

Inspection of The Oaks Nursery

The Oaks Children's Centre, Grange Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 2LA

Inspection date: 31 August 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy to attend the nursery. They know and follow routines and behave very well. Older children listen, and follow instructions, as they get ready to go indoors at lunchtime. They know how to, and understand why they need to, wash their hands prior to eating. They manage this independently. Younger children confidently move around the nursery, choosing what they want to do. This shows they feel safe and secure. Staff teach them to take turns and play cooperatively alongside others.

Older children engage well in activities, showing good levels of focus and concentration. Staff encourage children to recall previous learning. When children pick pea pods from the garden, they remember how they previously opened the pea pods, took them to the chef and ate the peas with their lunch. Staff talk to children about how the pea pods grow. This helps children to embed their previous learning and encourages their language development.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have positive experiences in the nursery. Staff know them well and provide them with opportunities that interest them. Children with delayed language skills communicate effectively with staff, using alternative methods such as picture prompts and signing. This helps them to communicate their needs and choices.

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

- Since the last inspection, a new manager has been appointed. The manager engages positively with staff, spending time observing and supporting their practice. Staff receive regular feedback about their performance, which helps them to identify ways to continue their professional development. Staff in lead roles receive specific training to help them to fulfil the requirements of their role well.
- Children understand what is expected of them and the rules they need to follow. During a fire drill, children were well practised and without hesitation followed the correct procedures. They listened carefully, followed instructions, and remained calm. This effective practice helps to keep children safe in the event of an emergency.
- Children have lots of opportunities to practise their physical skills. Outdoors, they run around and ride on scooters. Younger children safely negotiate ramps. Staff keep children safe. They communicate well with each other, to ensure children are always well supervised as they move indoors or outside.
- Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, staff have found ways to continue to communicate effectively with parents. They share information about children's development and enable a regular two-way flow of

information, importantly where there are concerns about children's development. Parents comment positively about their children's experiences in the nursery, particularly about the progress they have made with their communication and language skills.

- Staff working with children who speak English as an additional language place a strong focus on helping them to develop their communication skills. Staff use books and songs to encourage children's new vocabulary. Staff play alongside younger children, talking to them about what they are doing and using simple words and phrases. Children copy those words and successfully use them as they play.
- Leaders continually look at ways to improve what they offer for children. Recent changes mean that children experience a calmer environment, where they can focus and concentrate better. Leaders take account of children's different needs. They create a safe and calming space for children to access, when they need to be away from the main nursery environment. This particularly helps children with SEND, who benefit from sensory experiences. However, at times, the environment for the youngest children is not so well organised. After lunch, when staff are managing routines, such as clearing away and nappy changing, there are fewer opportunities to capture children's interest or help them to focus.
- Children are encouraged to be independent from a young age, which helps them to successfully transition between rooms. Older children serve themselves food at lunch time and tidy away their plates and cups afterwards. However, despite the positive interactions they have with staff during the morning's activities, staff do not consistently continue this through lunchtime. Children have fewer interactions with staff, which limits opportunities to continue their learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the signs they need to be aware of that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They understand the procedures they must follow to report those concerns. Leaders ensure staff keep their knowledge up to date, including of wider safeguarding matters that may impact on children. Leaders test out staff's safeguarding knowledge regularly with quizzes and support them to access relevant training. Leaders understand their responsibility to report any concerns about children and know to which agencies they must report them. Leaders make rigorous checks on staff's suitability to ensure only those suitable to work with children do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to strengthen planning of the environment for the youngest children, so that these children remain focused and engaged throughout the day
- enhance the quality of staff interactions with older children, particularly during routine activities such as lunchtime, so that children's learning is extended throughout the day.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY440385
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10145253
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	0 to 6
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	82
Name of registered person	Alpha Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP900801
Telephone number	01394 694752
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

The Oaks Nursery registered in 2011. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff and a cook. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Julie Meredith-Jenkins

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic on the provider and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together.
- Children spoke to the inspector about the activities they were engaged in and what they enjoyed doing in the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector jointly observed and evaluated a planned activity.
- Parents spoke to the inspector about their children's experiences in the nursery and the information that staff share with them.
- The manager, the provider's nominated person and the inspector held a meeting together. The inspector looked at a sample of documents, including evidence of staff's suitability.

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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