

Inspection of Cotton Tails Nursery

1110 Bristol Road South, Northfield, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 2RE

Inspection date: 20 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children excitedly welcome their friends into this vibrant nursery. They form extremely strong bonds with their key person. For example, children who are anxious when separating from their parents are superbly supported by staff, who offer an exceptionally kind and caring approach when reassuring them.

Children show extremely high levels of concentration when exploring the huge variety of rich learning experiences. For example, when engaged in a threading activity, children choose from an extensive range of different-sized objects. They are persistent and keep on trying until they successfully achieve their goal. Children take part in activities that extend their own experiences. When children talk about visiting a farm, staff help them to recall what they saw and develop their understanding of life cycles. They learn how a chick is born by using its beak to break free from its shell. This leads to an innovative and highly exciting activity where children use this knowledge to try to break their own chicks free from ice.

Children have excellent opportunities to practise their physical skills, which helps them to understand the importance of keeping themselves healthy. Children join in enthusiastically with a morning wake-up session to get them ready for the day ahead. Children learn early writing skills through expertly planned activities that build on their muscle development. For example, children are encouraged to lie on their stomach and pretend to be a lizard as they experiment with making marks in a variety of ways. This helps them to develop their inner core strength.

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

- The manager and leaders have an inspiring vision for the nursery to provide high-quality care and learning. Management gives high priority to the views of staff, parents and children in developing the service provided. Staff are very motivated and support each other to succeed in their roles. They feel highly valued members of the team. Children's needs are at the heart of the development of the environments. For example, children who like to stomp like a dinosaur have an inspirational space dedicated to extending their learning based on this interest.
- The manager has implemented an exemplary and extremely effective curriculum. Children are supported to make excellent progress in their learning and development. Staff are dedicated to ensuring that they provide children with rich, stimulating activities. Staff frequently involve parents in their children's learning and gather information about their home life. They use this knowledge to provide all children with valuable experiences, such as outdoor learning for children who do not have access to their own garden.
- Leaders and staff have a proactive professional development plan. Staff

enthusiastically talk about the benefits of the recent sign language training they have completed and how this has supported their children to develop exceptional communication skills. This includes children who speak English as an additional language, who particularly benefit from this excellent support.

- Partnerships with parents are given high priority. Parents speak overwhelmingly positively about the ongoing support they receive for their children. Parents really appreciated the home challenges provided by staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, children were able to continue their learning even when they were not attending the nursery. Managers have reflected on the impact of this and recognise the difference this has made to children's progress. Staff continue to offer home challenges which are linked to different areas of learning, such as activities that require children to explore mathematical concepts with their parents.
- Children develop an amazing appreciation for books. They show deep levels of concentration when listening to stories. Staff captivate children's imagination as they animatedly tell a familiar story about a bear. Children burst with excitement as they are eager to find out what happens next. Children recall stories they have read and make links in play. For example, they fondly remember reading a story about a worm. When making models with play dough, they tell staff that they have made worms for the birds to eat, which demonstrates the knowledge they have acquired.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are expertly supported. All staff act swiftly to implement early help for children who may be at risk of falling behind. They ensure that parents are part of the journey and the nursery special educational needs coordinator works closely in partnership with professionals. This ensures that children and their families have the right support from the outset. As a result, children requiring additional help are given the best possible start.
- Staff have accomplished a well-embedded behaviour strategy. They implement appropriate methods to manage children's behaviour and prioritise teaching children about right and wrong. Children behave impeccably, and they are polite and respectful in their play. Children show empathy and care about their friends, especially if one of them is sad.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding leads create a vigilant safeguarding culture across the nursery. Policies and procedures are acted on swiftly when concerns arise. All staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe from harm. There are rigorous hygiene procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, when noses are wiped, staff promptly wash their hands. Risk assessments are highly effective, and potential risks are minimised to keep children safe. Efficient systems are in place to ensure that all staff are safely recruited and suitable to work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	227081
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10116255
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	100
Name of registered person	Cotton Tails Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP908035
Telephone number	0121 411 1616
Date of previous inspection	17 March 2014

Information about this early years setting

Cotton Tails Nursery opened in 1997 and operates from a converted house situated in the Northfield area of Birmingham. It is one of four nurseries run by Cotton Tails Nurseries Limited. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. There are currently 19 staff working directly with the children, 16 of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff has a qualification at level 5, one has a qualification at level 6, and 14 have qualifications at level 3. Three apprentices are working towards qualifications at level 2. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Katherine Wilson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The manager and the inspector had a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the manager.
- The inspector talked to staff during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation.
- The inspector took account of parents' views.

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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