

# Little Learners

South Bridge Road, Victoria Dock, Hull, North Humberside, HU9 1TL

<b>Inspection date</b>	20/08/2014
Previous inspection date	20/01/2014

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	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

- Staff form exceptionally strong partnerships with parents. They recognise the benefits that this collaboration has in relation to the good progress that children make.
- Staff are confident about their teaching and place children's interests and learning needs at the heart of their activity plans. This means learning for each child is personalised and adapted to suit their individual needs, and therefore they make good progress.
- Safeguarding is highlighted as a regular agenda item for discussion at staff meetings. This contributes towards the many ways that staff keep children safe and well protected.
- Nursery managers have been highly successful in organising a parents' panel so that the true voice of parents is heard.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There are few opportunities for the older children to recognise their full names, in preparation for school.
- Children's dummies are not always stored hygienically when not in use or removed when children do not need them, which does not best support their communication and language development.

## 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

- One of the managers provided the inspector with a tour of the nursery.
- The inspector observed activities in all of the children's playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documents including children's assessment files and staffs planning records.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with one of the managers of a group of children involved in a speaking and listening activity led by a member of staff.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of all staff.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children during the inspection and representatives of the Sewell Group and the local authority.

## Inspector

Jackie Phillips

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Little Learners registered in 2003 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a purpose-built, single-storey building at Victoria Dock, Hull. The nursery is owned and operated by Sewell Education Hull Ltd. It also provides wrap-around after school and holiday club provision in close partnership with the Victoria Dock Primary School. Nursery children are based in groups according to their age in four playrooms. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 94 children on roll, of whom 31 are in the early years age range. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. The nursery is open from 7.15am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year around, except for public holidays and a week at Christmas. There are 22 staff members in total including two nursery managers, a deputy manager, a part-time administrator and a cook. One of the managers is qualified at level 4 and the other at level 5. The senior practitioner is also qualified at level 5. There are 16 staff members qualified at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend older children's literacy skills further, for example, by helping them to recognise their first and last name in readiness for school
  
- consider the use of children's dummies so that they are stored hygienically and do not hinder children's spontaneous speech or communication.

### Inspection judgements

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

Staff know and understand how children learn. They demonstrate this by providing a broad and interesting range of age-appropriate activities for all children. Staff are confident about placing children's interests and individual learning needs at the heart of their planning and through the range of quality resources that they provide. They regularly observe children and make assessments of their progress. Staff use what they know and find out about each child to set realistic targets so that they continue to learn through different experiences and do not get left behind. As a result, the quality of teaching is good. Children are active and highly involved in their learning. They take part in trips and outings so they benefit by being taken out of the nursery to different places of interest. This raises children's awareness of the world in which they live. For example, they visit the

coast, farms, local parks and transport museums. Staff competently use nature and the outdoor learning environment to promote children's learning. For example, they encourage children to watch grass grow from seed as opposed to using ready grown turf. They help children to calculate how much rainfall there has been by looking at the marks on the rain catcher. Some children recently found a sick hedgehog that was taken to be cared for by someone in the area. Children receive regular updates about its progress. This prompted staff to provide a hedgehog house in the garden, just in case another hedgehog visits the nursery. Children are keen to regularly check the hedgehog house to see if this is the case, which helps to foster their sense of care and compassion and also their inquisitiveness. This shows that staff make good use of spontaneous opportunities to help children to learn and they think of creative ways to enhance and extend this. Children demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning by being active, curious, engaged and motivated. This helps them to be ready and well prepared for school.

The variety of activities for babies and children are exciting, stimulating and challenging. For instance, all children take part in a wide range of arts and crafts activities, many with a strong focus on children learning through their sense of touch and observation. Children use mini binoculars to closely look at the small insects they find in the garden and to check the 'bug hotels' for visiting insects. Older children observe and hold their pet stick insect. They talk about its size and estimate if it is growing bigger and longer. They count the eggs the insect has laid and think about if they might need to find a new tank for the expanding family. There is very good emphasis on the display of key words around the nursery, including those that represent the different home languages of many of the children. Two staff members are responsible for checking that the nursery meets the needs of all of the families. They regularly seek the opinions of parents, particularly those from a wide range of backgrounds. They share their findings with the staff team, especially with each child's key person. This means that the nursery reflects all families' backgrounds and is fully inclusive to meet everyone's individual needs.

