

Inspection of Holly Trees Day Nursery

Holly Trees Montessori Nursery, Newland Street, Witham, Essex CM8 2AS

Inspection date: 2 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children generally enjoy their time at the nursery. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of staff's teaching. As a result, not all children receive learning experiences that capture their interests and challenge them effectively. Children understand the nursery routines and follow the staff's directions. However, some staff carry out the daily routines too rigorously.

Babies and younger children receive warmth and affection from their carers. They smile and giggle as they attempt to gain confidence to stand and take their first steps, using baby walkers. Staff praise them excitedly, while still creating a calm, relaxed environment. Older babies enjoy participating in lots of exploratory and messy play. Children are well behaved and kind to each other. They join their friends to create 'meals' with the home resources and food in the role-play areas. Older children take pride in their achievements. They show visitors the potato figures they create based on a favourite book character and talk about how they made them. Younger children become thoroughly engaged in using the parachute. They giggle together as they run under and wait for the parachute to come down and cover them.

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

- Leaders and managers have worked really hard since the last inspection to improve all aspects of the nursery provision. The manager closely monitors the number of children due to attend to ensure that the correct adult-to-child ratios are consistently met. New staff are being recruited and inducted to ensure that there is a stable team of staff who understand the nursery procedures and their roles. Changes to the morning routines now mean that children begin their day in a calm environment. The manager has developed and improved her understanding of her role and is now more confident to lead the staff team.
- Leaders have reviewed and improved many of the policies and procedures, including the sickness policy. Children's daily attendance records are completed as the children enter their room.
- While the improvements made since the last inspection mean that outcomes for children are greatly improved, there are still weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Some staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They engage effectively with them and provide generally appropriate activities and experiences. However, this is variable across the staff team. Staff receive training to further improve their teaching skills. However, this is not yet fully embedded, which results in inconsistencies in some staff's abilities to deliver the curriculum effectively.
- Staff do not always recognise the importance of enabling children to remain engaged and engrossed in an activity so that they fully benefit from the

experience. They focus too heavily on completing daily routines at specific times. As a result, children are sometimes taken away from the activity they are enjoying, for example to have their nappy changed.

- Parents generally speak well of the nursery staff. They comment on the changes and improvements they have seen since the last inspection. This includes more effective communication with their children's key person. Many parents say that they found the recent parents' evening useful. They comment that it was good to be able to enter the nursery for this event following the long period of COVID-19 restrictions which prevented this from happening.
- Children's mathematical language and understanding are promoted effectively. For example, staff use vegetables to compare sizes. They talk about finding 'longer' ones, 'half', 'more' and 'less'. Children proficiently engage in this activity, which is linked to a series of books which they have been reading.
- Staff working with babies and the younger children help to promote their language and communication skills through singing and responding to their babbles and sounds. They chat confidently to them and sing enthusiastically as they wait for lunch to be served. The babies clap and follow actions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and managers understand their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and protecting children. They regularly update their safeguarding knowledge, for example through training and in-house quizzes. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of the signs and symptoms to be alert to and know what action to take if they have a concern about a child's safety or well-being. Managers follow robust safer recruitment procedures to ensure that all new staff are appropriately vetted before they begin working in the nursery. New staff follow a thorough induction to prepare them for their roles, including safeguarding children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
support staff to plan, present and deliver rich learning experiences for the children which capture and sustain their interests and provide them with suitable challenges	08/04/2022

ensure that staff have sufficient experience, skills and knowledge to deliver a consistently good quality of teaching for all children.	08/04/2022
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- review the organisation of routine activities to ensure that children's care and learning needs remain a high priority.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2563245
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10216973
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	142
Number of children on roll	104
Name of registered person	Holly Trees Montessori Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2563244
Telephone number	01376 514333
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2021

Information about this early years setting

Holly Trees Day Nursery registered in 2020. The nursery employs 20 members of childcare staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Lynn Hughes
Dawn Pointer

Inspection activities

- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspectors viewed all areas of the nursery and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and the inspectors had a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what the nursery wants children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspectors carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspectors.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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