

Inspection of Lexden Lodge Kindergarten

26 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3QD

Inspection date: 17 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

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enter the kindergarten confidently and wave a cheery goodbye to their parents and carers. They are greeted by smiling staff, who take time to find out what they have been doing at home and how they are feeling. Children are very familiar with the kindergarten and know where to place their coats and other belongings. Older children climb the stairs to their base rooms with ease, making sure they follow the staff's clear directions to hold onto the banister and stop at the various waiting points on each landing. Children are keen and excited learners. They are encouraged to develop their independence from a very early age. For example, children from babies upwards are encouraged to guide their own play through self-choice. They help to serve meals and clear away when they have finished eating.

Children are kind and caring towards each other. They are praised and rewarded for good behaviour. Staff use consistently positive language to help to develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Babies form close bonds with their key persons. They approach the adults for cuddles and know that they can have their comforters when they need them.

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

- Managers and staff have worked hard since the last inspection to meet the actions raised and improve the provision and outcomes for children. Staff have completed a range of training, including about behaviour management strategies. The management team has made a conscious decision to reduce numbers of children and families attending to enable them to focus on building a strong and successful staff team. The provider has engaged effectively with the local authority and worked in partnership with them to further develop all aspects of the kindergarten.
- Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection speak highly of the staff and management team. Some say that they cannot fault any aspect of the kindergarten and believe that their children benefit greatly from their early years experiences. Parents are kept well informed about their child's day through the online app used to record and log all aspects of the kindergarten provision. Parents are encouraged to share information from home with their child's key person verbally and through the online system.
- Children engage in a wide range of activities during their kindergarten day. For example, they cut fruit to add to the water dispenser to flavour their drinking water. They confidently use knives to cut the fruit and talk about how it smells and tastes. Staff remind children of the importance of good hygiene when handling food and provide clear explanations to support children's learning.
- Staff help children to develop a greater understanding of numbers and

mathematical concepts during their everyday activities. They encourage them to count when playing and provide resources for children to sort, weigh and estimate with.

- Children enjoy listening to stories read by staff as well as looking at books. They re-tell favourite parts and talk about the pictures in the books. Children confidently create a register of the children and staff present.
- Children have fun finding pirate related items buried in sand. They chat confidently to staff about what they have found, how the sand feels and where pirates live. Staff follow the children's lead well, providing additional props. For instance, when a whale is brought into the conversation, staff find various whale figures to enhance the children's game.
- Staff generally interact well with children, during both freely chosen and adult-led play. However, at times, some staff do not use their interactions to extend and enhance the children's learning further. They lack the confidence to take the quality of teaching to a consistently high level. For example, while staff ask children questions they often ask closed questions, which do not enable children to think past yes or no answers. Occasionally, they also ask quick fire questions, not providing time for children to consolidate their thinking.
- Children participate in messy and creative play activities across the kindergarten. However, much emphasis is placed on the use of pre-printed sheets and adult-initiated finished products. This does not enable children to freely express themselves and further develop their imagination.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff understand their responsibilities with regards to protecting children. They regularly update their safeguarding knowledge through in-house meetings, training and research. Staff know the signs and symptoms to look out for that might indicate a child is being mistreated or abused. They understand wider safeguarding issues, such as the 'Prevent' duty and county lines. Staff and managers are familiar with the procedures to follow if they have concerns about any of the children in their care.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- monitor and further develop interactions between staff and children to raise the quality of teaching and learning to a consistently high level
- review the provision for children to freely express themselves, for example, through creative play, to promote and spark their imagination.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY307729
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10243195
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	125
Number of children on roll	137
Name of registered person	Samco Enterprises Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP523888
Telephone number	01206 574005
Date of previous inspection	28 April 2022

Information about this early years setting

Lexden Lodge Kindergarten registered in 2005. The kindergarten employs 31 members of staff. Of these, 20 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. This includes one member of staff who has early years practitioner status and three who have a degree. The kindergarten opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The kindergarten provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Lynn Hughes
Lyndsey Barwick

Inspection activities

- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspectors viewed all areas of the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy manager and inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the kindergarten and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children shared their views with the inspectors.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspectors.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the kindergarten.

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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