

Inspection of Crocus Early Years Centre

Saffron Walden County High School, Audley End Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4UH

Inspection date: 15 November 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 develop their physical skills while at nursery. For example, children have free access to a climbing frame in the baby room where they enjoy climbing up the stairs and going down the slide independently. Older children have free-flow opportunities to the well-resourced garden and participate in dance and yoga activities throughout the day. They learn how exercise affects their bodies and they feel their hearts beating fast after dancing, then slowing down during yoga and deep breathing exercises.

Children enjoy warm interactions with their key person. Children are greeted with cuddles when they wake up from their nap. Babies enjoy looking at photos of their families with their key person and show excitement when playing 'peek-a-boo' together. Older children are seen taking turns and cuddling one another. Children are taught about emotions. Older children discuss how they are feeling, which prompts conversations on how to support one another. This supports children's social and emotional development.

Children have good communication and language skills. They have access to a range of books and sing a variety of songs. Children can take books home using the nursery lending library. In the toddler room, children have a voting system of which book they will focus on that week. Staff use books to introduce new language, develop an awareness of emotions and facial expressions and extend their imagination. Younger babies are introduced to sign language, which is shared with parents. Children are now beginning to make requests, using signs such as 'more'.

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

- Older children learn mathematical skills through measuring each other on the floor and looking at the numbers. Children then stand up and see who is taller, encouraging each other to make comparisons.
- Children develop their fine motor skills and have access to range of resources, including tweezers and play dough, to develop children's pincer grip. Children have a range of opportunities to make marks to practise their early writing skills throughout the nursery, including writing walls, sticky notes and pads available to children.
- Staff focus on teaching children to be independent. For example, they encourage children to serve their own meals, pour their drinks and put on their coats. Staff help younger children to wipe their own noses and drink from a cup by themselves.
- Children enjoy good interaction with staff, who talk to them about what they are doing and join in with their play. At times, some staff focus on domestic routines

and miss rich opportunities to engage consistently with children. This means sometimes children are not fully engaged in activities to help them make the best possible progress.

- Staff work closely with local schools to support transitions for children. They invite the teachers to meet children at the nursery and speak with the key worker about children's interests, abilities and next steps. The local school has commented that the nursery has had a positive impact on getting children ready for school.
- Staff help children to learn about keeping safe. They use the nursery mascot 'Candy Floss' to identify any potential hazards in the environment and raise children's awareness of risks. Children can take the mascot home to help them learn risks at home. At nursery, children tell staff that they need to wipe the outdoor equipment down if it is wet before they use it.
- Staff follow children's interests and use this to extend their learning. For example, children in the room enjoy rolling a toy back and forth between one another. The staff add in guttering to roll the items down the tube to the floor. They discuss what is happening to extend children's learning.
- Parents are impressed with the level of care, love and attention that staff provide. Parents say staff are knowledgeable and that they are kept up to date with children's learning and what they will be doing next.
- The company and new nursery manager have a strong focus on staff's well-being. They celebrate staff achievements. Staff have access to regular support from external agencies, such as counselling and GP service. Staff comment that they feel well supported by management.
- Staff teach children about different cultures and how they are unique. They model positive behaviour and how to respect one another. Staff support children who speak English as an additional language through introducing new words and using key phrases in their home language to support their communication development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the signs and symptoms of abuse to keep children safe. They know the reporting procedure if they have a concern about a child. Staff's knowledge is kept up to date, through online training, during supervision meetings with management and regularly being asked safeguarding questions by management. Managers review children's attendance and any injuries at home. They review to see if there are any patterns and would follow the reporting procedure if they have concerns. Staff are aware of how to promote positive behaviour in children and the procedure to take if they are concerned about a member of staff's conduct. Staff know the signs and symptoms of county lines and female genital mutilation.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to develop their practice so that they focus consistently on supporting children's engagement in their activities and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY219409
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10233611
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	85
Number of children on roll	83
Name of registered person	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901358
Telephone number	01799 610314
Date of previous inspection	5 January 2017

Information about this early years setting

Crocus Early Years Centre was registered in 2002. The nursery employs 22 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Stef Montgomery

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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk together to discuss the areas of learning, their curriculum and what they want children to learn, both inside and outside.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to children about what they are doing at the setting.
- The inspector spoke to parents to take account of their views about the setting.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including first-aid certificates and Disclosure and Barring Service numbers of staff.

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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