

Little Bears Nursery

Woodside Childrens Centre, Highgate Road, DUDLEY, West Midlands, DY2 0SN

Inspection date	15/01/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- A key strength of this nursery is the high focus given to developing positive partnerships with parents. Staff use a number of successful strategies that engage parents in their children's learning in the nursery and at home.
- Children over two years are effectively supported to independently move and play inside or outdoors. This supports children who prefer to learn outdoors and provides wonderful opportunities for children to work on a larger scale with the stimulating variety of resources outdoors.
- Safeguarding child protection policies and procedures are robustly implemented to safeguard children.

It is not yet good because

- Teaching requires improvement because the quality of planned activities is variable. As a result, some activities are not effectively planned to ensure they are sufficiently challenging or adapted to the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each child. Therefore, children are not always supported to make good progress in their learning.
- The arrangements to support, coach and train all staff to take on the new responsibility of planning activities for their individual key children have not been effective enough to achieve consistently good teaching practice.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all areas in the nursery and outdoor areas.
- The inspector held discussions about safeguarding procedures and children's play, learning and care with the nursery and children's centre manager and staff.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children to obtain their views.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of children's activity with the learning and development manager and childcare team manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and discussed monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement plans.

Inspector

Christine Armstrong

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Bears Nursery was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register. It is situated within the children's centre on the site of Woodside Community school in the area of Dudley, West Midlands and is managed by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council. It is one of five nurseries operated by the provider. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from two rooms and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one staff holds an early years degree. The nursery manager also holds an early years degree. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 108 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good by making sure planned activities are challenging and adapted to meet the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each child.
- improve the level of support, coaching and training provided to staff, in order to achieve consistently good teaching practice, particularly in relation to the planning of activities for their individual key children, children who are learning English as an additional language and for children who's progress is less than expected.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

In most instances, the quality of teaching is good. Staff promote the learning and development of children effectively. They use a number of successful strategies to engage parents to take part in their children's learning in the setting and at home, which is a key factor for supporting children's future learning at school. This includes running a book library several times a week. This supports parents to foster their children's interest and enjoyment of books, which helps to support children's literacy and communication skills. Parents of children under two years are particularly well supported to become involved

and contribute to children's assessments and next steps in learning. For example, staff display information showing how they are using observations of children's abilities and interest to plan their next steps in learning. They are also effective in supporting parents to contribute to this process. For example, they provide resources and guidance for parents to undertake observations at home, which are used to obtain accurate assessments of children's abilities and interest. Parents of pre-school children spoken to on the day of the inspection, report staff are very supportive and take time to talk to them about their child's development, which they feel helps them to support their child's learning at home.

For the majority of the day, staff who work with children over two years, provide children with the choice to independently move and play inside or outdoors. This effectively supports children who prefer to learn outdoors and provides wonderful opportunities for children to work on a larger scale and benefit from the natural stimuli of nature. A covered area is well resourced with a selection of recycled materials that include shells and recycled packaging for children to join, use, create and design for their own purposes, which enhances their learning, curiosity and self-discovery. Staff plan enjoyable and challenging activities outdoors and staff on hand support and challenge children's learning well. For example, staff encourage children to experiment and listen to the different sounds and rhymes they can make on the different section of the wooden turtle using a range of different beaters. They set up an activity that supports and challenges children's physical development by requiring them to catch and throw small and large items into a tunnel. The member of staff is playful and enthusiastic in her approach and gives lots of praise and encouragement with words and actions. This attracts and maintains children's attention and encourages them to carry on trying. She effectively supports less able children by demonstrating how to hold their hands to catch and challenges more able children to catch and throw from a wider distance. Children's interest in number and colour is also supported as they count and name items by colour for a purpose. In some instances, staff are very effective and skilful in implementing continuous planned activities for children in their key group based on previous interests and individual abilities. For example, children's enjoyment of a story about a caterpillar is effectively captured with a range of puppets and props to maintain their interest and to support and challenge all children to recall and make up their own storylines. This effectively supports children to work together and express their thoughts and feelings. Also, staff use their knowledge of children's communication skills to effectively develop their vocabulary. Indoors, staff working with children under two years use an array of different resources to nurture younger children's natural interest and curiosity in the things they see hear and feel. This helps children to make good progress in their development because it encourages them to use their senses to explore and experiment. It helps children to begin to engage in new experiences and learn by trial and error, which helps to support and extend their physical skills, self-confidence and self-awareness.

