

Little Learning Ladder

Unit 1, Chips, 2 Lampwick Lane, New Islington, MANCHESTER, M4 6BU

Inspection date	29/08/2014
Previous inspection date	20/02/2014

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		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Assessment is precise and sharply focused. It is used well by staff to progress children's learning and development through good planning and effective teaching.
- Children are well supported in their acquisition of communication and language skills and are articulate and confident learners. As a result, children make consistently good progress in all areas of learning.
- Partnerships with parents are effective. The key-person system ensures parents are kept well informed about their children's learning and development. Children settle quickly as a result.
- Safeguarding is promoted well because all staff have a comprehensive understanding of child protection. Risk assessments are robust and effective safety measures are in place to keep children safe.
- The leadership and management organise the setting effectively. Actions to overcome weaknesses and improve the provision further are successful and focus on improving children's achievement.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor area is less well resourced than the indoors areas and does not maximise learning opportunities.

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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the different rooms of the nursery and the outside area.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at the children's assessment records and planning documents.
- The inspector checked the qualifications and suitability of practitioners in the setting.
- The inspector spoke to parents on the day and took their views into account.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and deputy manager of the provision.
- The inspector reviewed self-evaluation and a range of documents and policies.

Inspector

Gary KIRKLEY

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Learning Ladders was registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in purpose built premises in the New Islington area of Manchester and is managed by a limited company. The nursery serves the local area. It operates from three rooms. Playrooms are accessed by a number of steps and a lift is available. Children have access to an area for outdoor play, which includes a covered area. The nursery employs thirteen members of childcare staff. Of these, ten hold appropriate early years qualifications, including two at level 2, seven at level 3 and one with level 4. The nursery is open five days a week, all year round, except for bank holidays. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 7pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance further the range of toys outdoors to maximise learning opportunities.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. They complete purposeful observations of children, to identify the stage they have reached in all areas of learning and to note their interests and preferred learning styles. Assessment is a continuous process, is sharply focused and involves all those concerned with the child's learning, including parents. Staff value the knowledge parents contribute about their child, they use this information well to ensure that when they plan for children they take account of the child's full range of experiences. Staff use the information they gather from their observations and from the information parents contribute, to plan well-tailored activities that meet the needs of all children. They track children's progress by noting their achievements and targeting appropriate next steps. As a result, all children make consistently good progress from their individual starting points through purposeful activities. Individual learning plans are highly detailed and comprehensive. They clearly link to Early Years Outcomes. As a result, activities offered address the needs and interests of all children and prepare them well for the next stage in their learning and school.

All teaching is at least good and in some cases outstanding. Staff deliver activities that cover all areas of learning to a high standard. They promote the acquisition and

development of speech and language skilfully through a wide range of activities that children enjoy. For example, children participate in games that promote conversation and develop their listening, attention and critical thinking skills. Kinaesthetic learning, or handling objects, is part of many activities and helps children to impose a concrete value to words. Children enjoy singing and rhyme, and this particularly helps younger children, or children who speak English as an additional language, because they follow the actions and develop their language skills through visual prompts. A significant number of children have special educational needs and/ or disabilities, including communication needs, particularly children for whom English is an additional language. For many children the nursery offers their first encounter with English as their parents speak their native language in the home setting. Staff support these children well through a good understanding of how to promote the characteristics of effective learning and by working effectively in partnership with specialist professionals. As a result, children enjoy their play and develop a positive disposition towards learning. For example, they have fun exploring the texture of shaving foam and derive a sense of achievement as they work out how to squirt this by themselves. One member of staff focuses on using the noises that animals make to help motivate children to make sounds as a precursor for more formal language. As a result, all children make at least good progress with their language and communication skills from their starting point.

The learning journey and individual tracking files are particularly effective in plotting learning, recording progress in relation to Early Years Outcomes and keeping parents well-informed about their child's progress. Parents are asked to contribute what they know about their child so that staff can use this information and ensure continuity for children. Staff update assessments and learning journeys systematically to ensure that tracking is robust and accurately identifies children's achievements and future learning needs. They complete the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, which helps to identify any delay in their learning at an early stage. All children are working effectively within the typical range of development expected for their age. All children are making consistently good progress from their individual starting point. Where the starting points for some children are below those of other children of their age, the recorded assessments show they are improving consistently and that the gap is closing.

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

On starting at the nursery, each child is assigned a key person. The key person works very closely with parents, gathering relevant information about each child's individual needs and routines. This information is used well to help settle children quickly and to promote a strong sense of belonging, so that children feel secure. Staff follow children's home routines, as far as they are able, and have daily discussions with parents about children's changing and developing needs and routines, so that these can be suitably adjusted. They discuss and plan relevant activities that help all children rapidly develop emotional attachments and appropriate relationships. As a result, children develop a strong sense of security, which promotes their confidence and independence in a new environment. Staff quickly engage children in activities, which helps to alleviate any anxiety that children and their parents may feel as part of the separation process. Relationships are strong at all

levels and children quickly learn to understand and respect each other's differences.