Children are very well supported to develop their speech, language and listening skills. They engage in lively conversations with each other and with staff so they learn how to communicate. There are lots of opportunities for them to learn to recognise their own name. This helps with reading, raises children's self-esteem and promotes their sense of belonging. The process starts with a photograph picture clue for the youngest children with their name written alongside. When the child is older, the labels show just the child's first name without a clue. However, this does not include children's last names in order to provide extra challenge to recognise their full names in preparation for school. The progress that children make and the quality of their learning are good because staff recognise the valuable contribution that parents make towards this collaborative process. Staff provide parents with lots of different ideas so that they can share, extend and become actively involved in children's learning. For example, children take turns to take Bobby or Henry bear home so that parents, children and staff can share written accounts and photographs of their visits to children's homes and other places of interest. Parents and extended family members are often invited to visit the nursery for a range of different 'stay and play' activity sessions. This contributes very well to how children's learning is shared between parents and staff so that it can be continued at home. Staff keep parents very well informed about their child's progress and development, including occasions when they may have any concerns. This means that any obstacles to learning are shared so that

extra support or additional advice and guidance can be found and offered to make sure children continue to make progress.

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

A well-established key person system exists, helping babies and children to form close attachments to a special person. This helps them to feel safe and secure and promotes effective relationship building between the key person and the child's parents. It successfully supports the sharing of information to make sure children's individual and specific needs are met, including, for example, babies' routines and children who have special dietary requirements. Children approach staff very confidently, eager to share exciting news, such as the birth of a new sibling. Staff build on this by making books and having photographs of the special people in children's lives. This helps children to feel emotionally secure because staff respect and value each child and family. When children join the nursery or move between the different playrooms according to their age and maturity, they are very well supported. They take part in familiarisation visits, which provide them with the time to adjust to the new surroundings and reduce their anxiety. Staff allow children to keep their comforters with them or close by, such as soft toys, blankets or dummies. This is useful when children show signs of feeling anxious or are upset. However, sometimes staff are not proactive to remove children's dummies when it is clear that they are not needed because children are well occupied and fully engaged in their play and are not upset. It also does not ensure that overuse of a dummy does not have a negative impact on a child's developing speech and language skills. There are excellent arrangements in place to help children who are leaving the nursery to go to school. Staff readily share information and invite the teachers into the nursery to meet the children. Staff talk to the children about what they can expect when they start school, helping them to be well prepared for the change and for the next stage in their learning.

Children are busy, well occupied and fully engaged and because of this their behaviour is exemplary. Their good health and well-being are very well supported because children use indoors and outside on a regular basis. This means they have the opportunity benefit from fresh air and physical exercise. The gardens are exciting places for babies and children to explore, experiment and to benefit from a wide and interesting range of learning opportunities. Staff encourage children to take the toys and resources outside to use, which helps them to learn in different ways and in different situations. For example, children use clipboards and writing materials outside as opposed to sitting at a table inside to write or draw. This helps to meet some children's different learning styles, such as those who prefer to be more active outdoors. Staff supervise children very well to keep them safe. This means children are able to test and challenge themselves. For example, staff place a number of rubber tyres in the ground at different heights to encourage children to climb, jump and balance. It means that children can practise these physical actions in safety because they are well supervised. Staff are close by to help them to test their capabilities, achieve their goals, offer guidance and help children to manage safe risk taking.

