

Inspection of Ottertots Day Care Nursery

Ottertots Day Care Nursery, Hulham Road, EXMOUTH, Devon EX8 5DX

Inspection date: 24 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive and develop the skills they need to succeed in life. They learn to care for the world around them, such as when they look after the farm animals and explore nature in the forest school. Children feel secure and safe, as staff are warm and caring. They make good progress especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The manager is ambitious for children to succeed. She implements a well-sequenced and carefully designed curriculum. This means children engage and stay focused for long periods of time when learning and playing. For example, toddlers enjoy hunting for pretend spiders in piles of cotton wool. Staff expertly help them count the spiders' legs. Pre-school children play cooperatively in a construction role-play area. They draw their ideas on paper and work together to create a large bridge.

Children develop self-help skills through the well-planned routine. For example, babies express their needs at snack time by choosing fruit they want. Pre-school children independently put on shoes and coats when going outside to play. Children behave well and are polite. They follow the setting's routine and rules well. For example, pre-school children make collage pictures from natural items including sticks. They know to keep the sticks away from people's eyes and know to break them into smaller pieces.

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

- Children learn new words rapidly which supports their language development well. For, example pre-school children learn words for 'lichen' and the names of different types of oak trees, as they study items gathered on a woodland walk. Babies learn animal sounds as they play with the farm animals. Staff expertly model and repeat sounds to the babies, encouraging them to have a turn. The babies chuckle in delight when staff praise their efforts.
- Children have many rich and varied activities to choose from. Overall, staff plan activities well to meet the needs of the children. Children show a can-do attitude and persevere with challenges. For example, toddlers enjoy making biscuits. They measure out the ingredients using different sized spoons. They enjoy mixing the dough with their hands. Staff help them stay focused using lots of praise and open-ended questions. However, staff do not always pause after asking these questions which means children do not always have time to think and respond.
- Children have many opportunities to develop their physical skills. Pre-school children build and climb when they access the forest school. They ride bicycles and scooters in the garden. Pre-school children develop their fine-motor skills. They explore play dough and make marks on different materials. Babies practise crawling and toddling in the garden. They develop their hand-to-eye co-

ordination by picking up instruments and shaking them. They listen to the sounds. Occasionally, staff in baby room do not organise resources well. They do not ensure the indoor floor space is free from clutter. This means babies cannot always practise their crawling and walking skills when indoors.

- Children are very secure and have strong attachments with staff. The manager is very nurturing towards the staff. She ensures their well-being and home life is supported well. This means staff turnover is very low and children have continuity of care. The manager encourages staff to reflect on their practice and to attend regular training. Staff are motivated to improve outcomes for children and to develop their skills.
- Staff carefully observe and assess children throughout the day. They use this information to identify children who need extra support. When staff identify a child with SEND, they work closely with parents and the nursery's special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo). They ensure these children have the right support and make rapid progress. The SENDCo works closely with outside agencies to meet the child's needs.
- The manager and staff work hard to build strong relationships with children's parents. Staff share with the parents what children have learned and the children's next steps. This helps parents to support their child at home with their progress. For example, staff helped children plant sunflowers. They then sent the sunflowers home with the children so they could watch them grow and care for. Staff gave parents information about how to support their child with this activity.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have robust knowledge of how to safeguard children. Staff confidently know all categories of abuse and how to identify potential signs of harm. They are knowledgeable about how to record and report concerns safely. The manager ensures all staff attend regular training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. Staff know to report any allegations against colleagues to the local area's designated officer. Staff carry out daily health and safety checks of all areas that children have access to. The manager has rigorous recruitment systems in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- organise the baby room to provide clear floor spaces that allow babies to move about freely
- support staff to give children sufficient time to process questions, so they can share their thinking and ideas.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY466500
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10236248
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	60
Number of children on roll	171
Name of registered person	Ottertots Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527143
Telephone number	01395 271987
Date of previous inspection	20 December 2016

Information about this early years setting

Ottertots Day Care Nursery registered in 2013 and is located near Exmouth, Devon. This nursery is one of two settings run by Ottertots Ltd. The nursery opens from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. They receive early years government funding for two-, three-, and four-year-old children. There are 42 staff. Of these, one holds an early years teacher status qualification, one has a level 6, two have a level 4, 29 have a level 3 and two have a level 2 relevant early years qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Sian Bath

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 setting.
- The deputy manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to the nominated individual and staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to special educational needs support staff about how they help children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector 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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