

Inspection of Culham Science Centre Nursery and Preschool

Culham Science Centre, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3GY

Inspection date: 24 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Culham Science Centre Nursery and Preschool is a brilliant place for children to start their education. Children explore, play, solve problems and think for themselves every day. Learning is active, exciting and fun. Not a moment of learning time is wasted. The classrooms and outside areas are a wonderland of interesting and challenging activities.

Staff are excellent role models. They speak slowly and clearly, giving children time to respond to questions and instructions. Adults are highly skilled. They encourage children to think for themselves. For example, younger children add or take away bricks from a tower to make it the same height as them, squealing with delight when the tower falls.

The rich, imaginative and well-planned range of enjoyable activities and experiences sustain children's interests and keep them engaged. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn. They inspire and challenge children to do their very best at any activity they undertake. Adults meticulously plan learning opportunities which build on the children's previous experiences so that they know and can remember more. For example, children's early mathematical knowledge is developed extremely well as, dressed as superheroes, they eagerly search for and rescue toy figures. They carefully search for the correct numbered destination to take them to and triumphantly race there.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The excitement of learning is evident in every part of the nursery. The setting is highly inclusive and ensures that all children make rapid progress, no matter how small the steps. Leaders ensure that children learn to appreciate diversity in the wider world. Children learn about family differences in ways that are appropriate for their age. Children of different ethnicity, ages and gender play and learn happily together.
- Staff fully understand the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. These children are exceptionally well cared for and supported. Children with SEND enjoy the full range of exciting experiences that the nursery has to offer. The special educational needs coordinator and her assistant work with staff to ensure that no child slips through the net. External specialists guide staff to support children with specific needs extremely well.
- Parents are incredibly positive about the setting. They describe it as an amazing place. Staff work closely with parents, and children benefit from a very strong continuity of care. Staff ensure children's happiness and make them feel valued. For example, they listen with interest to children's ideas and help them to

persevere and succeed. Children build respectful relationships with each other and are always polite and helpful. Staff follow highly proactive systems to prepare children for when they move on to other settings, such as school.

- Observation, planning and assessment processes are exceptionally rigorous. Staff know the children remarkably well and are skilled in knowing how to challenge and extend children's learning even further. Staff plan purposeful activities that develop a variety of skills at one time. For example, as children investigate vegetables, they use tweezers to pick up and count different-sized vegetables. Staff develop children's mathematical understanding about size and weight and extend children's language skills exceptionally well as they discuss how vegetables are used.
- Leaders and staff prioritise developing children's communication and language skills. Staff model language extremely well. They talk constantly to children and listen carefully to what children have to say. They skilfully match the language they use and the questions they ask to the needs of each child. As a result, children are confident and articulate when speaking in a variety of situations. They learn to listen thoughtfully to adults and to each other and are proud of what they achieve.
- Children display exceptionally high levels of independence as they access activities. They follow their own interests and are engrossed in their work. Children concentrate for long periods as they play. Many stimulating activities help children to develop early writing skills, strengthening the small muscles in their hands. For example, younger children enjoy playing with sticky yellow rice, delighting in its feel before using it to make shapes in the tray.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have an extremely robust understanding of child protection issues. The culture of caring for every child is deeply embedded. All staff are extremely vigilant. They listen to what children have to say and watch what they do. Staff take action if they are concerned about a child. Rigorous recruitment procedures and comprehensive background checks ensure that suitable adults care for the children. Leaders address the suitability of staff constantly through regular appraisals, supervision meetings and monitoring observations of their performance.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY439308
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10128628
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 to 4
Total number of places	144
Number of children on roll	157
Name of registered person	Berridge, Nigel
Registered person unique reference number	RP516028
Telephone number	01865408128
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2015

Information about this early years setting

Culham Science Centre Nursery and Preschool re-registered in 2011. It is situated next door to the Culham Science Centre, near Abingdon, in Oxfordshire. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6pm all year round. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs 42 members of staff. Of these, 18 hold a recognised qualification at level 3, two have qualified teacher status, and one holds early years professional status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Robertson

Inspection activities

- The inspector and manager completed a learning walk throughout the nursery. They discussed how the early years provision is organised and how the curriculum offered supports children's learning.
- During the inspection, the inspector had meetings with the leadership team. She looked at a sample of policies and procedures, staff qualifications and evidence of the suitability of staff.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out and evaluated with the manager.
- Discussions with staff were held at appropriate times during the inspection.
- During the inspection, the inspector spoke to, and interacted with, the children. The inspector took account of parents' views through discussion and written feedback.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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