

Inspection of Watership Downs Nursery

Brickhouse Farm Community Centre, Poulton Close, Maldon, Essex CM9 6NG

Inspection date: 5 July 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are safe and settled in this welcoming environment. They develop close and trusting bonds with the staff, who are caring and friendly. Children arrive happily and settle well into the routine. They build strong friendships and enjoy playing with one another. When they arrive, they join in circle time where they welcome each other by name, singing a well-known and practised song. Staff go out of their way to support children and their families. They have a strong partnership with a range of professionals. This helps staff to provide the necessary support to families of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff signpost parents to additional groups and resources for further support.

Children are very happy in the nursery. Parents say that their children 'Develop well, they are communicated to, and feel supported by the nursery'. Babies enjoy playing with treasure baskets, and older children enjoy cuddles from staff as they sit on their knee or snuggle in for stories. Staff have high expectations for what children can achieve. Children develop good attitudes to their learning. For example, children in the pre-school room choose what they would like to play in the garden. They create an obstacle course, cheering each other on as they complete it, taking turns and playing collaboratively. Children in the toddler room enjoy playing with toy farm animals. Staff name the animals and make the animal noises, encouraging the children to name them and mimic the noise.

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

- The manager has clear plans in place to continually improve the nursery. For example, they have plans to adapt the environment to offer more space for the youngest children to move around and explore.
- The manager values the staff team and observes their practice, providing them with constructive feedback. Staff have regular opportunities for training to help develop their knowledge of teaching and learning.
- Babies thrive in a calm and nurturing environment. They have a very strong relationship with their key person. Staff think carefully about how they can support children's learning further. For example, they have treasure baskets to support the children's sensory development and provide opportunities to develop children's physical skills.
- Staff celebrate the children's success, for example they clap and cheer when the children complete the obstacle course. This helps to support children's sense of self-esteem.
- Children enjoy a range of activities. For example, in the pre-school room, the children measure water, food colouring and cornflour in jugs. They discuss the changes in colour and the effect it has after adding the flour.

- Staff know children well and generally plan activities to support their learning further. For example, they plan activities to help toddlers learn to share their toys with each other. However, staff do not consistently take account of each child's needs and abilities and adapt activities precisely for every child's age and stage of development.
- The manager uses additional funding effectively. For example, she provides extra staff for children with SEND to ensure they have the support they need to make good progress. In addition, the manager has developed a sensory room, to provide a calm and tranquil environment for children who need this.
- Staff have worked hard to maintain a strong relationship with parents, who speak very positively about the nursery. They work closely with the local community and provide a great deal of support to individual families during times of hardship.
- Staff use communication books for children under three and for children with SEND to ensure that parents are aware of what their child is learning at nursery, so they can continue this at home. However, staff do not always communicate well enough with parents to ensure they are informed of some of the changes in the provision in a timely manner.
- Children in receipt of two-year-old funding make good progress. Staff support them well to develop their communication, physical and social skills. For example, children play alongside each other in the sand and sometimes share resources.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding and child protection issues. All staff have completed safeguarding training. Staff know the signs which may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They have a clear understanding of what to do if an allegation is made against them or a member of staff. Staff closely supervise children and provide a secure environment to ensure that children remain safe. Robust recruitment and vetting arrangements are in place to help ensure that all adults working with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to plan precisely for each child's age and stage of development, so that they make the progress of which they are capable
- enhance communication with parents further and notify them of any changes in a timely manner.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2554158
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10215788
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	11 to 56
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	64
Name of registered person	Watership Downs Nursery School C.i.c
Registered person unique reference number	2554157
Telephone number	01621 858478
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Watership Downs Nursery registered in 2019 and is open all year round from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except for public holidays. There are 21 members of staff employed to work with the children. Of these, three hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2; eight at level 3 and one at level 6. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Hilda Miller

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- Parents spoke to the inspector about their views of the nursery. The inspector had discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including staff's first-aid certificates and evidence of the suitability of adults working in the nursery.

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