

Clare's Little Bears

Bunyan House, Basils Road, Stevenage, SG1 3PY



Inspection date	23 February 2018
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not applicable	
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff routinely share information with parents about their child's progress. They encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning. This contributes to the good progress children make in their learning and development.
- The provider values her team of staff, who are enthusiastic and dedicated to ensuring children have equal opportunities to play, learn and enjoy their time at the pre-school. They work well together to provide a broad range of activities indoors and outdoors to support children's learning and development.
- Staff work with parents to get to know their children from the start. They establish children's starting points with parents and tailor settling-in sessions to meet children's individual needs. Children settle quickly and form strong bonds with staff, who are warm, kind and approachable.
- Staff establish good links with the schools that children will move to. They invite school teachers to the pre-school to meet the children and take them to school events. This helps to familiarise children with the school environment and helps them to be prepared emotionally for the move to school.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always organise large-group activities well enough to support younger children's developmental needs. Sometimes, younger children lose interest and become distracted during lengthy activities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the planning of group activities so that younger children are challenged appropriately and supported to maintain their interest more effectively.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Gail Warnes

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The knowledgeable and skilled manager leads the pre-school well. She regularly reviews staff's performance and the progress made by individual and groups of children to help identify any gaps in provision. Additional funding is used effectively to support children's good progress in learning. Staff are committed to developing their skills and knowledge. They share what they learn from training at staff meetings. For example, recent training has improved how the outdoor area is used to support children who prefer to learn outside. Safeguarding is effective. Staff confidently fulfil their role to protect children from harm. They know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. The provider implements robust recruitment measures to help assure the suitability of adults working with children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Enthusiastic staff know the children well and, overall, plan activities to support their individual next steps in learning and emerging interests. They regularly review children's progress and share observations with parents frequently. Children confidently explore and make choices in their play. Staff join in with children's play and talk to them. They introduce new words to support their growing vocabularies. They ask questions to encourage children to think and develop their own ideas. Children confidently identify 'feelers' on woodlice and describe the 'tickly' feel when they handle them. They know that 'squirmy' worms do not like water and replace them safely under a log. Staff model mathematical language as children play. They compare size and shape as they fashion play dough into Chinese characters. They explore capacity as they fill and empty containers with rice.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at pre-school. They arrive confidently and quickly settle to activities. Staff praise children's efforts and good behaviour. This helps children to develop good levels of self-esteem. Children enjoy doing things for themselves, such as putting on their coats and shoes to play outside and pouring their drinks at snack time. They enjoy regular opportunities to play outside. They listen and follow instructions when they join in with dance lessons and move their bodies in time with music. Staff provide a range of experiences to help children learn about different cultures.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress given their starting points and capabilities. They are confident and becoming independent in their play and self-care. Children are beginning to recognise the sounds that letters represent and link them to familiar words, such as days of the week. They recognise their names and self-register on arrival. Older children are beginning to write their names. They are learning to share and take turns while playing. They enjoy listening to stories and excitedly anticipate what will happen next. They gain key skills and positive attitudes to support the next stage in their learning and eventual move to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY494921
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1036825
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	Clare Louise Cole
Registered person unique reference number	RP903100
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01438 239713

Clare's Little Bears registered in 2016. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9.15am until 4pm. Every session offers an optional lunch club. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year old children.

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