

Inspection of Conkers The Balsam Centre's Community Nursery

Wincanton Community Venture, The Balsam Centre, Balsam Park, Wincanton,
Somerset BA9 9HB

Inspection date: 27 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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children receive a warm welcome at the nursery and settle quickly with the caring and nurturing staff. Children benefit from a broad curriculum with exciting activities based on their interests and learning needs. Whether children are drawing 'treasure maps' or riding on scooters, they behave well, taking turns and sharing resources. Children are curious and enjoy exploring the environment. They have many opportunities to develop their physical skills as they climb and balance on the climbing frame. They play in the mud kitchen making potions or build sandcastles in the sand. They hunt for bugs and excitedly tell the inspector how they have found 'gems' and speculate about where they came from.

Staff know the children well and support them in managing their feelings successfully. Children are confident to express themselves because they feel safe and secure. Children learn many skills in preparation for starting school and their future learning. They develop good hand-to-eye coordination, as they throw a beanbag into a square when playing hopscotch. They develop their fine motor skills as they make marks with a range of materials, learning how to hold a pencil in preparation for writing.

Although parents do not currently come into the setting, staff greet each family individually at the gate. There is a good two-way flow of communication between the staff and parents to ensure that children's needs are understood and met. This also helps parents to feel involved in their children's learning.

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

- Staff support children to build a wide vocabulary and use effective strategies to support their communication and language development. For example, they introduce words such as 'woodlouse', as children dig in the soil looking for insects. Staff give children the time that they need to answer questions when listening to stories and learning about the characters.
- Children have good opportunities to count in routines and activities. They count the number of sausages in the pan and make simple calculations as they take one away. Children can recognise numerals up to the number 10 and are beginning to match the written numeral to the number. As a result, children develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Children love to be outside. Staff support children's learning well as they build with drainpipes and tubing. They introduce words such as 'heavy' as they encourage children to compare the weight of different balls. Children excitedly experiment rolling balls down the drainpipes to see which one travels the fastest.
- Staff ensure that all children are included and have equal access to activities and

resources. Children learn about the local community as they visit the library for example. They enjoy visits from the community police support officer or learn about animals that are brought into the setting from an animal park. However, staff do not provide many opportunities for children to use their home language in their play and learning when English is not their first language at home.

- Children have some opportunities to be independent. They pour drinks of water from a jug into a cup and learn to wipe their noses and faces. However, staff do not consistently encourage children to dress and undress for outside play, to extend their independence skills further.
- Children learn about the importance of living healthy lifestyles and benefit from fresh air and exercise. They follow thorough hygiene routines and understand the importance of good handwashing. They have opportunities to play with large models of teeth and toothbrushes as they learn about good oral health and hygiene.
- Children's behaviour is good. They help to tidy away the toys enthusiastically. They listen carefully and follow instructions well. Staff give children lots of praise and encouragement. This boosts their self-esteem and confidence successfully.
- The manager and staff use reflection effectively to identify areas for improvement. Since the last inspection the staff have updated their knowledge on safeguarding procedures to ensure children's safety. Staff complete more peer-on-peer observations to help develop good practice. Staff have good opportunities to extend their knowledge to help them support children further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are fully aware of their role and responsibilities to keep children safe. They are aware of the signs and symptoms which may indicate a child is at risk of harm, and they know the reporting procedure to follow. They know what to do if they had a concern about the behaviour of a colleague. The manager ensures robust recruitment arrangements are followed so that only those suitable to work with children do so. Staff complete daily risk assessments to ensure that the premises are safe and suitable for the children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- explore ways in which to further support children to develop and use their home language in play and learning
- provide consistent opportunities for children to practise developing their independence skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2552082
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10245987
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	32
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	Wincanton Community Venture
Registered person unique reference number	RP534730
Telephone number	01963 31842
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2022

Information about this early years setting

Conkers The Balsam Centre's Community Nursery re-registered in 2019. It was previously registered at different premises in 2015. The nursery operates from rooms in the Balsam Centre, Wincanton, Somerset. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 8am until 5.30pm, all year round. There are 11 staff employed. The manager holds a childcare qualification at level 3 and a management qualification at level 5. A further nine staff hold childcare qualifications at level 3. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide early years education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Heimsoth

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 deputy manager and manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took their views into account.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager of a group activity.

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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