However, teaching requires improvement because at times information gained about children's achievements and individual stage of development is not effectively used by all key persons to plan activities. Therefore, the quality of teaching is variable and not always tailored towards individual children or well matched to their abilities. This means that some children do not always receive effective support and challenge to make good progress in their development, given their starting points and capabilities. For example,

during an adult-led activity, staff start by naming all the children sitting in the key group. This supports new children to learn each other's name. However, the activity is not planned to challenge children around the table who are confident enough to introduce themselves or demonstrate they know other children's names, in order to extend their communication skills. When children are asked to describe the weather, some children are challenged well to think and have a go at making suggestions, using appropriate vocabulary. However, plans are not in place to use pictorial prompts to support less verbal children to contribute, in order to support their developing understanding for the world or opportunity to have a go. All children are suitably supported to identify their names that are written on a small piece of paper. However, staff do not plan to encourage children to keep their name in print and use for their own purposes in their play to further support their learning. Some children enjoy writing their name by joining dots made by the member of staff on a wipe board. However, no alternative strategies are planned for children who do not have the hand eye coordination to be successful in this task. In these instances, children would benefit more from being encouraged to make their own marks to represent their names or encouraged to make the shape of the letters in their name on a larger scale in the air or within sand. As a result, some children find this task frustrating and lose interest.

In most instances, staff work very effectively with the nursery's Special Education Coordinator, who is a qualified teacher. In these instances, information from assessments is used very effectively to plan well-targeted support for children, which results in them making good progress. However, in some instances where assessment is beginning to show children are making less progress than expected, the information is not always swiftly used to ensure activities are planned and sharply targeted. Some children who are learning English as an additional language are effectively supported by bilingual staff. Some effective strategies are used to support children whose home language is not spoken by staff. However, in this instance, staff do not always ensure the planning of activities are sharply targeted to fully support the learning needs of these children.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The nursery provides a welcoming environment for children, parents and visitors. There is a variety of positive images of diversity throughout the nursery, which provide a message that everybody is welcome. Staff greet parents and children as they arrive and engage in conversation and play with them, which help children to settle well and provide parents with the time to exchange information. Children are familiar with and respond well to all staff. Older children demonstrate they are very familiar with their own key person and group as they find their way to them at group and snack times. Discussions with parents demonstrate how well key persons develop relationships with parents, which contributes to exchanging information and meeting children's needs. Children under two years demonstrate very warm attachments to their key persons, which helps them to begin to develop further relationships with other staff in the nursery. All staff place good emphasis on ensuring children are emotionally well prepared for their next stage in their learning. Younger children make short visits and join key groups with children they are familiar with when they move up into the larger area of the nursery. Staff take a very flexible approach and take the lead from each child to arrange how long these visits last. This approach is

also taken when children first attend the nursery, which helps to ensure children are fully familiar with their new environments. Recorded written comments from parents demonstrate they feel their children settle well into the nursery because staff are supportive, especially when children find the experience difficult. Older children's play area is part of the school playground, which helps them to become familiar with seeing older children and school staff. Established links with the foundation stage of the school means that children benefit from having experiences within the school, which further supports their preparation for their move.

All staff are good role models who use consistent positive approaches to provide clear guidance for children about what is acceptable behaviour. Staff spend time talking to children and supporting them to explore, express and manage their feelings and consider others. As children play, all staff talk to them about the steps they can take to keep themselves and others safe. As a result, children enjoy a harmonious, safe environment. Parents spoken to on the day of inspection, describe the high levels of support they receive to manage their children's behaviour. This includes attending parenting classes to explore and learn effective behaviour management strategies and techniques.