Staff help children to understand their expectations and fully recognise all children's efforts as achievements. Praise is continuously used to promote progress and good behaviour. Consequently, children behave well and are developing a sense of responsibility and an understanding that actions have consequences to themselves and to others. Staff act as positive role models for all the children, being calm, focused and positive throughout. They maintain effective boundaries for children to behave within, and explain these clearly to children to remind them if they forget. Staff show a consistency of approach in their application of strategies, which contributes well to children's sense of emotional well-being. Sharing is promoted, with manners and politeness recognised and acknowledged by staff. Staff provide children with good opportunities to engage in robust play and support them well with learning how to be safe during more active play. As a result, children develop a sense of risk in their play and clearly show how they assess and manage this well. For example, when a group of children use cars in the outdoor area, they wait in turn and take responsibility to negotiate these well and not to crash into each other to avoid injury. Staff work well with children, helping them to learn the importance of keeping rooms tidy and how to look after their resources to keep them safe. Staff complete risk assessments and ensure that the whole building is maintained really well and any hazards are minimised through effective safety measures. All three rooms are completely refurbished, with excellent displays and reference materials, as well as many examples of children's achievements. Good use is made of the outdoor environment to promote all areas of learning to children, however, the outside area offers a lesser range of resources than indoors and children are not always challenged to their maximum potential. In spite of this, once outside, children enjoy the activities available and develop good physical skills.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted well through a wide range of strategies. Children regularly exercise in the outdoor areas through running and jumping, with walks outside the nursery frequently organised. Children confidently make independent choices from a range of nutritious foods that are provided for snacks. They are developing a good understanding of how to make healthy choices and staff support their understanding well of why this is important. Children have a main meal which is produced on the premises, containing vegetables and fruit. The menu is balanced and varied so that they experience a wide range of different foods. Children's personal hygiene is promoted well and toileting and washing areas are kept spotless. Children develop their self-care skills well, such as washing their own hands, using the toilet independently and learning how to dress themselves. These skills prepare them well for the next stage of learning. Furthermore, staff talk to the children about their move on to school and make structured visits to it. They plan activities to alleviate any anxieties, for example, by showing the children uniforms and items needed. This helps to motivate and enthuse children and helps them to look forward to starting school.

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

Leaders and managers fully understand the significance of safeguarding the welfare of all children. Child protection is at the heart of everything that the provider does. Staff receive safeguarding training and are secure in their understanding of child protection and the correct procedure to follow if they have concerns. Staff understand the indicators that would alert them to a child at risk. Children are kept safe in the environment because staff complete robust risk assessments of the premises and on outings and trips. They identify risks and minimise them effectively with appropriate safety measures. Safety checks are undertaken on a daily basis to ensure that any new hazards are immediately identified and that existing safety measures remain safe, to ensure the continued safety of children. The risk of unauthorised access to the building is reduced because the entrance to the premises is highly secure and all rooms are covered by cameras. Recruitment procedures are comprehensive and ensure that all staff have full checks on their suitability and that they have appropriate qualifications and experience for their role. All staff are part of the process for reviewing the policies of the nursery and all have a very good understanding of these. All staff know the statutory procedures for child protection, first aid and whistleblowing, as well as the application of behaviour management and early years outcomes for individual children. Records for accidents and medications are kept centrally and up to date.

The cohesive staff team work well together and share a vision for driving improvement to benefit the children. They all understand how children learn and develop and teaching is effective and of a consistently high standard for all age groups. This is monitored regularly to ensure a consistency of approach is maintained. The sharing of good practice takes place at weekly staff meetings and all staff contribute to this. Assessment of progress is tracked well and ensures children can improve in all areas, particularly where English is spoken as an additional language. Staff training is based on developing staff knowledge and expertise in supporting learning. Language development for all children has improved through shared good practice. Self-evaluation has improved considerably since the last inspection, with the Ofsted self-assessment documentation used more effectively, resulting in a better understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. These management and leadership tools have been really successful in the focus on raising achievement for all children.

Partnerships are very strong and lead to children being well-prepared for the next stage in their learning. All parents interviewed believe that the nursery is offering great support in helping their child to learn and develop. Without exception, they praise the standard and quality of the staff and management, whom they say they trust totally. Parents say that they are well-informed of their child's progress and have good opportunities to contribute what they know about their child. Staff establish strong links with local schools and work well in partnership with them. For example, they share children's assessments and progress with teachers to provide them with prior knowledge of the needs of the children who are moving into their class. Links with other specialised professionals are also firmly embedded to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, staff work closely with speech and language therapists, to support children with communication problems and speech delay. They know to establish partnerships with other settings where children receive shared care, to complement the learning that takes place there and to ensure continuity for children.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
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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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY460492
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	966276
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	32
Name of provider	Little Learning Ladder Ltd
Date of previous inspection	20/02/2014
Telephone number	07885613509

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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