

Inspection of School Outdoors Dulwich

Herne Hill Velodrome, 104 Burbage Road, London, Surrey SE24 9HE

Inspection date: 4 May 2022

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children and families are met at the gate with a warm welcome from friendly practitioners. Parents share information from home to help practitioners support their children throughout the day. Children arrive at the setting eager to learn and explore. They seek out friends to share their play and experiences with. New children settle well. They form strong bonds with their key person and other practitioners, who reassure them and help them to feel safe and secure. For example, new children happily explore activities away from their key person.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress well. Practitioners have high expectations of what children can achieve. They provide good opportunities to promote children's learning and development. Children are constantly engaged in exciting activities which spark their curiosity and interest. They learn and play with natural resources in this outdoor setting. For instance, children use real tools and natural materials, such as tree bark, to make their own boats.

Practitioners are positive role models. They are considerate and respectful in their interactions with children, and are sensitive to their individual needs. As a result, children behave extremely well. They show respect towards each other and demonstrate high levels of tolerance and self-control. Children play cooperatively and solve problems with one another.

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

- The manager's intent for the curriculum is clear. Practitioners use their knowledge of the children's interests and abilities to plan and implement an exciting and challenging curriculum. Practitioners plan the outdoor environment to promote children's all-round development, particularly their physical development and understanding of the natural environment.
- Practitioners provide excellent opportunities for children to build their confidence, independence and resilience. Children learn to manage risk and their own safety, and have a good understanding of the rules. This helps to provide them with skills which they need to succeed in later life.
- Key persons discuss their intent for activities confidently. They use their observations and assessments to identify gaps in children's learning and plan for these effectively. At times, practitioners who are new to the setting have less knowledge of children's next steps. However, they receive effective support through the robust induction process.
- Practitioners focus on widening children's language and vocabulary by asking questions and introducing new words. This helps children to communicate with confidence and develop good language skills. However, on occasion, children are

not given enough time to think and respond before a question is repeated.

- Children learn about being healthy. They plant vegetable seeds and take part in activities promoting good oral health. Staff provide healthy meals, and encourage conversations with children about how fruits and vegetables make them 'strong'.
- The manager works closely with the local schools to understand what is expected of the children and prepare them for a smooth transition into their next stage of learning. The setting also has good links with the local community. For example, children visit the local garden centre and they use locally sourced produce for meals.
- The manager and the special educational needs coordinator have a good understanding of children's individual needs and how to support them. Practitioners work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure the best possible outcomes for children.
- The manager oversees the practice of her team and recognises areas for improvement. She is committed to practitioners' continuous professional development and offers them a range of online training. Practitioners are encouraged and supported to gain higher qualifications. The manager identifies staff's training needs through supervision sessions. This positively impacts the children's learning and development.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents speak positively about the setting, and the care and experiences that their children receive. They say that the communication from the team is good and they are regularly updated on their children's development. Parents like the daily updates and use this information to continue activities and approaches at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has a good understanding of her role to safeguard children. All staff are knowledgeable about the safeguarding policies and procedures. They are confident to report any concerns which they may have about a child. Staff carry out robust safety checks each day to ensure that the environment is safe and secure. Practitioners do regular head counts and have rules in place to keep children safe outdoors. They consider the needs of individual children to ensure that the setting is a safe place for all children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- consider the time given to children to think about the answer to questions, before asking another.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2552436
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10217081
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Under the Willow Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP531969
Telephone number	07850 712092
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

School Outdoors Dulwich registered in August 2019 and is located in Dulwich, in the London Borough of Southwark. The setting provides care for children aged between two and five years. It operates all year round from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The provider employs seven staff, five of whom hold a relevant childcare qualification at level 2 or above. Funded places are offered for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Katie Smith

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 inspector viewed the provision, and discussed the safety and suitability of the setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together to discuss the manager's intentions for children.
- The manager and the inspector carried out joint observations of group activities.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Children spoke to the inspector about their friends and what they like to do at the setting.
- The inspector spoke to staff during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

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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