

Inspection of Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten

Lansbury Suite, Hutton Poplar, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex CM13 1YU

Inspection date: 23 June 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy, eager to go inside. A quick kiss from their parents and they are off to line up, keen to see their friends and staff. Children are very familiar with the daily routines, including removing their outdoor shoes and sanitising their hands. During the session, they independently collect mats to sit on and wait patiently for staff to join them for group times.

Children choose from a wide selection of resources that staff provide on easily accessible shelves. For example, they carefully pour water from small glass jugs into cups and use their imaginative skills while playing with small world cars and figures. Staff use a timer to let children know when the time to tidy up is coming, which allows children to finish what they are doing.

Children make good progress in relation to their starting points. Staff identify and plan what children need to learn next. They regularly monitor children's achievements to ensure that they are developing the skills they need for their future learning. Children have a good awareness of road safety. While on walks outside the setting, they confidently tell staff that they need to 'stop, look and listen' and wait patiently for staff to tell them they can cross the road.

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

- Children, generally, behave well. They share, take turns and wait for their friends to finish with toys before helping themselves. However, at times, staff do not organise daily routine changes to meet all children's needs, especially the older children who become restless. Staff do not always recognise this quickly enough to step in and manage the change effectively.
- Overall, the curriculum meets children's needs and helps them to develop a good range of skills. However, at times, the educational programme lacks ambition and staff miss opportunities to plan activities that fully excite and encourage children's thinking skills. For example, some activities are too prepared to enable children to be creative and interpret the activity in their own way.
- Children enjoy group time. They listen carefully and respond to staff's questions with enthusiasm, talking about the day of the week, what the weather is and what season it is. Children sing along to favourite songs, perform the relevant actions and easily tell staff that they should use their listening ears and kind hands and feet. Consequently, they develop high levels of social skills and manners.
- Parents are very happy with the care and learning opportunities staff provide for their children. Some children started at the setting during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, which means that parents have not yet been into the setting. They comment on how happy they are with the information they receive

from staff in their daily books and via social media. Parents report that they feel as if they know the setting really well without even stepping inside.

- The manager and staff have really good relationships with local schools and professionals involved in children's care. Time is spent by the manager looking for any other available help for parents and they are kept informed about any other support they can access, particularly for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The manager provides staff with regular supervision meetings to help support their professional development and practice. She works closely beside the staff, which also helps to identify areas to develop further. Staff are keen to undergo additional training, which shows that they have a positive attitude to providing children with good quality teaching.
- Staff spend lots of time listening to children. They are enthusiastic about what children share with them and encourage them to use their words at every opportunity. This helps children to develop good communication and language skills. Staff cleverly use questions to help children make connections in their learning. For example, they ask children to think about how to solve problems, such as stacking wooden cubes up in corresponding order of size from large to small. This also helps children to develop their mathematical skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection and wider safeguarding issues. They know what to do in the event of any concerns about children in their care and how to respond should they feel that their concerns have not been dealt with swiftly. Staff are able to identify when children and their families are at risk of harm or abuse from grooming and radicalisation. Clear reporting procedures and robust safeguarding policies support the staff to safeguard children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and develop the organisation of key daily routines to keep all children engaged, particularly those who are preparing to start school
- develop further the educational programmes to provide children with a curriculum that is ambitious and builds skills for their future learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY552141
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10174094
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Tender Tots Childcare Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP552140
Telephone number	01277201120
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten registered in 2017. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The manager has early years practitioner status. The kindergarten opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sue Mann

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the provider.
- The provider took the inspector on a learning walk and discussed how the educational programmes and curriculum is planned to support children's progress.
- The inspector spoke to parents outside the setting to take account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff during the inspection.
- The inspector observed children playing inside and accompanied them on a brief walk before observing children and staff playing outside.
- The provider showed the inspector evidence of staff's suitability and other relevant documentation, such as the register and risk assessments.

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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