

Inspection of The Lodge

SOUTHCOTE CHILDRENS CENTRE, 85 Coronation Square, READING, Berkshire
RG30 3QP

Inspection date: 16 August 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 have a positive attitude towards learning. For example, they enjoy digging in the soil, filling buckets and adding water while outside. Children show excitement as they explore with their friends. Those who learn best outside are given numerous opportunities to follow their interests. For example, they independently select safe scissors to cut plants and flowers, which they proudly give to adults. Staff plan and structure the day to enable children to spend a significant amount of time outdoors to explore, investigate and learn through play. Children access activities which are unique and spark their imagination. They make fires in cauldrons, adding sticks, leaves and water to make 'witches' soup'. Children are confident to follow their own interests.

Staff support children to behave well. Children listen and respond to staff's instructions and follow the rules well. They are familiar with the routines of the day and know what is expected, for instance when it is time to wash their hands on arrival. Staff sensitively encourage and support children to understand the importance of following appropriate personal hygiene routines. Children show their understanding of this when they remind each other to wash their hands before eating.

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

- All children make good progress in their learning. Parents cannot currently come into the setting, as they would have done before COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions. Instead, they have daily discussions at the gate when dropping off or collecting their children. Parents say how much their children love attending the setting, and how well their children are progressing.
- Staff develop close bonds with children, which helps to support their emotional development and confidence. There are effective systems in place to ensure good continuity of care and learning, such as when a child's key person is absent.
- Parents receive good information on their children's development and confirm that they receive daily feedback on their children's care and learning. However, staff are not always consistent in providing parents with information and advice as to how they can support children's learning and development at home.
- Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged children is a particular strength at this setting. Children benefit from the calm a consistent environment and staff support their individual needs closely. All children enjoy the wide variety of experiences on offer and make good progress from their developmental starting points. Staff often meet with other professionals to share information and plan for children's learning. Staff ensure the curriculum they provide meets children's individual needs. They

ensure activities are planned to meet the current interests of the children.

- Staff have high expectations of children. Overall, children make good progress. However, sometimes, staff do not extend or adapt the teaching and activities to take full consideration of the abilities of all of the children. In particular, at times they do not ensure that the most-able children are fully challenged.
- Children gain a good understanding of healthy practices. Staff regularly remind them to wash their hands and ask them if they know why, to check their understanding. All children carefully cut fruit and vegetables for their snacks and discuss their likes and dislikes.
- Staff understand the importance of promoting children's physical development. They provide opportunities outdoors for children to play and have introduced an obstacle course from planks and tyres. Children develop good physical skills as they learn to balance and negotiate the obstacle course independently.
- Recruitment, induction and ongoing suitability processes are robust. Staff receive regular supervision and encouragement to continue their professional development. Leaders discuss manageable workloads with staff to ensure they do not feel under pressure. Leaders and staff have recently introduced an ethos of being 'trauma-informed'. Leaders say they have seen a positive impact from this in the nursery. For example, they have developed a 'calm down area' where children can spend time to relax when they may be feeling upset or anxious.
- Children enjoy playing in a safe and secure environment. The premises are checked daily to ensure resources and equipment are safe for children to use. Staff support children effectively to understand risk. For instance, children know that they must wait to use the climbing frame, if there are already children using it.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are aware of safeguarding issues which might affect children in their care. They attend regular training and understand the signs and symptoms that could indicate a child is at risk of harm or abuse. Staff know the dangers posed to children from extreme views and behaviours and how to report their concerns. They have a clear understanding of what to do if an allegation is made against a member of staff or they have concerns about a colleague's conduct. Staff keep appropriate records and contact relevant professionals when required. Risk assessments help to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- build further on the established systems for sharing information with parents to help them become more actively involved in their children's learning at home

- adapt and extend teaching and activities to consistently take into account the abilities of all children and ensure they are offered sufficient challenge.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY563487
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10194449
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Brighter Futures For Children
Registered person unique reference number	RP563486
Telephone number	0118 9373092
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Lodge registered under new ownership in 2018. The setting operates Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The managers hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 7 and level 3. They employ 12 members of staff. Of these, eight hold an appropriate childcare qualification at level 3 and two hold an appropriate qualification at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Chris Lamey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- The manager and deputy manager showed the inspector round the premises and explained the learning intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum and the activities offered.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents at appropriate times. She took their views into consideration.
- During the visit, the inspector reviewed a number of documents relating to safeguarding, suitability and record keeping.
- Observations were made of interactions between staff and children, both inside and out. The manager and the inspector jointly observed children's learning and discussed its impact.
- The safeguarding roles of the manager and staff were discussed with the inspector.

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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