

# Inspection of Little Oaks Nursery

Denefield School, Long Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG31 6XY

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Inspection date: 12 October 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision requires improvement**

The quality of education and children's overall experiences in the nursery are variable. Staff do not implement a well-designed curriculum that engages and challenges children in their learning consistently, so that all children make good progress in their learning. Additionally, staff's support is not precise enough to help children, including children in receipt of additional funding, catch up quickly enough in their learning. This includes in areas of learning, such as communication and language, independence and confidence, which staff have identified as areas where children experience a delay due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Despite the weaknesses in the quality of education, all children settle well and have their care needs met by a nurturing staff team. Babies seek comfort from familiar adults and enjoy the company of their peers. They sing songs and develop their physical skills, such as when playing in the outdoor area. Staff provide some opportunities for children to use their home language in the setting, alongside English. For example, children identify numbers in a dual-language book. Older children are beginning to understand the concept of sharing. They use sand timers to help manage turn taking with a popular resource. However, the behaviour rules are not well monitored by the manager. Staff sometimes use methods of behaviour management that do not support children to understand the consequences of their actions or help children to express their feelings.

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

- The lack of a robust oversight of practice in the nursery has led to weaknesses at a leadership level. These include the monitoring of staff's safeguarding knowledge, use of behaviour management strategies for older children, and, overall, the effectiveness with which staff support children's speaking and social skills. Although these weaknesses do not place children at significant risk of harm or delay in their learning, these areas are not well understood or successfully implemented by staff, including the manager, and require improvement.
- Staff do not benefit from effective supervision opportunities, including constructive feedback on how they can build further on supporting children's individual needs. They do not receive support in order that inconsistencies in their understanding of policies and procedures are addressed. Staff access some training appropriate to their roles. However, this does not focus precisely enough on helping them to deliver a high-quality and inclusive curriculum. Despite this, staff report favourably on their workload and feel well supported by the manager and provider.
- The manager has a satisfactory overview of the curriculum and knows what children need to learn next. However, this is not embedded into practice. At times, children remain unmotivated by the activities on offer, which fail to

capture their curiosity successfully. Identified room priorities, such as supporting older children's independence skills, are not consistently met. Staff working with older children often do tasks that children are capable of doing for themselves, limiting children's independence in readiness for school. Inconsistencies in how staff help children to manage their feelings, at times, limits children's confidence.

- At times, small-group activities meet children's needs well. Older children become engrossed in an activity where they take turns to guess the missing character from a favourite story in a memory game. They use their initiative well as they refer to the book and work out which item is missing. Staff effectively support children to remain engaged and focused through sensitive encouragement and skilful questioning. However, these opportunities are not extended to all children. During children's free play, support for children's individual learning needs lacks a similar focus.
- Staff promote children's understanding of healthy lifestyles well. Children benefit from balanced and nutritious meals. They learn about the community they live in. For example, they go on trips to a local park and to feed the ducks. However, staff do not support children to develop good levels of resilience when they face a setback and children give up easily. Consequently, overall, children's emotional well-being is not as well supported by staff as their physical health is.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff access some safeguarding training and demonstrate an adequate understanding of signs that would indicate a child is at risk of harm. Their confidence in implementing the safeguarding policy and procedures varies, and, overall, is not well monitored by leaders who hold responsibility for safeguarding matters. Despite this, the manager generally identifies when to take action, as required, and suitably identifies routes of referral. Good attention is given to the recruitment of new staff who are aware of when to inform leaders of any changes to their ongoing suitability or health. Staff maintain a suitable environment and have a good regard to children's safety on outings. Staff show vigilance in implementing children's care plans to support children's continued good health.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

	<b>Due date</b>
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<p>implement effective supervision opportunities for all staff, including the manager, that address weaknesses in the quality of the education, support staff's knowledge of implementing the nursery's policies and procedures and guide staff to improve their personal effectiveness</p>	<p>10/01/2022</p>
<p>deliver a well-planned curriculum that focusses on supporting all children to develop their social skills, gain high levels of independence and develop confidence in communication and language</p>	<p>10/01/2022</p>
<p>improve the quality of staff's support for children so that information is presented to children clearly and that staff's interactions challenge and ignite children's curiosity, extend their thinking and help them persevere at tasks.</p>	<p>10/01/2022</p>

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2518422
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10191844
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 3
<b>Total number of places</b>	21
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	25
<b>Name of registered person</b>	The Orchard Day Nursery (Yattendon) Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901317
<b>Telephone number</b>	07494 498339
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Little Oaks Nursery re-registered in 2019 under new ownership. The nursery is located in Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire. It is open Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 6pm, all year round, except for a week at Christmas. There are nine staff, including the manager. Of these, the manager holds early years professional status, five staff hold level 3 qualifications and two other staff hold level 2 qualifications.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Melissa Cox

## 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 with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children who require additional support in their learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their written views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.
- A meeting was held with the provider's representative.

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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