

Inspection of University Day Nursery

University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9AB

Inspection date: 26 October 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 Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff provide a caring and nurturing environment for children at this nursery. Children enjoy warm, positive relationships with the adults who care for them. This helps children to be emotionally secure. Children are extremely well behaved. Staff are good role models for the children and have high expectations for their behaviour.

Children enjoy accessing a wide range of resources which reflect their own interests and ideas. They eagerly join in with a 'rhythm stick' session they have chosen. Children show positive attitudes to their learning as they listen to instructions and tap the sticks together. They are mindful of their peers as they make sure everyone has a set of rhythm sticks so they can join in.

Children learn to be independent from an early age. Babies learn to feed themselves with spoons. Older children pour their own drinks and scrape their plates after lunch. Children show determination as they learn to put their coats on ready to play outside. Pre-school children learn how to dress and undress themselves for sport sessions. This helps children to prepare and develop the skills they need as they move on to the next stage of their education.

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

- The nursery has an established partnership with the on-site university. The nursery ensures it provides flexible care to support the needs of the families. Parents speak highly of the nursery and appreciate the willingness to support working parents. They are kept up to date with their children's learning and development with regular communication and parents' evenings. Parents are encouraged to continue their children's learning at home with activity bags and library books.
- The outdoor area for older children has been significantly improved to ensure that the learning experiences are the same for children who prefer to learn outside. Children enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities, including forest school sessions. Children thoroughly enjoy learning about the seasons and discover mushrooms that grow in the woods. They learn how to keep themselves safe as they explore by staying close to an adult. However, there are fewer opportunities for babies and young children to benefit from outdoor learning.
- Children's language and literacy are promoted throughout the nursery. Children confidently sing along to songs and nursery rhymes. They learn to sign the words as they sing 'The Wheels on the Bus'. Books are incorporated into children's learning at every opportunity. Children access a wide range of books, both inside and outside. Books are shared to help children build on their

learning. For example, as children play with toy farmyard animals, they look to find the animals in a book. Other children snuggle up to staff to share stories when they have woken up, helping them to gently transition. This helps children to develop a love for books and make good progress in their speaking skills.

- Staff work exceptionally well to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure they receive the focused support they need. They build strong relationships with settings that children are moving on to, which ensures the transition is smooth. Children with complex medical needs are well looked after. Staff receive focused training from medical professionals to ensure they fully understand the needs of the children. This helps to ensure that children can make the best possible progress from their starting points.
- The manager is reflective of the provision and takes responsibility to make improvements. For example, she is working closely with caterers to improve the menu offered to children. The manager recognises staff's individual strengths and delegates responsibilities effectively. This helps staff to feel valued and part of a team. Staff receive good opportunities to enhance their professional development with further training. However, with the recent change in management, supervision for staff has not been a priority, and the manager has not yet re-established regular support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of how to keep children safe. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect. Robust reporting procedures ensure that staff know what action to take should they have concerns about a child or the conduct of others. Staff complete daily risk assessments in the setting to ensure the equipment and resources are safe. The manager follows safe recruitment procedures and completes thorough checks to ensure that adults who work 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:

- review and develop the facilities in the outdoor areas for babies to have good-quality experiences outside throughout the year
- develop supervision sessions further to provide consistent support to staff and reflect even more on the quality of practice.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY378136
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10235230
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 5
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	154
Name of registered person	University Of Hertfordshire
Registered person unique reference number	RP523978
Telephone number	01707 284448
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

University Day Nursery registered in 2008 and is run by the University of Hertfordshire. It is located in purpose-built premises and primarily serves staff and students on the university campus. The nursery employs 22 permanent members of childcare staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm, with flexible hours offered during this period. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Emily Woodhead

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk. She talked to the inspector about the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors. She discussed children's progress with staff.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation. This included evidence of staff suitability, staff records and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of written feedback provided.

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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