

# Inspection of Keele University Day Nursery

University of Keele, Keele, NEWCASTLE, Staffordshire ST5 5BG

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Inspection date: 17 November 2021

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Outstanding</b> |
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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Good

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

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children arrive at the nursery looking happy and enthusiastic. They beam with excitement as they greet staff and their friends and quickly settle into the nursery routines. Children learn through an effective balance of interesting and innovative adult-led activities and child-initiated play opportunities. Staff have extremely high expectations for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, all children make rapid progress from their starting points.

Children and staff form very strong bonds and clearly enjoy each other's company. Staff provide children with a highly secure sense of belonging and family. Babies are extremely well settled. This is enhanced by the nurturing staff, who provide stability and a calm and gentle approach to all aspects of their care. Behaviour is exemplary as all children are listened to and understood. Children are skilfully supported to learn how to manage their emotions. As a result, children develop exceptional levels of self-control and learn how actions affect others. Children respect the similarities and differences between themselves and others. They actively engage in excellent opportunities to learn about different cultures and traditions. For example, staff invite visitors into the nursery to share their cultural backgrounds with the children.

Children display consistently high levels of confidence and independence. This is illustrated as they enthusiastically talk about their experiences at forest school. They demonstrate how they worked together as a team to pull a bow saw back and forth to cut pieces of wood for the campfire. Children relish the opportunities to learn directly about nature as they grow and eat vegetables from the nursery's vegetable plot. They recycle materials and learn about sustainability and how to look after their planet.

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

- The manager is very enthusiastic and passionate and shows extreme dedication to the quality of education that children receive. She has a superb overview of the curriculum and knows what she wants children to learn. The dedicated room leaders and staff share the same vision for excellence and place children at the heart of everything they do.
- The manager and room leaders undertake regular supervisions and peer-to-peer observations with staff to help develop their practice. Staff say that they are extremely well supported, that they enjoy working in the nursery and that they feel valued. Staff are consistently supported to undertake further training and continuous professional development to deliver highly skilled teaching.
- Staff are approachable and always make time to talk to parents, offering

reassurance and guidance as well as advice on home learning. Staff know the children they care for extremely well. They closely monitor children's progress to identify any potential gaps in learning and plan highly effective opportunities to provide additional support. Staff work closely with external professionals as well as with parents of children with SEND to help ensure their provision is inclusive.

- Staff lead engaging and enjoyable focused group times that support children's listening and attention skills. Staff expertly consolidate teaching by revisiting what children have already learned. This ensures their new knowledge is secure. For example, older children join in with conversations about the topic of night and day. They excitedly say, 'Owls are nocturnal and only come out at night when we are in bed asleep.'
- Leaders and staff inspire a love of books and singing from infancy, which helps children to develop communication, language and early literacy skills. Children have excellent opportunities to practise self-expression. For instance, they have great fun banging on drums and take part in enjoyable music and movement sessions and arts and crafts.
- Babies and children are supported exceptionally well to develop their physical skills. Babies use their senses and whole bodies as they splash enthusiastically in the water tray. They cruise around furniture and become fascinated as they keenly crawl through fallen leaves. Children navigate challenging obstacles and learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, during forest school, they climb and swing on trees and safely toast marshmallows on the campfire.
- Children use mathematical language and numbers spontaneously while they play. Older children focus intently and carefully build a tower using small construction pieces. They meticulously work out that 'as the tower gets taller it will be unbalanced and fall.' Children recognise numbers up to twenty and can correctly answer simple sums. Staff encourage children's efforts and praise them highly when they succeed, which helps to boost children's self-esteem and confidence.
- Children are extremely well prepared in readiness for their eventual move to school. Teachers visit the children in the nursery before they start school and staff share children's developmental progress with them. Staff make children's transition to school as smooth and as exciting as possible.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of the signs and symptoms which may indicate that children are at risk of harm, including wider safeguarding concerns and the 'Prevent' duty. They know how to deal with concerns about children's welfare and have a secure understanding of local safeguarding procedures for reporting allegations. The manager ensures that robust recruitment procedures are in place to check the suitability of new staff and the ongoing suitability of existing staff. The nursery is secure, and its risk assessments are thorough in minimising all potential risks to children.

## Setting details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | 218444  |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | Staffordshire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10072569  |
| <b>Type of provision</b>                           | Childcare on non-domestic premises  |
| <b>Registers</b>                                   | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| <b>Day care type</b>                               | Full day care   |
| <b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b> | 0 to 4  |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 128   |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 166   |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | University of Keele   |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP520117  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 01782 733394  |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 5 April 2016  |

## Information about this early years setting

Keele University Day Nursery was registered in 1989. The nursery employs 33 members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including the manager, who holds a BA (Honours) in early childhood studies. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Angela Hulme

## 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 and the inspector completed a learning walk together to look at how the curriculum is planned to meet children's needs and development.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A meeting was held with the inspector and the manager to discuss leadership and management arrangements.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and checked evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children, and took account of parents' views about the provision.

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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