

Inspection of Countryways Nursery

Aldershaw Farm, Kent Street, Sedlescombe, East Sussex TN33 0SD

Inspection date: 18 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children come into the nursery happily and quickly settle to activities. They form strong bonds with the staff team. They show that they feel happy and safe with staff, asking for hugs when they see them. Children behave well and demonstrate very good manners. They ask politely if they want something and say 'please' and 'thank you' without prompting. They gain useful self-care skills and become more independent. Older children use knives and forks competently at lunchtime, and toddlers begin to feed themselves with a spoon. Even the youngest children find their own shoes and coats when they go outside.

Children take part in a varied range of experiences that they enjoy. Younger children are excited to crunch cornflakes with their feet or move their bodies to music. Older children have great fun playing imaginative games on the outdoor equipment. Staff know children well and have high expectations for what they can achieve. Children who need extra support or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from well-targeted assistance to help close any gaps. Staff have stayed in close contact with all families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This has helped children return to the nursery confidently after any time away.

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

- Children get along well with each other and with staff. They share and take turns with equipment and are familiar with the daily routines. Older children help tidy up without being asked when they have finished playing a game. Staff are very caring and highly sensitive to children's individual needs. They plan opportunities for children to share their home languages or talk about their holidays abroad. This helps to broaden children's understanding of different people and communities and helps them learn to value their friends.
- Staff observe children and accurately identify the next steps for their learning. They make sure children benefit from new experiences that build on what they do at home. Children achieve well and gain useful skills for their future learning and for starting school. Older children confidently express their ideas. They count as they play and they listen attentively to staff. At times, however, staff do not focus precisely on the skills and knowledge they want children to learn when they plan activities, to help them make the best possible progress.
- Staff join in with children's play and follow their lead, giving them time to make choices and decisions for themselves. They respond to children's interests and encourage children to be curious. For instance, when children heard about how tall a sweetcorn plant grows, staff helped them measure how big this is with a long ruler.
- Children develop a love of books at the nursery. They enjoy sitting in the 'loft'

area and sharing a story with their friends. Staff read to children every day. They use their voices and props such as puppets to make the story interesting. However, group sessions such as story time are not always planned as well as they could be to include all children and fully support their communication and language skills effectively.

- Parents are happy with the care the nursery provides. They speak highly of staff and say that they keep them well informed. Staff regularly share their assessments of children with their parents, as well as ideas for activities at home. They seek parents' views about their children's development and ask for information about their achievements at home. Children benefit from this consistent, shared approach to their learning and care.
- The manager and staff team are motivated to continually develop and improve the provision. They have worked hard throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and adapted the provision where needed to keep children and their families happy and safe. The manager monitors the provision effectively and accurately identifies areas where practice can further improve. Staff make good use of training opportunities to add to their skills and knowledge, including seeking specific courses to help them meet children's individual needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibility to keep children safe. They conduct daily safety checks and continually assess the environment for risks, to make sure that children can play safely. Staff show an understanding of the signs of possible abuse or neglect and know how to report any concerns about a child's welfare. The manager conducts thorough recruitment checks of any new staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. All staff receive a thorough induction so that they understand their role.

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 focus more precisely on what they want children to learn from activities, to offer new challenges and help children make the best possible progress
- strengthen the planning of group activities such as story time, to fully engage all children and to provide even better support for their language and communication skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY399786
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10207519
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	17
Number of children on roll	14
Name of registered person	Fenwick, Lynne Margaret
Registered person unique reference number	RP905614
Telephone number	07745 234 284
Date of previous inspection	18 August 2016

Information about this early years setting

Countryways Nursery registered in 2009. It operates from a converted part of a farmhouse in Sedlescombe, East Sussex. The nursery opens from Monday to Thursday, from 7.30am to 5.30pm, for 49 weeks of the year. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are four staff, three of whom hold childcare qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rebecca James

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group story time.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting and sampled relevant documents.
- Some parents shared their views on the setting 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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