

Inspection of Apple Blossom Day Nursery

Bluebird House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3PU

Inspection date: 5 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children settle quickly and are very happy in this friendly nursery. Staff are enthusiastic and caring. They ensure that children form secure relationships with their key persons. Children develop a strong sense of belonging. Babies and toddlers are keen to explore the improved environment and enjoy making choices about what they would like to do. For example, they are fully supported as they use chalks to make marks on giant paper. Babies happily explore the sandpit or a tray of shredded paper to find hidden 'treasures'.

Children learn to be friendly and well mannered as they follow the positive example set by staff. Staff focus on developing children's social interactions as they play together. For instance, older children talk about sharing and waiting their turn to use a slide. They share different shape cutters as they create with dough and learn to wait in a 'smart line' to wash their hands before snack. Children have positive attitudes to their learning. They are prepared to persist at tasks which they have chosen for themselves. For example, older children persevere to write the letters in their name, hunt for bugs in the garden and create smiley faces out of cereal. Younger children enjoy exploring a variety of rose petals and materials to make potions. During these times, staff skilfully expand on children's learning in several areas, using good questioning skills. This helps to reward children's curiosity and ideas.

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

- The manager and staff team are passionate about their nursery. They have worked effectively together with leaders and local authority advisers to meet the actions set out at the last inspection. The manager and staff have raised standards in the nursery to a consistently good level in all areas, including safeguarding, and have successfully embedded a broad curriculum.
- Staff collect detailed information from parents about what their children can do when they first join, to fully understand children's starting points in learning. They explain how their aim is to support children's progress through building on what they already know. Staff use their observations well to identify children's next steps in learning. When children need extra help, staff arrange effective activities and support to meet their needs.
- Staff working with babies and toddlers plan sensitively to help children move on to the next stage in their learning. They talk to parents closely about the individual support that younger children might need, for example, when they are ready to move into a new room. Staff give parents and carers 'home challenges' to encourage children's learning at home. Parents state that they are thrilled with their children's progress, and value the commitment of the caring manager and team.

- All staff focus on supporting children's communication and language skills well. They continually talk to children and value what they say. For instance, in the baby and toddler rooms, staff regularly encourage children to sing, use rhymes and look at books. They point to the pictures and demonstrate clear words, along with actions, to help them to grow their vocabulary. Older children are encouraged to talk about their ideas. Children learn to be confident speakers in readiness for school.
- Staff support children's developing self-care skills effectively and encourage good hygiene routines. For example, children say to each other, 'Now we need to wash our hands,' when they return from outdoor play. Staff teach children about healthy food choices and oral health. They consistently provide fresh drinking water for all children and babies.
- Staff have started to build stronger relationships with other settings children attend, sharing what they know about the children. Partnerships with local schools are also in the early stages of development. However, staff do not consistently share information about children's learning and development, to prepare children as well as possible for the next stage of learning or their move on to school.
- The manager and team are reflective and want to keep on working hard to continually improve the setting. Following training, staff make sure that the environment offers a mixture of support and challenge for all children. However, although children regularly use the outdoor areas throughout the day, the youngest children do not have the same opportunities to explore and challenge themselves in the fresh air.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager now keeps safeguarding at the top of staff's attention, so that children's safety and welfare is at the centre of their practice. All staff are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse and know the correct local safeguarding procedures, including whistle-blowing. Staff have a secure understanding about a range of safeguarding issues. For example, they know the signs to be aware of if there is a risk to children in relation to radicalisation or extremism. The manager and staff regularly review the premises, so that children are safe and secure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen links with other settings and local schools to consistently share information about children's learning, development and well-being to support continuity

- extend opportunities for children to enjoy a wide variety of activities in all areas of learning, particularly for younger children who prefer to learn outdoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2545675
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10216160
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	30
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Apple Blossom Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP529026
Telephone number	01434 604860
Date of previous inspection	14 October 2021

Information about this early years setting

Apple Blossom Day Nursery is located in Hexham, Northumberland and registered in 2019. It is one of several nurseries owned by Apple Blossom Childcare Ltd. The nursery opens all year round, from 7.30am until 6pm, Monday to Friday. It employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold relevant childcare qualifications from level 3 to level 5. The nursery provides funded education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jan Harvey

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed 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, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about leadership and management of the setting, looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff 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.

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