

Little Gryphons Nursery School

The Gryphon School, Bristol Road, SHERBORNE, Dorset, DT9 4EQ

Inspection date	09/04/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children benefit from an exceptionally vibrant and evolving environment in which they are thriving.
- The excellent key person system and highly successful links with other external professionals involved in children's care and development help to ensure all children are making excellent progress.
- Staff are extremely responsive to children's emerging interests and provide resources and experiences to bring their ideas to life.
- Children are highly valued as individuals and are developing exceptional independence, self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Children benefit from extensive outdoor play activities which allow more active children to thrive within their preferred environment.
- Management and staff are all highly driven to maintaining continuous improvements, and actively involving parents in the development of excellence within the nursery.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching in the two units and outside play area.
- The inspector sampled children's assessment records and planning documentation.
The inspector held a meeting with the registered person and manager to assess
- suitability and qualifications of staff and management's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the pre-school room leader.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents.

Inspector

Bridget Copson

Full Report

Information about the setting

Little Gryphons Nursery School re-registered in 2012 having previously been in operation since 2005. The nursery operates from a purpose-build unit on The Gryphon School site in Sherborne, Dorset. Children attend from the local surrounding areas.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 82 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, offering sessions or full day care for 49 weeks of the year.

There are 18 staff members employed to work directly with the children, all of whom hold or are working towards relevant early years qualifications. One member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider ways to provide opportunities for younger children to express their design skills outside.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making rapid progress in their learning in relation to their starting points. This is due to staff's in-depth knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements. In addition, staff work very closely with parents and other professionals involved in children's care and development. Parents provide a wealth of information from the start, and complete 'weekend star' observations and take sharing boxes home to enjoy with their children. They also attend consultation meetings where they agree their child's goals. Each child's key person uses all this information to accurately track, review and plan for children's learning individually. As a result, children are achieving beyond their expected levels of development.

Staff have high expectations of children and provide a vibrant and exciting environment in which children thrive. Staff interact skilfully in children's play without intruding in their exploration. They step in to provide support, encouragement and challenge according to each child's needs. Staff seize spontaneous opportunities to extend children's learning

further still. For example, staff provide an outdoor picnic snack in the forest school tent to allow a small group of very active boys to continue with their exploration unhindered. As a result, children are extremely motivated learners who engage very well in their play.

Children are developing an excellent range of skills to promote their future learning and readiness for school. They are developing extremely positive attitudes, very good self-confidence and self-esteem and children of all ages show high levels of independence. Children communicate extremely well. Staff working with infants respond with great sensitivity to nurture their smiles, gurgles and chuckles and to include them in activities. Children benefit from small 'narrative therapy' group sessions. These provide children with brief but sharply focused sessions twice a day. During these sessions they develop very good communication and language skills, think critically and join in games with a specific focus. Staff skilfully adapt challenges to support and stretch children's learning accurately. All children also use sign language as part of their day-to-day communications. This sensitively enables children who communicate non-verbally to feel included.

Children are making excellent progress in their physical development. They all benefit from 'wake and shake' sessions twice a day to energise themselves. For example, children under two years join in action songs, wiggle, flap their arms and bounce up and down. Staff respond quickly to engage less motivated children by introducing a harmonica, which once played draws them into the group successfully. Children make excellent use of the extremely well resourced outdoor play areas. These provide a wealth of tools and activities for gardening, exploring natural life, creative play and mark making. Children independently dress themselves for outdoor play and many spend extended periods playing and investigating outside. This free-flow system allows children over two years to thrive within their preferred play environment. Outdoor play also provides all children with very good opportunities to learn about keeping safe. For example, managing steps, using tools safely and identifying the red triangles to alert them to any potential hazards.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of the world. They show an extremely positive sense of self. For example, younger children explore their 'all about me' booklets with photographs of themselves and those important to them. All children self-register and see a reflection of them and their work throughout the nursery. Children are becoming very caring and responsible individuals. They recycle waste and learn to care for living things. For example, children learn how to handle, clean and feed the nursery's African land snails each day. They gently pick up a snail each to 'warm them up', tell others 'this is how we pick them up carefully' and know to put the snails back down the right way up so they 'don't get hurt or 'roll over'.