The meals and snacks that children enjoy are nourishing and make a very positive contribution to children's good health. The seasonal menu is regularly rotated to make

sure that all babies and children enjoy a wide range of tasty, freshly produced meals. Children understand the need to wash their hands during the daily routine, particularly before they eat and after cleaning their noses. The nursery staff have recently focused very strongly on helping children to understand about adopting effective nasal hygiene measures. They have added more waste bins, tissues and hand cleaning materials for children to use. Staff display very attractive posters to remind children adopt good hygiene routines. The results are highly successful because children confidently remember to wash their hands when they have wiped their noses. This shows a good understanding of how to manage their own care needs and that they know how to keep themselves clean and healthy. However, there is room for staff to take a more active approach to store babies' dummies more appropriately to reduce the risks of germs when they fall onto the floor and are discarded because they are not needed. Children are very well supported to make choices and decisions. The wide variety of toys and resources are very easily reached by babies and children because they are at low level. There are cosy and comfortable 'snuggle areas' created in each room, which are expertly resourced with soft cushions, drapes and furnishings to create calm, relaxing spaces for children to rest or sleep. Space in the nursery is used very well. The colourful displays of children's work or displays that provide excellent information to parents are highly attractive and informative. Wonderful mobiles hang from the ceilings, including nappy changing areas, so that the environment is rich and interesting for all children and is very conducive towards their learning.

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

All staff are checked to ensure they are suitable to work and be in close contact with children. They attend first-aid and safeguarding training on a rolling programme as part of their continuous professional development. This means that qualifications are regularly validated to ensure that staff's skills and knowledge are kept up to date. It also means that staff confidently know what to do and the action to take, including whom to contact if they have any concerns about a child's welfare or well-being. The safeguarding of children is regularly an agenda item for discussion at staff meetings, which helps to keep this issue a firm focus in everyone's minds and influence staff's daily practice to keep children safe and protected. Written safeguarding procedures are in place, alongside risk assessments, policies and procedures and other daily checks that staff make to keep children and the environment. The nursery building is safe, secure and well maintained. The staff team is well established and well qualified and there is a robust process for the recruitment, appointment and induction of new staff members. The staff team are secure in their knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities towards meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Staff regularly monitor children's progress and systematically record their findings to identify the next steps to take so that children are well supported to continually move forwards in their learning. Staff use what they observe and find out from talking to children and parents to shape and guide the programme of activities. This means children's learning is adapted to meet their individual needs. Children also learn from being involved in a good balance of activities that are either led by staff, self-chosen or through learning from each other. For example, they are often involved in different sized

groups of children with varying ages and abilities. Staff are relentless to find ways to help children to learn, develop and make progress despite any barriers to their learning. They work closely with parents to find ways to overcome obstacles. For instance, they offer to visit families in their own homes if it helps in the pursuit of gaining answers to problems regarding children's learning and progress. Staff are very willing to work with other professionals to ensure that children receive the support they need to make progress. The managers work closely with members of the staff team to support them in their work. They positively encourage staff to observe and evaluate each other's practice to ensure the team are working effectively. An effective and well-established programme of professional development helps staff to improve their knowledge, understanding and practice, alongside good systems to monitor their performance. It shows that the nursery team have a good understanding of their responsibilities to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

There are exceptionally strong partnerships in place with parents and other providers. Parents are given a wealth of information in many different ways, which helps to meet everyone's needs. Both managers have been particularly successful in organising a parents' panel so that the true voice of parents is heard. The relationship with the school next door is strong because teachers, the school headteacher and nursery staff continually meet together, share ideas and exchange information. This is of great benefit as the majority of the nursery children will attend that school so their transfer is seamless. Since the last inspection, staff have reflected on the quality of their teaching and considerably improved their knowledge and understanding of how to meet children's learning needs. They have done this in various ways, such as through additional training, more frequent staff meetings, focused supervisions involving the managers, and working successfully and conscientiously alongside other professionals. The actions and recommendations have been fully met. The team went 'back to basics' to reflect on their practice to help them to focus on how to move forwards and improve the quality of teaching and learning. They faced and met the challenge to improve admirably, which confirms their passion and enthusiasm to provide high quality childcare and education. The very capable and competent managers support their staff very well. They utilise the strengths of the confident staff to help those who are less so. This has strengthened the team because staff are keen, dedicated and focused to improve. This shows ambition and a clear drive for improvement in the continual pursuit of excellence.

### **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
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY265739
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston upon Hull
<b>Inspection number</b>	965564
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	90
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	94
<b>Name of provider</b>	Sewell Construction Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20/01/2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01482 218828

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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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