



Best Soft Play & Children's Party Venue – Essex

When Anton & Emma James took on a rundown children's play centre in 2014, they knew that they had their work cut out for them. Since then, the team at Little Monsters House of Fun have built an outstanding reputation for cleanliness, professionalism, and above all, fun. Here we find out more as it is recognised for its tremendous efforts.

Based in Great Dunmow, Essex, is Little Monsters House of Fun. The soft play centre offers an action-packed experience for children of all ages.

The indoor play area features slides, ball pools, crawl tubes, rope nets and bridges to challenge and stimulate even the most active children. And that's just the beginning.

For the babies and toddlers they also have a small, designated soft play area where parents and children can interact in total safety. There is also a garden space and outdoor play area with big sandpits for the summer months. The Little Monsters Café serves a great selection of coffees and freshly prepared food and drinks.

Anton tells us, "Play is a vital part of every child's development. We're proud to provide a clean and safe environment for children (and adults) to play and have fun. Little Monsters is an integral part of the local community and we support local schools and charities."

Little Monsters has recently introduced a series of Mini Monsters classes. The classes, run by award-winning children's educator, Helen Aldridge, are all about learning through play. Designed for the under 5's, a variety of different experiences are on offer. Classes such as 'Sensory Explorers' focuses on language and storytelling with craft making.

'Rhyme Time' introduces children to action rhymes that use body movements to help tell a story as well as develop their appreciation for music, and 'Bright Minds' explores treasure boxes and colour.

Little Monsters also take great pride in their unique style of party hosting, interacting with the children and have a renowned reputation for their award winning children parties. Another recent development at Little Monsters is the newly refurbished multimedia party rooms. The air-conditioned rooms can accommodate up to 40 guests, and are available for party packages and VIP private hire. Simply choose one of the Little Monsters Party Packages and let the team organise the rest for you. You can even request a special guest appearance from your favourite superhero, princess, or a big cuddly monster.

We ask Anton to tell us a little bit about Little Monsters' experience through the COVID-19 pandemic. He explains, "Many soft play centres closed due to the pandemic. It made the remaining operators realise the importance of hygiene and cleanliness. Fortunately for us, our hygiene procedures were already on point from back when we opened in 2014. Little Monsters is a member of the AIP (the Association of Indoor Play), and were involved in lobbying the government to illustrate the importance of play in child development, especially with younger children. The importance of having a safe, clean environment for children to develop skills and interact with other children cannot be understated." Although the pandemic was challenging, the company's reputation for safety and cleanliness held strong and helped Little Monsters bounce back.

Post pandemic, when Little Monsters was finally allowed to re-open, the company changed many of its procedures. Reducing the number of tables from 55 to 34 and introducing set play sessions enables staff to reset and clean the building ahead of each session. The company has introduced a digital booking platform into its structure too.



Meaning customers can book their classes and sessions online, reserve tables, and order food and drink via a web app.

Having staff that share the company vision and values is central to the company's success and it has worked hard to keep those people. Anton says, "We're very much a family business and we have a good relationship with all our staff. We do have a number of staff for whom this is their first job, including some students and our apprentices. We recognise the importance of them continuing education and we encourage this. In fact, we want all our staff to grow along with the company. Feedback and ideas are always welcome too. Fun is what we do, we want our staff to enjoy working in a party environment."

If you're looking for a stress-free soft play centre for your family to have some fun, why not visit Little Monsters House of Fun.

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