers and occasionally tasting them. Older children are actively engaged in making cloud pictures, sticking and painting cotton wool balls. They handle equipment confidently and skilfully, for example, scissors, paint brushes, glue spreaders, rolling pins and cutters. Children greatly enjoy their time outdoors and develop skills of cooperation and negotiation, for example, as they complete a large floor hop scotch puzzle. Adults' frequent use of open-ended questions helps children to develop their problem solving skills. For example, they talk about the cause and effect of speed and distance of a rolling barrel and make comparisons, should a child be inside. Protective clothing, such as boots and all in one rain suits are provided to ensure children can enjoy outdoor

physical opportunities all year round. They recently purchased a six seated pushchair, which also helps the babies and youngest children leave the nursery and visit places in the local community, for example, they are taken on nature walks and visits to the local shops.

Children's understanding of diversity and differences is enhanced as they celebrate festivals and special events and visit places of worship, for example, the Sikh temple. Children are learning about the different habitats of animals and preparing for the changes of the coming seasons. The positioning of a bird table in front of a large circular window allows children to watch from the comfort of the playroom, the wildlife feeding in the garden. An external bird box has had a closed circuit television camera installed in preparation for the forthcoming winter months. This will beam a live video stream to a television or laptop in the playroom, so children can experience first hand how birds behave and feed. Children speak excitedly about what they hope to see, for example, a bird feeding her chicks and they are waiting with glee and increased anticipation for this event to unfold.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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