

Inspection of The Country Mouse Nursery

Masonic Hall, Bepton Road, Midhurst, Sussex GU29 9HH

Inspection date: 15 February 2022

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

Children are happy and enjoy the time they spend in this warm and friendly nursery. All children, including those who are new, settle quickly. The small staff team knows the children well and creates a family feel to the nursery. Children have strong emotional attachments to the caring staff, who cuddle and comfort them as and when needed. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Children's behaviour is good. Staff act as positive role models and they have high expectations for children's behaviour. Children are spoken to in a calm and respectful manner and they are praised often. This helps to boost children's self-esteem. Children are kind and polite to staff and each other. For example, they say 'please' and 'thank you', play cooperatively and demonstrate positive behaviours, such as being kind, sharing and taking turns.

Children make good progress in their development, including those in receipt of additional funding. They show a positive attitude to learning and are eager to join in with the activities. For example, babies show high levels of engagement and enjoyment during an outdoor water play activity with staff. They smile, babble, splash and move their bodies with excitement. Babies learn to scoop, pour and transfer water and giggle as they work on their control and coordination skills. Pre-school children concentrate fully and use language such as 'heavier' and 'lighter' as they use scales to weigh and measure different items. All children are keen to show what they know and can do.

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

- The manager develops an inclusive curriculum that incorporates children's interests when planning activities. She is clear about what she wants children to learn. This includes the key skills that children need in preparation for school, such as being able to communicate clearly. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to provide additional support for children who need it.
- Children's language is developing well. Staff place a strong emphasis on supporting children's early communication and language skills by modelling and extending children's language while they play. For example, staff in the baby room gently repeat and pronounce words correctly and introduce new vocabulary to children. Older children enthusiastically join in with stories and songs and have lots of conversations with adults and other children.
- Staff provide a variety of challenging equipment to support children's small physical skills in readiness for early writing. For example, younger children use large plastic tweezers to pick up small objects. Older children make 'potions' and use a concoction of water, feathers, herbs, soil and stones and a range of utensils to mix and transport the mixture to different places.
- Children understand and follow the rules and routines in nursery. However, on

occasion, staff do not fully support children's individual needs during routine transition periods such as nappy changing, mealtimes and nap times. This means that, at times, some children become disengaged and restless.

- Parents praise the nursery and the positive impact it has had on their children's development. They comment that their children have made good progress and have settled well into the nursery.
- Staff encourage healthy lifestyles across the nursery. Children have opportunities to learn about the world around them and to enjoy fresh air and exercise outdoors. They exercise their large muscles as they confidently learn to climb, run and balance in the outdoor area. Recently, staff introduced yoga sessions. They teach children about different breathing techniques. This helps to promote children's mental well-being.
- The manager is passionate about her role and is knowledgeable and dedicated. She has a clear vision for the nursery and understands the importance of quality care. Staff report that they feel happy and supported in their roles.
- The manager provides some feedback for staff to help them to improve their practice. However, feedback is not always specific enough to help individual staff improve their skills and knowledge further. Consequently, there are some variations in the quality of education across the nursery. For instance, not all staff are clear about the learning intentions of activities to ensure they support children's learning even further. This means that, at times, some children are not fully challenged.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a sound knowledge of how to ensure that children are kept safe. They can identify the signs and symptoms which may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Staff know who to contact if they have concerns about a child's safety and welfare. They are supported through training on various aspects of safeguarding at induction, through additional training and staff meetings. Rigorous recruitment procedures are in place for all staff. Staff complete thorough risk assessments to help ensure that the areas of the premises children access and trips off site are safe and suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- consider how to support children effectively during routine transitions to ensure that they do not become restless and disengaged
- provide staff with more sharply focused feedback and professional development opportunities to help them to improve their skills and knowledge even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2526055
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10208275
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	The Country Mouse Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2526054
Telephone number	01730813422
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Country Mouse Nursery registered in 2019. It is open Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year, from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs seven childcare staff. Of these, five staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Joanne Allen

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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector undertook a learning walk, where the planned learning behind the educational programmes on offer was discussed.
- At suitable times during the inspection, the inspector spoke to staff, parents and children and took their views into account.
- The inspector and the manager observed interactions between adults and children. They discussed the learning that took place.
- The manager and her staff explained their role in safeguarding children to the inspector.
- The inspector viewed a range of documents relating to safeguarding, suitability of staff and record-keeping.

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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