Children use their imaginations to act out real-life experiences in a wealth of activities in the nursery and outside. They enjoy the changing role-play areas, which staff plan to reflect children's interests. For example, younger children play in the 'washing room' sorting and counting socks, putting clothes in the machine and then going outside to peg them up. Older children make bread and sell it in their 'bakery', using salt dough, tins and moulds. Children explore in the sensory play areas, playing with different media and materials which staff innovatively combine to provide unusual textures. For example, they mix flour and oil as an extension of the bakery make-believe play. This helps children link their learning from different experiences. However, at times, some younger children have

less opportunity to make marks freely with chalks in one of the outdoor play areas to further express their design skills.

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

Staff work in very close partnership with parents to make sure they understand and meet children's needs to a high standard. They exchange valuable information every day to support consistency and continuity of care. The nursery assigns two key persons to each child and children benefit from strong and consistent teams of staff. As a result, children are very happy and settled and develop extremely warm and trusting relationships with the staff.

Staff have established highly effective links with the schools children attend to prepare them very well for their move on to school. Key persons, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and all support staff work very closely with the many external professionals involved in children's care, education and well-being. Consequently, the staff accurately meet each child's needs and every child is fulfilling their potential. The exceptional partnership practices also help to support children very well during the move from their home into the nursery and other settings. This contributes to their personal, social and emotional development exceptionally well.

Children benefit from an extremely warm and welcoming environment. They independently choose from a wealth of toys and activities inside and outdoors, which promotes excellent independent learning. Staff create a very nurturing play area for younger children to actively play and explore from a strong base. Staff working with children over two years of age continually review and update the play areas and experiences in response to children's interests. This provides a rich and vibrant environment full of challenges. Consequently, children lead their own play and exploration very well and focus intently. Children's behaviour is exemplary. This is due to the staff's excellent example and the consistent messages children receive. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and encourage them to manage issues themselves. Children benefit from many activities in which they discuss feelings to promote considerate behaviour and a respect for one another. As a result, children show very positive attitudes.

Staff recognise that children's health and well-being are vital to their development, and promote these exceptionally well. Children practise good personal hygiene through hand washing, brushing their teeth and helping with cleaning routines. Staff use food boards and bags to discuss healthy options while children eat to inspire healthy eating habits. They introduce many new foods and flavours, and keep a record of what children do and do not like. Children are encouraged to try foods they think they do not like because staff suggest 'you might like it this time'. The highly successful free-flow to the inspirational outdoor play environments allows all children to thrive in all areas of learning while being active. Children's safety is of paramount importance, and staff prepare children very well in learning to recognise danger and keep themselves safe. For example, children help complete risk assessments, learn to use tools safely and sing 'this is the way we cross the

road' when on outings.

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

Management and staff all have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. They have a very secure knowledge of the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern about the welfare of a child. In addition, the many policies and procedures, risk assessments, checklists and robust staff vetting procedures all help to further protect children's welfare. Managers implement highly effective staff supervision to monitor the impact of staff's practice on children's care and development. For example, managers actively work in the units each day to observe practice, they conduct mock 'Ofsted inspections' and carry out one-to-one and team performance management meetings.

Management and staff demonstrate a passionate drive for excellence and implement a wealth of highly successful systems to assure meaningful and sustainable improvements. Staff feel valued and know their views are respected and acted upon to make important improvements for those in their care. They contribute to planning and improvement meetings, self-evaluations, development plans and attend lots of training opportunities. They also continuously evaluate the impact of the provision on children's development. Consequently, children consistently benefit from continuous improvements to their care and development.

Partnerships with parents are inspirational, and staff nurture their involvement from the start. Staff keep parents very well involved through 'parent panel' meetings, parent open evenings, newsletters, displays and daily communication. Parents and children also take home the Persona dolls to extend play and communication with their children. They record their experiences with the dolls in the diary to share with the nursery. Parents are keen to share their views of the nursery. They state the staff's 'involvement and relationship with parents is excellent' and the nursery provides 'exceptional care'. They add they like the 'broad range of activities which their child then replicates at home'.

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 action. 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	EY454680
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	886800
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	82
Name of provider	The Gryphon School
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01935810112

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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