

Little Darwins Nursery

Rettendon School, Main Road, Rettendon Common, CHELMSFORD, CM3 8DW

Inspection date	08/11/2012
Previous inspection date	18/11/2011

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

- Babies and children make good progress in their learning and development because the educational programmes have depth and breadth across all seven areas of learning.
- The nursery provides a very safe, secure environment where babies and children settle well and are confident and eager to learn. Resources are of high quality, imaginative and easily accessible, both indoors and outside.
- Parents and carers are extremely well informed about their children's progress and consequently, become fully engaged in their children's learning in the nursery and at home.
- The staff are extremely skilful in supporting transitions within the nursery and when children join the reception year in school.

It is not yet outstanding because

- While staff confidently assess and analyse the progress of individual children, there is less precision when monitoring the development of groups of children.
- Although mealtimes are happy and social occasions, opportunities to extend children's learning through these everyday routines are not yet fully embraced.

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
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as 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 for inspection 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
- 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 indoor and outdoor learning environments and carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the nursery management, staff team and children.
- The inspection viewed a sample of the children's learning journey books and planning documents.
- The inspector viewed evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff, risk assessment, policies and procedures and other documentation in relation to health and safety checks.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Darwins Nursery is run by The Rettendon Community Academy Community Interest Company. It opened in 2011 and operates from three playrooms within a purpose-built

premises adjacent to Rettendon Primary School in Essex. All children share access to secure, enclosed, outdoor play areas and there is a temporary marquee to provide additional play space for out of school children. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting opens five days a week, all year round. Operating times are from 7am until 7pm. There are currently 124 children aged from eight months to 11 years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions, day care or out of school care. The setting serves the local community and wider areas. It supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

The setting employs 19 staff, of whom 13 hold appropriate early years or teaching qualifications. There is one staff member with Qualified Teacher Status. There are five staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The nursery employs a hospitality manager and assistant and also an administrator. 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:

- strengthen the monitoring of assessment to ensure staff gather more precise information about the progress of groups of children as well as individuals
- enhance the organisation of snacks and mealtimes to give children greater opportunities to pour their own drinks, serve their own food and talk about maths in everyday situations.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and there are effective systems in place to ensure that all children's unique needs are met. Staff provide a rich learning environment using a wide range of exciting resources that children independently access. Children enthusiastically engage in all that is on offer and thrive as they choose whether to play indoors or outside. Babies have access to stimulating and sensory play materials that keep them absorbed and intrigued in purposeful play. Teaching is effective because the staff are encouraging and enable children to use language well to organise their ideas and develop their play. The staff are

also sensitive to children's thinking and learning and skilfully decide when to interact and when to step back and value the children's independent activity.

Staff have developed a clear process for observing children's play and learning both during focused activities and spontaneous learning experiences. These observations are recorded in individual learning journey books and enable staff to provide for identified learning priorities. The staff also track and analyse the progress of each individual to ensure that no child gets left behind. The staff are now beginning to collate the necessary information from children's observations to complete the additional progress checks that are required when the children reach the age of two. The early years children who attend the after school club have a wide range of resources and activities and mix well with the older children. Their key person has a clear overview of their likes and interests, as well as an awareness of any developing areas that need support.

Throughout the nursery there are displays and posters with labels and captions which help children develop an awareness that words carry meaning. They also have regular opportunities to develop a love of literature. Popular stories capture children's imagination and they eagerly remember or anticipate what will happen next. Simple rhymes help them learn the sounds of letters and many of the older children are beginning to form recognisable letters as they proudly write their names on their work. Cooking activities are used to teach children new skills and knowledge and they concentrate well as they bake gingerbread men or help construct a gingerbread house. Outdoors children play imaginatively with upturned crates as they eagerly explain to staff where they are going on a train journey.

Children take great delight in exploring features of the natural world and changing seasons. They go on outings, and take part in community events, such as the harvest festival at the village church. The daily routines are used generally well to support learning. Children learn table manners and social skills as they sit together for meals in small groups. They have some opportunities to develop independence skills as they spread their own toppings onto crackers. Further consideration to reviewing the organisation of snack and mealtimes so that children can pour their drinks, serve their food or count and talk about numbers, has the potential to extend and enhance children's experiences.

The nursery is extremely effective in involving parents and carers in their children's learning. Open days are well attended and information booklets about the revised Early Years Foundation Stage are routinely shared. Each day an information board gives parents details about the activities their children have taken part in so they can discuss and follow on with these experiences at home. Parents and carers have regular opportunities to see and contribute to the learning journey books. Many children now have photographs of the people most important to them within their developmental records. Parents also contribute items to capture children's interest during activities, for example, a hedgehog recently came into the nursery while children were investigating the changing seasons. The nursery helps parents very positively to understand more about learning, playing and interacting. A 'Stay and Play' session operates on one morning each week for parents to share activities with their children. The nursery opens for charity events and special occasions take place at weekends. For example, the recent bulb planting day successfully involved parents in

meaningful learning experiences with their children.

