

Inspection of Milton Keynes College Little Explorers Nursery

Milton Keynes College, Chaffron Way, Leadenhall, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire
MK6 5LP

Inspection date: 20 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are developing ever-increasing confidence in their environment. They openly explore the space available to them and seek reassurance from familiar people when they feel uneasy. Younger children experiment with resources, using their acquired skills to extend their experiences. Older children show high levels of intrigue and curiosity by asking questions. For example, children ask the inspector what they are doing in their nursery and what they want to play with, openly inviting others into their play.

Children are eager to learn. They show awe and wonder at new discoveries. For example, they watch the balls fall through the tube and watch where they have disappeared to. Older children share their experiences, recalling what has happened in their play. For example, pre-school children happily recall when they went on a 'bear hunt' and found pawprints. They enthusiastically discuss how 'big' the bear was and follow it up with creative play.

Children develop self-help skills throughout the nursery. Babies make choices for themselves, exploring the resources available to them and using them purposefully. For example, they drop the string of beads into the teapot, listening to the sound, and repeat the sequence independently. Older children put on their shoes, coats and waterproof trousers to enjoy the outside area. They explain the importance of hygiene procedures, such as washing their hands before lunchtime and after toileting. Toddlers listen to instructions to find tissues so that they can have help to wipe their noses.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children make close friends with their peers. Younger children play harmoniously alongside others. Older children are proud of their friendships, sharing equipment and achievements. They are eager to learn from their peers and enthusiastically share their learning with adults.
- Children's communication is promoted well throughout the nursery. Babies babble excitedly, responding to staff's enthusiastic communications through gestures, expressions and vocalisation. Toddlers learn to use simple speech patterns through repetition and gestures, increasing their ability to express their own needs. Older children use complex language to describe their play. They listen carefully to questions and have time to absorb what is asked and respond with further vocabulary to explain their findings.
- Children thoroughly enjoy outside play. The learning intention for each child is mirrored successfully, inside and outside, to support their next steps in development. Staff encourage children's physical development, using the equipment and environment to strengthen core muscles and finer movements.

This helps to support their coordination and confidence to try new skills. Children use the natural environment to extend their experiences, which they may not have in their home lives.

- Staff are eager to develop their knowledge and skills for each child's stages of development. They continually attend training linked to their interests, as well as any mandatory training. Management identifies staff's strengths and areas to develop. They empower staff to share their experiences and knowledge, which promotes a consistent approach to staff's practice in the nursery.
- Staff are deployed effectively within the nursery. They provide children with stimulating activities and interactions. Staff know when to stand back and allow children to discover experiences for themselves. They know the children well and recognise how they learn best. However, sometimes, staff do not make full use of the observations made of how children learn, to consistently promote their development. This sometimes has an impact on children's continued enthusiasm to play in their own way.
- Children learn how to promote healthy lifestyles. Older children serve themselves, making decisions as to how much they want to eat. They are actively encouraged to try new foods to expand their tastes. Staff have a clear knowledge of children's dietary requirements and help other children to support this, promoting their ongoing well-being. Younger children thoroughly enjoy the social aspects of meals and snacks. They also gain comfort from snuggling up with staff when they have bottle feeds. Staff are particularly sensitive to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with their eating habits.
- Parents make positive comments about the reassuring relationships they have with staff. They receive verbal information daily about their children's achievements. Parents know how to support their children's learning at home due to the support and suggestions made by their child's key person. Children benefit from ongoing professional relationships between staff, carers and other agencies involved in children's care. This helps to give them stability and a consistency in their care.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a robust knowledge of the procedures to keep children safe from harm. They attend regular training to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff work cohesively with other agencies to support children's ongoing welfare. Children play in a safe and secure environment. They learn to keep themselves safe. They gain high levels of support to test their physical capabilities, particularly in the outdoor play areas. Staff work well with children to support their understanding of hazards through outings within the community, as well as discussions throughout their play.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- use observations and knowledge of how individual children learn more effectively to provide further experiences, challenges and extensions to their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	141847
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10280237
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	67
Name of registered person	Milton Keynes College
Registered person unique reference number	RP517368
Telephone number	01908 684462
Date of previous inspection	15 August 2017

Information about this early years setting

Little Explorers Nursery (formerly Early Years Nursery) registered in 1998 and is situated in Leadenhall, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. It operates from a separate building within the college campus. It is open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. The provider employs 14 members of staff. One member of staff holds a relevant qualification at level 6 and two hold a qualification at level 5, with eight others holding qualifications at level 3 or level 2. The provider is in receipt of funding to provide free early years education to two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Claire Parnell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at nursery.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector spoke to several parents/carers during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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