The nursery has a varied range of resources inside and outdoors. In most instances, they are used effectively to stimulate and support learning. Indoors, resources are continuously available to children and are set out in learning zones, which engages them to become active in play as soon as they arrive. Displays of children's work and photographs of them at play help children to develop a sense of belonging. However, staff do not always make best use of the available resources, particularly when planning adult-led activities for their keyworker group, in order to keep children motivated and engaged. The outdoor area provides a sheltered area, so that children can enjoy fresh air and outdoor play during all weather conditions. Children have lots of good opportunities to become active and energetic and develop their physical skills using a wide variety of large and small equipment. Children's good health is further supported through the focus given to supporting them and their parents to become more aware of the importance of healthy eating. Staff provide a good level of support to children, so that they become independent and aware of the need to wash their hands thoroughly before eating snack. However, key persons do not always use their knowledge of what children can do for themselves to plan snack time, so that children are supported and challenged to do as much as they can for themselves, such as pouring their own drink and serving themselves to snack. Children's need for rest and sleep is adequately met. Children under two years sleep in cots, on cushions and lie back chairs following their own routines in their playroom. Children over two years are supported to have quiet times throughout the day and they have a sleep in a sectioned off area in their playroom.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

There is a clear line of responsibility within the team who have management responsibility for the nursery. The team members are very knowledgeable and have a clear vision and aim to provide very high quality care and education. High priority is given to safeguarding children. There is an established safeguarding training programme that includes the

management team undertaking advanced safeguarding training. All staff undertake level 1 training and training on the Common Assessment Framework. As a result, safeguarding procedures are robust, any concerns about children's welfare are acted upon swiftly and appropriately and staff work as part of a multi-agency team to ensure early identification of need. This helps to ensure families are supported and children are kept safe and protected from harm and neglect. Recruitment procedures are also established and robust, ensuring all adults are suitable. Children are further safeguarded through high levels of supervision and risk assessments. Robust steps are taken to ensure intruders are prevented from entering the premises. All the required records, to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and to help ensure the needs of all children are met, are kept. Staff receive training in first aid, which ensures they administer first aid appropriately and inform parents of any accidents. These procedures help to ensure children's health is promoted and benefit from a safe and secure environment.

The nursery has recently been re-registered with Ofsted and re-organised, which has led to significant changes within the nursery in relation to how the nursery meets the learning and development requirements. The nursery no longer has a teacher manager who worked within the nursery and was solely responsible for planning and monitoring children's progress. Therefore, key persons now hold the responsibility to undertake planning for their own key children. The management team recognise that the significant change have presented many challenges. They have put into place a number of effective strategies to facilitate the changes, including a programme of staff training. New systems for planning activities have also been put in place. In most instances, this has been effective to ensure activities are based on children's previous interest and individual abilities. However, these changes are not yet fully embedded and as a result, the quality of teaching is not consistently good. The management team are monitoring this and are aware of the need to continue to make improvements in this area. They have plans to continue to provide further staff support, coaching and training, where needed, to secure and embed the new approach. However, swift enough action has not yet been taken to ensure all children are benefiting from planned activities that are based upon their previous interest and individual abilities, in order to support their good progress towards the early learning goals.

Partnerships with parents are very positive and make rich contributions to children's learning and care. Staff continually strive to support parents to be actively involved in their children's experiences at nursery and learning at home. Parents' views are sought and acted upon on a day-to-day basis and through the self-evaluation process, which helps the nursery to identify how they can improve in meeting the needs of children. Partnerships with other professional agencies and the school on site are also very positive and contribute to ensuring all children and families receive early intervention and support as they move towards school.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY464717
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	929065
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	108
Name of provider	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01384818245

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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