

Inspection of Dockside Day Nursery & Pre-School

Unit N1 Dockside Outlet Centre, Maritime Way, St. Marys Island, Chatham, Medway
ME4 3ED

Inspection date: 12 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

All children flourish and have a thirst for learning at this very inclusive nursery. Children arrive excitedly and quickly settle into their chosen play. All children are keen explorers and excited to have a go. Babies establish very strong relationships with staff. They show high levels of concentration, and focus as they point to their nose and eyes during singing. Babies clap and beam with delight as staff enthusiastically celebrate their achievements, such as learning to climb up the steps to the slide. Toddlers expertly use scissors during art and craft activities. They show sustained levels of interest as they draw and name shapes on paper to make Easter chicks.

Staff ignite discussions with pre-school children to support and deepen their understanding. For example, children learn how to use their tongue to clean their teeth after eating raisins, to prevent tooth decay. Children enjoy imaginative play and demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary. Children say, 'let's wash the dinosaurs before the lava melts them and they become extinct.'

Children happily explore the stimulating and well-planned environment. Toddlers readily climb up and slide down the play equipment, demonstrating excellent balance and control. In the outdoor play area, pre-school children initiate running and hide and seek games between themselves. They confidently and safely navigate the space, manoeuvring themselves over various large obstacles with great agility.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language make exceptional progress. Children learn key skills needed for their next stages in learning, such as school.

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

- Children's speech and language skills are superbly supported by every member of staff. Staff use sign language, speak clearly and ask precise questions. They give children enough time to consider a response. Staff consistently extend children's language, using words such as 'allergy, intolerance, protein' and 'carbohydrate,' when discussing their lunch. Children's use of vocabulary is extensive and encouraged at every opportunity.
- The passionate, ambitious and dedicated staff team has a strong and clear vision for the nursery. Staff provide a wonderful broad curriculum designed to ignite the curiosity and wonder of all children. For example, children stare in awe as they explore play dough and how to draw a chick, shouting 'Look, that's a triangle for its wings'. Children are inspired, highly involved and motivated, and, therefore, make exceptional progress across all areas.

- Children share stories while smiling and clapping in excitement together. They hug each other, hold hands and invite each other into their games. This helps to develop their levels of self-esteem. Children fully immerse themselves in play, to achieve their full learning potential.
- Staff provide excellent opportunities for children to learn about the world around them. Children regularly go for walks in the local area and learn about road safety. Parents come in to speak with the children about different occupations, including dog training, policing and security.
- The manager and staff recognise the impact the pandemic has had on children's emotions and have successfully developed ways to support them. Staff consider the language of feelings throughout the day, for example, by making different facial emotions, drawing them and discussing what makes them happy. Small-group sessions help children explore feelings and build their confidence, resilience and social skills. Children demonstrate exemplary behaviour and show great respect and care for each other.
- The manager provides highly effective professional development for all staff. She utilises their skills and knowledge in the best way to support all children. Staff feel valued and part of a team. Every child receives the best possible care for them to thrive.
- Highly effective partnerships with parents and professionals allow for great consistency in each child's learning and development. Parents are extremely happy with the care provided for their children. They comment that 'the staff care so much about the children' and 'they strive to make a difference'.
- Children have wonderful opportunities to learn about different cultures to their own. The staff help children to learn about festivals and events that are important to them and their friends. For instance, staff learn key words in children's home language as they play games and sing songs together. Parents have come in to speak with the children about different cultures and festivals, including Chinese New Year and Eid. Children gain an excellent understanding of the differences and similarities in people's ideas and beliefs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All designated safeguarding leads (DSL) demonstrate an extremely secure understanding of how to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. They ensure staff remain up to date with guidance, especially with safeguarding and child protection issues in the nursery's immediate area. The DSL and all staff have a secure knowledge of the process to follow to refer any safeguarding concerns in line with local procedures. This enables them to ensure that children, who may be at risk, receive intervention as quickly as possible. They know indicators of wider safeguarding issues, such as domestic violence, county lines, radicalisation and bruising protocols. Extensive risk assessments are in place to ensure children remain safe during riskier play and staff support children to identify hazards and be aware of how to keep themselves and their friends safe.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY562840
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10190983
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	70
Number of children on roll	127
Name of registered person	Sea Shells Nursery (Dockside) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP562839
Telephone number	01634 258235
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Dockside Day Nursery & Pre-School registered in 2018. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 7am to 7pm all year round, except for bank holidays. The nursery receives funding for early years education for children aged two, three and four years. The nursery employs twenty four staff. Of these, one holds appropriate level 6 qualifications, sixteen hold relevant level 3 qualifications and four hold level 2 qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Bev Boyd

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 setting.
- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk to establish the priorities for the curriculum.
- Discussions took place with staff and children at suitable times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A range of relevant documentation, such as evidence of policies, recruitment processes and staff qualifications, was reviewed.
- The inspector invited parents to share their views. The inspector took account of all feedback received.

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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