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

Children are very confident and secure in the relationships they develop with the key persons caring for them. Babies settle very well when left by their parents. The staff handle them with great warmth and gentleness in a calm atmosphere where constant praise plays an important part in their development. Information is effectively gathered from parents right from the start so that key persons have a deeper understanding of children's routines, interests and capabilities. There are daily opportunities for them to meet with staff to discuss their child's care needs. The important information regarding care routines, such as, food eaten, nappy changes and sleep times are also shared within the home-link books. Older children develop firm friendships with each other, often choosing to play together in small groups. The key persons are good role models and have an efficient approach to behaviour management, which takes account of each child's age and level of understanding. Consequently, children behave extremely well and demonstrate a real understanding of how to play harmoniously by sharing and taking turns.

Children's confidence and enthusiasm ensures that they actively engage in purposeful play throughout their time at the nursery. The staff give priority to developing learning in the prime areas so that children become confident communicators, develop strong physical skills and grow into inquisitive learners. This provides a very firm foundation for them to develop their skills for future learning. Children with special educational needs, such as, speech and language delay, are sensitively supported. Staff work with parents and therapists to ensure that additional provision is made to extend the opportunities that enhance communication. Careful consideration is given to the variety of home backgrounds and staff liaise effectively with carers or extended family members to ensure that children get the specialist support they need. The staff also find out useful words to assist children where families speak more than one language. Visual supports and written captions in other languages are clearly displayed for children to see. Children's transitions from home to the setting and from one room to another are well supported, helping children to maintain a feeling of safety and security. There are exceedingly strong links with the adjacent primary school, as children join in activities on the school premises several times each week, and they regularly get to meet the teachers. This ensures that there are extremely smooth transitions when children start full-time education.

An extremely high priority is given to keeping children healthy and there are robust procedures in place to protect them from infection. Babies and children benefit from modern, spacious and well planned accommodation. The sleep room, kitchen and toilet facilities are kept scrupulously clean and tidy and each baby or toddler has named containers and bags for all their daily needs. Nappy changing and toilet training is sensitively undertaken to preserve children's dignity. Children follow excellent hygiene practices as they take increasing responsibility for washing their hands throughout the day. They benefit from well-balanced menus that take account of dietary needs and meals are cooked on-site from fresh ingredients. The staff effectively support children's growing

understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Gentle reminders ensure that children sit safely on chairs and they are encouraged to learn to assess risks for themselves as they use climbing and balancing apparatus outdoors.

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

The management team of the nursery have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage. Well-written and comprehensive policies and procedures have been updated to promote children's welfare and safety and the operational plan effectively explains how the nursery runs. There are very effective safeguarding procedures in place for identifying any child at risk of harm. This ensures that staff act in their best interests of children if they have concerns about their welfare. The premises are secure with controlled entry systems which prevent unauthorised access and ensure children cannot leave unnoticed.

The nursery meets the required staffing and qualification levels to ensure that children are effectively supervised. There is currently a recruitment campaign because the number of children attending has soared since the last inspection. The recruitment and induction process is thorough and robust. All staff complete the required background checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Each staff member is given a comprehensive handbook so that they understand their responsibilities. The nursery management team competently support the staff's ongoing professional development through appraisals and supervision. Staff undertaking accredited training courses are effectively coached, mentored and supported. The staff also regularly engage in e-learning training courses, which help keep them up-to-date on a wide range of subjects, such as safeguarding or food hygiene. The management team nursery has successfully addressed the action and recommendation from the last inspection. Written parental permission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment is requested prior to children starting the nursery. The staff also protect children by ensuring that risk assessment is routinely updated to cover any potential hazards with which they may come into contact.

Effective systems are in place to obtain suggestions and feedback from parents and children. This information not only informs the nursery action plan but also the self-evaluation process. Consequently, the nursery is well aware of the strengths and areas for further development. The nursery management and staff team hold regular meetings to ensure that information is cascaded and continuous improvements are made to enhance children's learning and well-being. Everyone is very receptive to suggestions from local authority advisors. Staff also attend and host learning community meetings with other early years professionals to share best practice. All staff have a good understanding of how children learn and have embraced the recent changes to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The system used to monitor the observations and assessment process has been reviewed. However, there is scope for staff to identify more precisely the progress of particular groups, for example, two-year-olds or boys.

The excellent relationship with parents and carers contributes to improvements in

children's achievement, well-being and development. Parents receive very good quality written information about the nursery. Regular newsletters are sent out to parents, which highlighting activities and coming events for the nursery, and there are a wealth of notices displayed, as well as an informative website they can easily navigate. All parents spoke to during this inspection say that they are absolutely delighted with the care their children receive. They say that their children have come on 'in leaps and bounds' and give high praise to the caring staff team.

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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. 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 inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. 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	EY416623
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	887816
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	124
Name of provider	The Rettenden Community Academy Community Interest Company
Date of previous inspection	18/11/2011
Telephone number	01268 769599

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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 that are usually their 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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