

Inspection of Sandcastles Nursery

81 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet, Essex SS7 2QL

Inspection date: 18 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	Outstanding
--	-------------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children become deeply involved in activities that interest them. For example, they choose when they want to play in the extensive garden, benefitting those who prefer to learn outdoors. Older children creatively build an obstacle course with beams and crates. They are encouraged to share their ideas and work collaboratively, gaining ownership of their construction. They show great delight when jumping off a box, challenging themselves and taking managed risks. Younger children also have many opportunities to develop their physical skills indoors and outdoors. They ride on trikes and confidently navigate a wooden climbing structure.

Older children are becoming confident communicators. They eagerly speak to visitors, telling them what they enjoy doing at nursery. Babies are beginning to engage in back-and-forth conversations. They look through books with an adult and make recognisable sounds when they see familiar pictures. Babies respond with a smile when adults use descriptive words, such as 'scrunch' to describe the noise that foil makes. Older children are introduced to more-complex words. When they identify a lizard in a book, they are told it is a 'chameleon'. They excitedly point to it, repeating the word. They find out that the chameleon changes colour to match its environment, building on their existing knowledge and understanding.

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

- The owner and manager work closely together to lead the team. They continually evaluate the setting and, as a result, have introduced a more child-centred approach to teaching and learning. There is a list of aspirations in each room that detail what staff want children to know and be able to do before they move up into the next age group. This contributes to creating an ambitious curriculum that fully prepares children for their next stage of learning.
- Staff know their key children well. They clearly describe the progress children have made and how they have implemented targeted support to meet children's individual needs. This effectively helps to close any gaps in children's learning and development.
- Strategies, such as visual timetables, support young children and those with specific learning needs to have a very good understanding of what is happening next. This helps to enhance their emotional well-being. Thoughtful provision is made for children who are unable or reluctant to express themselves verbally. For instance, adults sensitively offer a choosing card with pictures of juice or water so that all children can show their preference.
- Babies become engrossed in sensory activities and explore textures and sounds. Staff do not always consider that they are interrupting babies' learning and engagement in their chosen activity when, for example, they approach them to

change their nappy.

- Children are very familiar with the rules and routines of the setting. When older children choose to have snack, they independently collect a cup and plate and place their name in a basket to show they have eaten. However, arrangements for younger children's mealtimes do not consistently take into account their differing skills and abilities.
- Adults expertly use their incidental observations and interactions to move children's learning on, helping to develop their skills further. For example, a child was shown how to use a tape dispenser. Once this was demonstrated to them, they were able to use the equipment independently and proudly displayed a sense of achievement.
- Despite parents not routinely entering the setting, a wide range of systems are in place to maintain contact and to share information. On the whole, these are successful in sustaining effective partnership working. Links with home were in place during the COVID-19 pandemic and these helped to ease children's return to nursery. Staff identified children who needed extra support and adapted the environment to help them feel comfortable and secure.
- Parents recognise that their children have made progress while at the nursery. They comment that their children eat better, have learned manners and have developed their communication skills both verbally and using signing techniques.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are knowledgeable about child protection issues and understand how to keep children safe. They accurately identify the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child and in the event of an allegation against an adult. Several staff have undertaken additional training to be able and confident to support the staff team if any safeguarding concerns are raised. The provider follows effective recruitment procedures and carries out checks to ensure staff working with children are suitable to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review how routines are managed so that staff consistently allow children to continue their play and learning uninterrupted
- support staff to recognise how they can build on their already good interactions to further encourage children's independence and self-help skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	403985
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10114694
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	99
Number of children on roll	108
Name of registered person	Sandcastles Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP523576
Telephone number	01702 555171
Date of previous inspection	9 September 2013

Information about this early years setting

Sandcastles Nursery registered in 2000. It is located in Hadleigh, Essex. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm all year round. There are 22 members of staff, of whom 18 hold an early years qualification at level 3 and above. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The setting also provides out-of-school care.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Fiona Sapler

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 inspector completed a learning walk of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact of this on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector had discussions with the owner and manager and viewed documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022