

Inspection of Thorney Close Early Education Centre

Thorney Close Early Education Centre, 120 Thorndale Road, Sunderland SR3 4JQ

Inspection date: 26 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

Staff have high expectations of children and help them to make good progress. They provide clear and consistent boundaries for children's behaviour and offer regular praise to them. This helps children to develop good social skills. Children know how to wait for their turn and share resources with minimal support. Children who have any gaps in their learning are effectively supported by staff, who know them well and focus their teaching appropriately. For example, staff model sentences and new words to children as they explore water and fruits in the tray. Staff encourage children to copy new phrases and offer praise when they persevere. Children are keen to participate in activities, indoors and outdoors. They develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem. For example, older children show determination as they develop their physical skills in cutting their fruit and ask for help after they have tried independently.

Since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, staff have adapted the ways parents and carers drop off and collect children. In addition, children who are new to the setting have been unable to have settling-in visits with parents attending. Despite this, staff have supported families to overcome the challenges and maintained effective levels of communication with them. New children continue to settle in quickly and parents are happy with how quickly their children have developed confidence in the nursery. Children benefit from the calm, nurturing environment and show that they feel safe and happy in the nursery. Their behaviour is consistently good.

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

- The majority of the curriculum is carefully planned and helps children to build on their existing knowledge. For example, young children enjoy singing nursery rhymes and begin to learn sign language during circle time activities. Staff build on these skills and older children discuss the author of their favourite story, and know who the illustrators are. Children retell stories to staff and show a love of books from an early age. However, leaders and managers have identified children do not have enough access to technological resources to develop their skills over time, they are still enhancing this part of their provision.
- Children take an active part in their own self-care and enjoy time outdoors in the fresh air. Staff use opportunities in the everyday routine to help children develop new skills. For example, children know to count how many people are at the table to find out how many cups there are. Staff continue to extend children's mathematical development and model language, such as 'full and empty', as children enjoy healthy snacks, milk and water. This helps to build foundations for children's future learning and helps them to develop some of the skills they will need at school.

- Children thoroughly enjoy the range of experiences available at the nursery, indoors and outdoors. They are willing to try new activities and show excitement when they discover new concepts. For example, children show delight when they pour water into containers and baskets and see the water dripping through. Staff encourage children to experiment with this and test out their ideas. Young children develop their early writing skills and express themselves creatively as they use painting resources independently. Staff notice the large circles that children make with their brushes and pass information to children's key persons to help assess and plan their development.
- Leaders and managers place a strong emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development and staff's well-being. Children take part in a range of well-being and mindfulness activities, which staff continued during the lockdown period. For example, parents leave positive feedback about how children take quiet times to lay down to listen to gentle music and take part in basic yoga classes.
- The leadership team work hard to ensure that staff feel valued and are happy in their work. For example, they send out surveys to monitor the impact of workload on staff's stress levels and make adjustments to support them. During the coronavirus pandemic, staff continued to develop their skills and knowledge to work with children. For example, they reflected on different educational theorists and how their practice helps children learn in different ways. However, there are times when staff lack confidence in their teaching skills and maintain a supervisory role instead of promoting high-quality interactions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers implement robust recruitment procedures to help them employ suitable staff. For example, they complete a range of interviewing rounds which include asking safeguarding questions and obtaining suitable references. Staff are experienced and confident in identifying and reporting concerns about children's welfare. They are aware of wider safeguarding concerns, which are becoming more prominent, such as county lines and witchcraft. The provider regularly monitors any accidents in the setting and staff make adjustments to try and prevent these in the future. This helps to keep children safe around the nursery. Staff follow specific risk assessments in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to further develop their confidence and teaching skills so that children consistently benefit from high levels of engagement and meaningful experiences

- consider ways to strengthen the curriculum for children to further develop their skills in using technology.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2507932
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10202467
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	102
Number of children on roll	65
Name of registered person	Hylton Red House Nursery School Governing Board
Registered person unique reference number	2507931
Telephone number	01915614164
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Thorney Close Early Education Centre registered in 2019. It employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including the manager. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. It provides funded early education places for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Lorains

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 provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A joint observation was completed outdoors by the manager and inspector during a planned activity.
- The inspector held a discussion with manager and provider in relation to the leadership and management of the nursery. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of recruitment, staff's qualifications and their suitability to work with children. The inspector discussed children's learning and development with the staff team and nursery manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents in-person and over the telephone to obtain verbal feedback for 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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