

Inspection of Poppyfields Nursery

Fairfield Park Lower School, Dickens Boulevard, Stotfold, HITCHIN, Hertfordshire
SG5 4FD

Inspection date: 5 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are excited and eager to come into nursery. They are enthusiastic and really look forward to meeting staff and friends. From the start of their day, children are so eager to learn through an excellent range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. Children thrive in this setting because they feel safe and secure. They gain a wealth of skills through meticulously planned activities that continuously challenge their thinking. Staff actively encourage children to investigate and problem solve. For example, children add more powder paint to water if it is too runny, so that they can find the right consistency to print with vegetables.

Children have extensive opportunities to be active learners. They develop their language and vocabulary with support from both the highly skilled staff and their friends. Staff present their favourite stories in exciting and engaging ways. They encourage children to share new learned vocabulary. For example, during song time, children are asked how many speckled frogs there are left. Children recall the word 'zero', which they had learned the previous day.

Children's behaviour is exceptional. Children play together purposefully and show great consideration for their friends. For example, a child voluntarily asks, 'Please can I use your scales to see if my clay is heavy?'. Children wholeheartedly take the opportunities they are given to connect with the natural world. They are confident to take risks and can independently manage their safety. For example, when cutting up vegetables for a stew, a child explains that if they do not hold the carrot carefully when cutting it, they will cut themselves.

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

- Leadership and management is exceptional. Leaders have high expectations for all staff and this is reflected in everyday practice. They are passionate about ensuring every child has the best possible start to their education. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that puts the well-being of children at the heart of what they do. They thoroughly evaluate the environment with a key focus on building on what children know and can do. Leaders and staff plan with the children in mind, to provide a wide range of rich opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Leaders ensure that staff are highly valued and respected and they are involved in all aspects of the provision. Leaders recognise the importance of staff well-being. Staff and leaders work together to identify relevant training to benefit the children. For example, as a result of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and children's well-being assessments, leaders and staff identified a need to further support children's social interaction and listening and attention skills. Staff

attended an additional training initiative to best support children's continued excellent progress in these aspects of development.

- All staff know the children exceptionally well, even those children that have only just started. This allows them to move children's learning on from the moment they start nursery. Staff are highly skilled and actively encourage the transfer of skills throughout the nursery. For example, children make marks on a tally chart when on a bug hunt, record how many pasta tubes are on a string and make marks in the paint. Staff know when to intervene in children's play and when to stand back and watch the learning happen. Staff closely monitor children's well-being and progress to identify any gaps in learning, so that these can be swiftly addressed.
- Staff have an extensive understanding of the curriculum and how children learn. They spend time observing the children to assess their well-being and starting points and to plan their next steps. They work highly effectively with parents to gather initial and ongoing information about children's development. This provides an accurate understanding of what the children need to know, to support their development from the start.
- Leaders and staff maintain incredibly positive relationships with parents. They share experiences and significant moments online, daily. Parents are truly a part of their children's learning journey from the moment they start nursery. Parents report how exceptionally well informed they are about their children's learning, skills and next steps. Detailed information is regularly shared with parents in monthly newsletters, verbally and online. Parents comment that the nursery is like a home from home.
- Leaders are outstanding at identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities swiftly. Highly effective partnerships with parents and professionals allows leaders to plan initial timely interventions for children. Leaders and staff work closely with professionals, to ensure early support is put in place to help children achieve the best possible progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a culture of safeguarding that allows them to identify children that are at risk and to refer any concerns. The safeguarding policies and procedures are stringent and extremely well understood. As a result, staff are highly confident in identifying signs and symptoms of abuse. They understand what they must do should they have any concerns about children's well-being or the conduct of their colleagues. Leaders regularly check that staff understand their role in safeguarding through questioning and ongoing training.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY359845
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10137522
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 7
Total number of places	108
Number of children on roll	84
Name of registered person	Poppies Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP907094
Telephone number	07814204126
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2015

Information about this early years setting

Poppyfields Nursery is one of two settings run by the proprietor and was registered in 2007. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff, of whom eight hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 2 and above. The owner holds early years professional status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. The nursery also operates according to demand during school holidays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Annette Franklin

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk to understand how the provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and together they assessed the impact of the teaching on children's learning.
- The Inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The Inspector spoke to a number of parents of children attending the nursery and took their views into account.
- The Inspector checked documents related to staff suitability and qualifications, including paediatric first aid and safeguarding.

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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