

Inspection of Little Footsteps Of Mattishall

Dereham Road, Mattishall, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 3AA

Inspection date: 16 July 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 are happy and settle quickly, demonstrating they feel safe and secure in this welcoming setting. Parents praise the 'lovely' relationships children have with staff. They comment on how much children enjoy their time at the setting and how staff support them to learn skills to prepare them for starting school. Resources are easily accessible and organised to enable children to make their own choices and become independent learners. Children's creativity is particularly well supported. They have access to a wide range of materials and become skilled in using a variety of tools. They use scoops and sand as part of an imaginative ice-cream shop game. Children use bark pieces as 'chocolate sprinkles' and wooden sticks as wafers.

Children demonstrate good manners and are kind towards their friends. They listen to staff who gently remind them to share and take turns as they play. Staff have clear expectations of what they want children to learn before they go to school. They make good use of daily group times to teach children the 'number, letter and shape of the week'. These group activities are delivered in an animated way, which holds children's attention and encourages their participation. Children demonstrate a strong grasp of numbers and shapes, and often count or identify numbers during their play.

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

- Staff know the children well. They use this knowledge to inform the curriculum so that children enjoy a wide variety of opportunities and make good progress in their learning and development. Children particularly enjoy learning outside and can freely move between the indoor and outdoor environments. They explore the climbing frame and spend extended periods in the mud kitchen, cooking for their friends and staff. Children relax on a bean bag in the cool shade of a wooden tent as staff read stories to them.
- The directors have an accurate overview of the setting and are actively involved in evaluating practice with the manager and making plans for further improvement. Staff have made significant improvements to the outdoor area since registration. This has been highly successful as most children choose to spend a significant part of their day engaged in learning outside.
- The manager uses observations of staff practice to identify specific development targets. She uses this information to provide constructive feedback, to inform supervision meetings and to select the most appropriate training for individual staff.
- The setting has forged a very strong relationship with the on-site school. This has enabled staff to promote regular visits to and from teachers, to support children's emotional well-being and readiness for their transition to school.

- Staff effectively support children's speech and language through everyday interactions, as well as targeted interventions. They skilfully engage children in conversation and create opportunities for every child to join in. This helps children to develop confidence in speaking and expressing themselves clearly.
- On arrival, children are keen to go straight outside to play in the garden. They relish the physical challenge of the climbing frame and develop self-confidence as they learn to manage risks by navigating its steep slope. Staff remind children to stay hydrated during the hot weather and children remember that they need to wear hats.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that children's individual care needs are met. Parents feel well informed about their child's learning and experiences at the setting and receive suggestions for activities to try at home. They appreciate the level of communication provided, particularly when children are settling in. However, staff are not always successful in gathering detailed information from parents about their children's home learning experiences, to aid staff in their planning and enhancement of activities in the setting.
- Staff supervise activities well and are active participants in children's play. They interact warmly with children and make good use of praise to recognise their efforts. However, staff do not always effectively extend children's learning and thinking skills. For example, when children recognise numbers in their play, staff do not extend this meaningfully with links to relevant concepts, such as time or temperature.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and know how to refer any concerns about a child or an adult who works with children. They have a good understanding of wider safeguarding issues and how to recognise when children may be at risk of harm. Staff work effectively with external agencies and professionals to promote children's welfare. They access regular training to refresh their knowledge. When appointing new staff, the directors follow appropriate recruitment processes to assure themselves that staff are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance arrangements for gathering information from parents about their children's home learning experiences, to help staff tailor activities and build on children's learning even further
- increase staff's understanding of how to further extend children's knowledge and thinking skills during activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2507754
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10191632
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	Little Footsteps Of Mattishall Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2507753
Telephone number	01362693937
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Footsteps of Mattishall registered in 2019. The setting employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Oakley

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk across all areas of the premises to explain how the early years provision and curriculum is organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of interactions during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the manager and one of the directors. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.
- The manager completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection. She also took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

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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