

Inspection of The Old School House Day Nursery

The Old School Nursery, 69 High Street, Stetchworth, Newmarket, Cambridgeshire
CB8 9TH

Inspection date: 5 May 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

Children thrive at this extremely nurturing and caring nursery. Staff welcome children with enthusiasm and affection and children happily go off to explore. There is a tremendous sense of purpose and focus all around the nursery. Babies investigate coloured rice and draw circles with crayons. Older children set up a café in the home corner and use toy telephones to pretend they are customers. Children confidently lead their own play and chat about their ideas. For example, they set up cones to jump over and challenge each other to dig the deepest hole in the sandpit.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They show kindness and consideration for each other and this results in high levels of well-being. Babies smile and hold hands as they walk around together. Toddlers use blankets and tuck each other in for their afternoon nap. Older children show concern when their friends trip over and they comfort them with a hug. Children show an awareness of safety as they sweep sand off the floor and explain how it is 'too slippery'. At 'tidy up time', children are keen to put away toys in the correct place. Staff use story sessions to share a book about 'filling a bucket with kindness', which reinforces behavioural expectations.

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

- Staff provide an ambitious and well-planned curriculum that keeps children wonderfully engaged and focused. Staff know how to move children on quickly in their learning and this results in children making rapid progress. For example, older children remember the mathematical symbol for adding and use this knowledge to solve simple number problems. Younger children confidently find letters in the sandpit and use these to write their names on whiteboards. Learning is consolidated through revisiting activities, ensuring knowledge is embedded. For example, staff encourage babies to remember animal names and noises during story time.
- There are extremely strong relationships between staff and children. All children are treated with the utmost care and respect. Staff are gentle and kind with babies and engage them in story and singing time. If babies become upset, staff are quick to soothe and sensitively distract them with peekaboo games and stories. Toddlers tell staff they are happy and approach them for a cuddle.
- Children make rapid progress in their independence skills. This results in high levels of confidence and exploration. Babies feed themselves and wash their own hands at snack time. Older children confidently put on their own coats and manage zips. Staff empower children to carry out small tasks. Toddlers scrape their own plates after lunch and take off their own bibs.
- Staff use every opportunity to support children's communication and language development. They are quick to introduce new vocabulary to children. For

example, staff explain other words for 'yummy' during a play dough activity making pretend cakes. When toddlers see a bird building a nest, staff initiate two-way conversations and pose questions to them. Staff use 'chatter sacks' and sign language to support children with limited spoken English. Younger children confidently sign to staff to indicate their needs.

- Staff are fully committed to providing excellent care and education for children. The manager organises meticulous systems of monitoring and supervision. Any gaps in training needs are quickly identified and acted upon. Staff are reflective and readily take into account feedback to improve their practice. They report their morale and well-being is high and that they feel part of a team.
- Leaders and staff develop outstanding partnerships with parents. All parents would highly recommend the nursery and some travel a considerable distance to enable their child to attend. Parents say their child is 'thriving' and has made 'amazing' progress. Parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress and how any additional funding is spent. Leaders make considerable effort to settle in new children and act upon transition information they receive from parents. Settling-in sessions are tailored to suit each individual child and parents report how 'seamless' this is. This results in new children settling quickly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify and report concerns regarding the welfare of children or the behaviour of an adult. They show an awareness of issues that may affect the children in their care, including wider safeguarding concerns, such as radicalisation. Managers ensure that staff are suitably trained and there are a range of induction procedures in place for newly appointed staff. They are meticulous in ensuring all staff have a working understanding of safeguarding and medical knowledge and regularly use questioning techniques to 'test' this. The manager worked hard during the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain regular communication and provide support for children and their families. Staff work collaboratively with other professionals to ensure relevant information is passed on to ensure the best outcomes for children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY563070
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10191140
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	106
Number of children on roll	165
Name of registered person	Cresswell Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP558337
Telephone number	01638 507178
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Old School House Day Nursery is situated in Stetchworth, near Newmarket and registered in 2018. The nursery employs 24 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 7, one at level 6, two at level 5, 10 at level 3 and one at level 2. The nursery is open all year round, from Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Helen Oakden

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The deputy manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documents on request.

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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