

The Learning Tree

The Parish Rooms, Cranbrook Road, Maidstone, Kent, TN12 0AZ

Inspection date	11/02/2013
Previous inspection date	14/07/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
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

- Children make good progress and are becoming very independent learners because they are free to explore and make choices.
- Staff monitor and assess children's activities well to effectively identify and address gaps in children's progress.
- Children are encouraged to use their imagination well because staff provide an impressive range of resources to enrich the children's experiences. Strong partnerships with parents and other professionals support staff to provide cohesive, consistent care.
- Children develop a good understanding of the importance of health and hygiene through practical experiences and encouragement from staff.
- The positive, friendly and stimulating environment helps children to develop very good social skills and very good behaviour.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There are some minor inconsistencies in the organisation of activities which means that, on occasion, some children gain more from experiences than others.
- Children play with resources which feature languages other than English but these do not reflect all languages spoken in the homes of those attending.

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 interviewed the manager and other staff were spoken to at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Interactions between staff and children were observed including a joint observation by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including records on children's progress.
- The inspector made observations in all areas used by the children.
- Two parents shared their views with the inspector.

Inspector

Liz Calouri

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Learning Tree Nursery registered in 2000. It operates from a hall and two rooms in the Parish Rooms, Staplehurst, Kent. There is also a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery provides care for children in the early years age range but is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open

from 9am to 12pm each weekday during term time. There is an additional lunch club from 12 noon to 1pm operating three days a week.

There are currently 29 children aged from two to the end of the early years age range on roll. Some two, three and four year old children are in receipt of funding for free early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs five staff, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the organisation of some adult directed activities to provide all children, who choose to take part, with the same high quality of resources so that the learning is consistent for all children
- extend the range of resources which introduce children to other languages to reflect all of the languages spoken in the homes of those attending.

Inspection judgements

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

The management team and staff understand how to promote children's learning well. As a result children make good progress in all areas. Staff effectively monitor and assess children's activities to identify any gaps in the rate at which children are progressing. Staff act promptly to address these, for example by increasing the focus on promoting numbers with the older children. Staff share written summaries of children's progress with parents on a regular basis. They encourage parents to contribute observations from home. Good arrangements are also in place to complete two year old progress checks.

Staff plan interesting activities which children join in with, with great enthusiasm. Overall, these offer a very good level of challenge. Staff provide stimulating activities on a very regular basis, so all children have many opportunities to take part in practical experiences. However, there are some occasions where the organisation of activities does not allow for all children to take a fully active role. For example, while all children enjoy taking part in an activity to make individual fruit jellies, only some have sufficient resources to be involved in the whole process.

Children's learning is significantly enhanced by the support they receive from staff. Lively conversations can be heard throughout the nursery as children use language very effectively to share their views, ask questions and narrate their play. Children enjoy regular opportunities to exercise. They are able to play outside each day and are developing good physical skills and coordination. Children have great fun as they learn, benefitting from the freedom they receive to explore their environment and choose the activities they want to take part in. As a result, they become very independent learners. This, along with their high levels of achievement, prepares them very well for their move to school.

Effective strategies are also in place to support children and families who speak English as an additional language. Staff use visual timelines to help children understand the planned routine of each session. There are also dual language books to help all children to become aware of languages other than their own language. However, these do not reflect all of the languages spoken in the homes of the children attending. This means children are not always encouraged to understand that all home languages are valued. Good arrangements are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff demonstrate a very thorough understanding of each child's specific needs and work sensitively with parents, and other professionals, to meet these.

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

Children are very happy, friendly and motivated in the nursery. They play with a very impressive range of toys and resources which significantly enhance their enjoyment and learning. For example, they explore a selection of tape recorders and microphones. They are remarkably proficient in operating these and have great fun singing and listening to music.

Children form strong, trusting bonds with all staff and an effective key person system ensures that children's individual needs are well understood. Children behave extremely well and are developing very good social skills. They play very cooperatively and form friendships with other children.

Staff help children to learn to keep themselves and others safe through activities, such as fire drills, and with gentle reminders, for example, not to run in the hall. Children also receive very good support to understand the importance of following good hygiene practices to stay healthy. They routinely wash their hands before handling food and independently take tissues to wipe their nose, disposing of these efficiently in the bin provided. Children enjoy nutritious snacks, including a selection of fruits, and have the choice of milk or water.

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

The management and staff team fully understand their responsibility to promote the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Regular self-evaluation takes place, including good arrangements to monitor the success of educational programmes. Highly effective team working creates a relaxed, harmonious atmosphere. Staff meet regularly to discuss all aspects of the provision and regular staff appraisals help to identify any further training needs among the team.

Robust arrangements are in place to safeguard children including rigorous vetting of staff. One member of staff takes lead responsibility for child protection and has attended training to support her in this role. Clear and appropriate procedures are in place to deal with concerns about the welfare of any of the children attending. Staff carry out comprehensive risk assessments on the premises and there are daily health and safety checks before children arrive each day.

Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the service the nursery provides. Children benefit from observing the very positive relationships in place between staff and their parents. This helps children to settle easily and ensures that their individual needs, and their achievements, are discussed regularly. Good arrangements are also in place to share information with any other childcare settings attended by the children. This supports staff to ensure that care is coordinated and cohesive.

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	127693
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	813715
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Anna Reiss
Date of previous inspection	14/07/2009
Telephone number	01797 260843

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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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