

Inspection of The Apple Trust Neighbourhood Nursery

Ellis Ashton Street, Huyton, Merseyside L36 6BH

Inspection date: 6 December 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 at this nurturing nursery. They are happy, independent and curious. Children are captivated by the thoughtful, well-considered learning activities that staff provide. Daily life for children at the nursery is full of looking at high-quality books, listening to stories and gentle conversations with staff. Children learn the meaning of new words, such as 'balance' and 'gallop'. Babies' and toddlers' early attempts at talk are recognised and respected by staff. Children learn to sing, count, say the sounds that letters represent and practise the knowledge that they know.

Children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn about the importance of being independent. They know when to ask for help and when to keep on trying for themselves.

Children feel at ease with their key member of staff. Babies, toddlers and children with SEND benefit from exceptionally positive relationships with staff. Children behave sensibly. They learn to use 'kind hands' with each other as they see this behaviour being expertly role modelled by caring staff. Younger children learn about consent as staff respectfully ask them if they can change their nappy or clean their face. Children learn to be kind and considerate to one another. They demonstrate that they feel safe in the nursery.

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

- Leaders and staff have thought carefully about what they want children to know and when. For instance, they place high value on staff and children loving books. Leaders and staff place well-chosen books everywhere in the nursery. Children learn many different stories well. Staff think carefully about how to develop children's physical knowledge and skills, such as through an outdoor 'assault course'. Leaders are not complacent. They ensure that the nursery continues to improve at pace. For example, leaders are taking action to refine the curriculum in mathematics and phonics, even though these areas of learning are already well developed.
- Staff know what children need to learn now as well as what they need to learn next. For instance, mobile babies learn how to use large-muscle movements when playing with large paintbrushes outdoors. Staff then refine this skill for older children as they develop small-muscle movements in readiness for writing.
- Staff use assessment strategies effectively to spot gaps in children's learning. They adapt the curriculum carefully to teach children what they need to know. This enables children to mostly learn well.
- The children are very well behaved, and the nursery rooms hum gently with talk. Children experience rich back-and-forth chatter with staff about what they are

doing in their play. They also have in-depth conversations with staff about differences between people, such as why some adults and children wear glasses and others do not. However, on some occasions, some staff ask questions quickly one after another or use too many closed questions when talking with children. These weaknesses hold back some children's learning and interrupt conversations.

- Leaders work closely with other agencies to support the needs of children with SEND, including children at the earlier stages of learning language. Leaders ensure that staff are trained to use symbols and gestures to support children's communication and language. Staff's skilful work enables children who are not yet able to use words to make choices, such as their selection of favourite nursery rhymes to sing.
- Leaders and staff pride themselves on their successful partnerships with parents. Parents value the way in which staff keep them informed about their child's learning. Parents of children with SEND feel extremely well supported. They are fully involved in discussing their child's learning and agreeing the targets for supporting their child at home and nursery.
- Staff enjoy working at the nursery. They say that leaders consider their well-being thoughtfully and help them to have a manageable workload. Leaders ensure that staff complete training to gain the knowledge they need to teach children in different areas of learning. Recently, staff learned more about teaching science to young children, such as teaching them about volcanoes or how plants absorb water. Such training has enhanced the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' careful attention to safeguarding is part of everyday life at the nursery. They provide staff with regular, up-to-date training in child protection. This helps staff to spot the possible signs that children may be at risk of harm. Staff know that they must report any concerns about children's welfare immediately. They are clear that they must also report any concerns about their colleagues' conduct. Leaders and staff take seriously their duty to record and report any concerns about safeguarding to other agencies. Leaders' partnership with parents helps them to identify when a family might need early help, such as needing support from local food banks.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve staff's use of questions so they ask questions in ways that develop children's language and thinking.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY312526
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10263847
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	37
Number of children on roll	61
Name of registered person	St Gabriel's Area Partnership Enabling Play And Learning For Everyone Ltd.
Registered person unique reference number	RP525016
Telephone number	0151 489 4120
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Apple Trust Neighbourhood Nursery registered in 2005 and is located in Huyton Quarry, Merseyside. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, from 8am until 5.30pm, all year round. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery employs 20 members of staff to work with the children. Of these, 16 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or higher. One manager holds an early years qualification at level 6, another holds early years professional status, and a deputy manager holds early years teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Andrea Vaughan

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 completed a learning walk in the nursery with leaders and discussed the leaders' curriculum.
- Children spoke with the inspector about what they enjoy doing at nursery.
- The inspector talked with staff during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the managers about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke with the inspector about how staff support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed children's learning of the curriculum, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this has on children's knowledge.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of learning activities with managers.
- The inspector looked at a range of leaders' documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working at 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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