

Inspection of Abacus Kindergarten

Friars Grove Primary School, Upland Drive, Colchester, Essex CO4 0PZ

Inspection date: 28 September 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	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive and flourish at this exceptional setting. They come in excited each day to meet the friendly staff. Children make lasting friendships and show care and concern for others. They develop confidence in choosing favourite activities from a wide range of choices. Children quickly become independent explorers, developing their own personal preferences.

Children's behaviour is outstanding. Staff are clear and consistent with routines. As a result, children feel settled and calm as they know the expectations each day. Children are given notice before they need to finish their activity. Staff use visual prompts and countdowns. This leads to calm transition periods. Staff act as incredible role models for turn-taking and sharing resources. They teach children the importance of respecting each other and property. Children therefore take pride in tidying up for the next child. They thrive under the responsibility and challenge. Children can also take part in mindfulness sessions. These include recognising emotions, calming, stretching and breathing exercises. This creates calm environments in both rooms.

Children feel proud of their achievements. Their amazing moments are displayed on a tree in the entrance to the setting. Parents are invited to share achievements from home. Children adore featuring on the tree. This supports their desire to achieve even more of their learning targets.

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

- A superb communication and language programme is embedded in the curriculum. Children make pleasing progress, bridging gaps in learning. Staff create an environment rich in language, including at snack and mealtimes. As a result, children become confident communicators.
- Staff teach to extraordinary levels. Children explore the sound rain makes on surfaces to develop listening skills. They talk about objects in the mystery box. Staff encourage early reading and writing. Parents take home books, and mark-making opportunities are abundant. Teaching is adapted for all ages and abilities. This leads to children making excellent progress in their development.
- Staff know the children incredibly well. They plan activities around children's interests to be accessible. Managers follow processes for tracking children individually and as groups. This ensures that concerns are addressed in planning. As a result, children meet developmental targets while enjoying activities.
- Staff promote high levels of independence for children. Children learn to feed themselves, wash their hands and pour drinks. They wash up plates, cups and cutlery themselves. Water stations allow children to access drinking water

throughout the day. Due to this, children develop a desire to be independent and responsible.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. The special educational needs coordinator is highly proactive in listening to concerns. She swiftly creates support for children. Working alongside families and professionals, she aims for all children to have the same opportunities. As a result, they make rapid progress.
- Staff have a close relationship with the school on site. Teachers visit and welcome children to use the classroom and playground when they are away. Children are invited for lunch, and teachers share expectations for school readiness. This ensures a seamless move to school. Transitions into the setting are closely supported, and staff extend the home-corner resources. Children feel soothed and settle quicker, finding items similar to those at home.
- Partnerships with parents are incredible. Parents feel highly supported as they can take free books, food and clothing. Management organises mornings where parents can share opinions and ideas. Staff create activities for home learning. Parents therefore feel listened to and valued. They appreciate the regular communication and updates on their children's development and activities.
- Community involvement is commendable. Children develop an understanding of recycling. They have bins on site and walk to larger bins to dispose of waste. Children access the community library bus. They walk to a supermarket to buy resources for making pizzas. Children visit residents at a care home, bringing musical instruments and biscuits to share. Children write Christmas wish lists and post them to their homes. These opportunities result in an appreciation for the environment and community.
- Staff welfare is highly prioritised. Management created a welfare pack whereby staff can win prizes and rewards. Staff report feeling incredibly well supported, with approachable and compassionate managers. Regular appraisals and supervisions mean that staff can express themselves. Support is then put into place, such as training opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have strong knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities to keep children safe. They have had recent training in the core and wider aspects of safeguarding, such as the risk of children being drawn into radicalisation. Staff are confident in recognising signs for concern and recording and reporting swiftly. They are aware of the processes for reporting concerns wider than the setting to the local authority. Safety is paramount at the setting. Staff are clear on risk assessments of all aspects of provision. They follow fire and intruder procedures, ensuring that children are safe at all times. Accident and incident processes are stringent and secure.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY479966
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10233924
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Abacus Learning LLP
Registered person unique reference number	RP533852
Telephone number	07580 588554
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

Abacus Kindergarten registered in 2014. The setting employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting opens from Monday to Friday, from 9am to 4pm, with extended options from 8.30am to 4.15pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marianne Brown

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and group manager joined the inspector on a learning walk of the setting to discuss the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The group manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity.
- Staff, children and parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection, sharing their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff.

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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