

Little Chestnuts Pre School

The Village Hall, Toppesfield, HALSTEAD, Essex, CO9 4DR



Inspection date

10 May 2016

Previous inspection date

1 December 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
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

- The pre-school has effective leadership and management. There is a strong team spirit and everyone is motivated to improve the quality of the pre-school. The manager monitors the quality of the provision well and identifies areas for further improvement.
- Children play in a calm, relaxed and welcoming environment. They participate in a broad range of activities that reflects their interests. Children make good progress and develop the skills they need for future learning.
- An effective key-person system is in place. Children develop good relationships with staff and each other. They respond well to the daily routines and complete many tasks independently.
- Partnerships with parents are successful. Parents feel well informed about their children's learning and become involved in the activities in the pre-school. They speak highly of the staff and are happy with the care provided.
- The manager and staff have effective relationships with other early years professionals and the local school. This helps to promote continuity in learning and a smooth transfer when children start full-time education.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The organisation of some of the group activities does not always meet the needs of the youngest children.
- Although children mainly behave well, staff do not take every opportunity to encourage children to take responsibility for helping to tidy up and take pride in their environment.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- strengthen the organisation of the group activities and consistently support and extend the learning and development of the youngest children
- provide more opportunities for children to demonstrate their growing sense of responsibility and take pride in their environment.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during indoor activities, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff, children and nominated person.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the children's development records.
- The inspector reviewed evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff, self-evaluation, risk assessment and policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The manager and staff have reviewed and implemented a wealth of policies and practices to help keep children safe from harm. Rigorous recruitment and vetting processes help ensure all staff and committee members are suitable to be with children. Staff are vigilant and have a good understanding of how to protect children from harm. Thorough risk assessments of all the areas used, both outside and indoors, are carried out and reviewed daily. Staff have a good awareness of how to identify and report concerns regarding the welfare of a child. The manager frequently observes staff and gives feedback to help them to reflect on their practice. Staff attend training courses to extend their knowledge and skills. This helps to improve outcomes for children. The action and recommendations from the last inspection have successfully been addressed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The staff team is well qualified and experienced and demonstrates a clear understanding of how children develop and learn. Staff gather important information from parents before children start at the pre-school. They build upon this information through regularly observing and assessing children's progress. From this, staff plan interesting and purposeful activities that children enjoy. Any gaps in development that are identified for both individual children, or groups of children, are swiftly closed through targeted intervention. Staff teach children to recognise and write their names and develop an understanding of words and letters. They also provide a broad range of activities to encourage them to speak and listen. This has a significantly positive impact on children's communication skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children cheerfully enter the pre-school ready to learn. They show they are pleased to see staff. They share their stories and offer information about what they have been doing at home. Staff listen with genuine interest and act as calm role models. Children learn how to share, take turns and show kindness for others. Children's independence is promoted well through everyday routines. They learn how to attend to their self-care needs and enjoy serving themselves at snack time. In addition, staff regularly review how the spaces within the pre-school are used. This helps them to create new opportunities for children to choose where they would like to play and what they would like to play with. A good range of outdoor activities, informative displays and discussions with children helps them to develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including those who receive funding, make good progress. Children are confident, self-assured and really enjoy learning. They demonstrate a strong desire to try new things and eagerly investigate the many experiences on offer. Older children's literacy and mathematical skills are developing well to support them in their next stage of learning and the eventual progression on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402244
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	1034410
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	20
Name of provider	Little Chestnuts Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2015
Telephone number	07901 880914

Little Chestnuts Pre School opened in 1974 and is run by a committee. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, one member of staff holds a qualification at level 5 and three staff hold a qualification at level 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during school term times. Sessions are between 9am and 3pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and from 9am to 1pm on Thursday and Friday. A breakfast club operates on Thursday and Friday morning from 8am to 9am. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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