

Inspection of Little Earthworms

387 Ditchling Road, BRIGHTON BN1 6NF

Inspection date: 15 July 2024

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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff prioritise children's emotional well-being at this welcoming nursery. Children build strong bonds with staff, which helps all children, including babies, to settle well and feel safe and secure. Staff get to know children well. They value each child's unique background and are sensitive to their individual needs. They quickly recognise when to adapt the day, such as when children are tired and need an early lunch.

Staff plan a broad range of activities and experiences to support children's learning and help them gain skills for the future. Children have a wonderful time in the garden and staff follow their interests particularly well outside. When children want to make mud cakes, staff help them find the equipment they need. Children confidently help pour out compost from a large bag and fill containers with water so they can turn the soil into mud. Staff use agreed strategies throughout the day to ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can take part, such as using simple sign language or picture cards to help them make choices. This helps ensure that all children make good progress in their learning.

Children respond well to staff's clear expectations for their behaviour. Staff offer gentle guidance to help them quickly calm down and manage any strong feelings. They are good role models and teach children to be kind to their friends.

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

- Managers have taken swift and effective steps to make improvements since the last inspection. They have put in place rigorous systems to ensure everyone is aware of any staff still waiting for their suitability checks and understand the arrangements to monitor them. This effectively promotes children's safety.
- Staff receive effective coaching and support to develop their practice where required, and those who are less experienced benefit from the guidance of their colleagues. Staff working with younger children have successfully built their confidence in supporting this age group and offering a broad and purposeful curriculum. For example, they have strengthened their approach to meeting children's emotional needs and introduced new strategies, such as using puppets, to encourage early communication.
- Managers have a clear overview of the skills and knowledge they want children to gain during their time at the nursery. They make sure staff also have a good understanding of these aims. For example, staff throughout the nursery support children to become more independent and develop their self-care skills. Overall, staff are aware of why activities have been planned. However, at times, they are less sure how activities link to the next steps for individual children's learning, to build more precisely on what each child already knows and can do.

- Stories and songs are an important part of each day at the nursery. Staff use these well, for instance, to support and extend children's communication and language skills. Babies eagerly look at books with staff and repeat words as they explore the different textures on the page. Older children recall words and phrases from the nursery's 'book of the month'. Staff encourage them to use the new words they learn, such as 'prance' and 'buckled', in their everyday play.
- Staff are skilled at responding to children's ideas and interests during their free-choice play. Children are delighted when staff join in with their games and help them explore their real-life experiences, such as a visit to the doctor. At times, however, organised group sessions are not planned fully effectively to ensure all children benefit from the intended learning. For example, sometimes, group activities are too large, and some children cannot see what is happening or do not receive all the help they need to take part.
- The arrangements for supporting children with SEND are effective. Staff put appropriate individual plans in place to meet children's needs, and additional staff are available to support children where possible. Staff work closely with families and other professionals to ensure a shared approach.
- With staff's guidance and support, children behave well, build strong friendships and learn to get along together. Staff use a variety of effective strategies to help children understand the rules and routines. Children know they should stay quiet and listen when staff wiggle their fingers in the air. They remember they need to share resources and equipment and try hard to wait patiently for their turn.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff work with parents effectively to provide consistent care and education. They keep them well informed and provide regular updates about children's progress and development. They offer parents suggestions and resources to help them continue their child's learning at home. For instance, staff put together individual activity packs for children to use with their parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to gain a more consistent understanding of the link between planned activities and the next steps for individual children's learning
- strengthen the planning of adult-led group activities to help all children fully benefit from the learning opportunities offered during these sessions.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY402775
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10340751
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	68
Name of registered person	Little Earth Worms Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910334
Telephone number	01273 243182
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2024

Information about this early years setting

Little Earthworms registered in 2010. It is located in Brighton, East Sussex. The nursery is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. It receives funding to provide early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 14 staff who work at the nursery. Of these, 11 hold appropriate qualifications at level 2 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rebecca James

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager, deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- 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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