

Inspection of Essential Early Years

67-69 Grange Road West, Birkenhead, Cheshire CH41 4BZ

Inspection date: 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

All children flourish as they become familiar with routines in this heart-warming nursery for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They develop their independence and demonstrate a positive sense of themselves and others, enabling them to form a positive disposition to learn. Children's emotional security is promoted exceptionally well by staff, who act as excellent role models. Children are demonstrating this by displaying high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They are learning to form good relationships with their peers and work alongside others companionably.

Leaders have created an exceptional environment where every single child's individual needs are met. Children are provided with an ambitious curriculum that has been meticulously planned to offer meaningful learning across all areas. Staff use their considerable experience and the wealth of detailed information about children's development from parents to help children settle. They have a superb understanding of their individual learning styles and use this knowledge to skilfully engage children in the opportunities on offer. Staff provide precise learning experiences for children's development that build on what they already know and can do. This helps all children to achieve to the best of their abilities.

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

- The management team is highly qualified and skilled at meeting the needs of children with SEND. It works in partnership with a vast range of external professionals every day to ensure children get the support they need. Staff monitor children's progress exceptionally well. They accurately identify areas where they need additional help and implement swift and targeted intervention. Funding allocated to children is used to implement specific and highly personalised support. Consequently, children with SEND are making huge progress.
- Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to develop their small-muscle skills in readiness for future writing. For example, children benefit from sensory baking and a daily 'dough disco', where they enjoy prodding, rolling and squeezing dough. They express their creativity and shape 'witches' and 'ghosts' from the dough. Staff ask thoughtful questions, such as 'What else does your witch need?', and give praise when the children respond with 'ears' and 'hat'. This freedom of expression and creativity helps children to make rapid progress in their learning and development.
- Staff model clear pronunciation and give children time to put their thoughts into words when asking them open-ended questions. Staff use tools such as Makaton signing, a communication and language programme and the Picture Exchange Communication System to provide precise support to the children as they make

remarkable progress from being non-verbal to forming short sentences. Parents of children with SEND are in awe of the level of progress their children are making, saying 'the nursery has saved their lives'.

- Children are learning about healthy lifestyles and good hygiene practices. They wipe their own hands and faces with individual cloths and place them in the bucket after lunch. Staff sensitively coach children to manage their personal needs, sequencing their learning into small, manageable steps. This gentle and knowledgeable approach helps children to gain independence.
- Children are learning to recognise and celebrate each other's differences. For example, to celebrate Diwali, the children visited a local shop that sells saris and experienced the sensory textures of the different fabrics. They also go on walks to the park and take trips on the bus to a nearby farm. This helps children to gain an understanding of the world and develop their confidence in new environments.
- Partnership with parents is exceptional. Parents sincerely value the support they receive during the referral process and beyond. They say the staff are 'just perfect' and comment on their children 'already achieving above and beyond parental expectations'. The in-depth settling-in process and constant support during transitions keep parents informed and involved at every stage of their child's journey. Innovative ideas such as 'take home bags' and 'talk books' and a multitude of helpful advice and parent workshops allow parents to further support children's learning and development at home. These highly positive relationships help to ensure the children make the best possible progress.
- The leadership and management of this nursery are excellent. Leaders are passionate about providing the best possible care and experiences for children with SEND. They reflect continuously, developing strategies such as 'golden tickets' for staff appreciation. Staff say they feel incredibly well supported and valued, and they work diligently to build on their excellent teaching. Staff training and focused professional development opportunities are given high priority. As a result, leaders provide an outstanding environment where children with SEND can thrive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have an extremely robust knowledge and awareness of how to keep children safe and protected from harm. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the steps to take should they become concerned about a child's welfare or the conduct of a colleague. The highly knowledgeable staff show a precise understanding of the specific safeguarding issues that can affect children with SEND, such as if a non-verbal or non-mobile child was at risk of harm. Staff receive excellent training that ensures they recognise and report any concerns quickly. Leaders adopt stringent procedures for the recruitment of new staff and keep robust records that ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are thorough, and staff are vigilant when checking that the environment is a safe and secure space.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2576943
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10250918
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	27
Number of children on roll	52
Name of registered person	Essential Early Years Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2576942
Telephone number	01513453230
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Essential Early Years registered in 2020 and is situated in Birkenhead, Merseyside. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status and a level 7 qualification, one holds a level 5 qualification, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, two hold level 2 qualifications and three are unqualified. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, with the exception of public holidays. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded education for two-, three- and four-year-old children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marianne McDowell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager and discussed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at a sample of relevant records and documentation, including evidence of staff suitability and training.

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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