

Inspection of Ambleside Centre

The Ambleside Centre, Ambleside Close, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4JJ

Inspection date: 20 February 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enter a calm and welcoming space. They are warmly greeted by friendly staff. On the whole, children separate from parents with ease and are quick to settle. Those that need a little help receive a reassuring cuddle. This helps them to feel safe and secure and supports their well-being. Children recognise who their key person is and gravitate towards them. This supports the need for children to have an adult to identify with, recognised as an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff remain vigilant as to where children are in the nursery and ensure children are always engaged in play inside and in the outside space.

Children are encouraged to develop, with a focus on confidence and resilience. Staff encourage children to interact together. For instance, babies join the older children at lunchtime. This supports children of all ages to socialise and make friends. Overall, staff have high expectations for each child, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress in communication. Children have a positive attitude to learning. They are curious and explore new activities, such as with shaving foam in a plastic tray.

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

- Staff identify that individuality is at the heart of everything the nursery does. They believe this to be fundamental to developing children's independence. This prepares children for when they move up to the pre-school-age nursery next door. Overall, staff encourage children to do things for themselves, such as putting on their own coat to go outside. However, at times, there are missed opportunities to encourage this development. Staff do not consistently encourage children to undertake simple tasks for themselves, such as older children clearing the lunch table.
- Staff give children the opportunity to develop their physical skills. This starts from when the younger children are learning to walk. Children are given lots of space to crawl and low equipment to pull themselves up on. Staff encourage older children to develop their stepping and balancing skills in the outside space. They provide crates that children climb onto and walk along.
- Children with SEND are fully supported. Staff have a separate room that is used to offer a quiet area. This provides children with the time and space to learn and develop new skills with a specialised teacher, such as how to use sign language. Staff work with individual children and include parents in this process where needed. They support children who speak English as an additional language. Staff read stories and use single words for instruction to help children understand, and model language.
- Staff are quick to reinforce the rules and behavioural expectations of children.

For example, they remind a child to use their 'kind hands' with their peers. Overall, children behave well and are quick to act on instruction. However, at times, staff do not fully encourage children to make choices for themselves, such as at mealtimes.

- Staff are well supported by the headteacher. They feel comfortable enough to approach her with concerns or worries. Staff can access training any time, for example online. They discuss training requirements as a team during meetings. The headteacher delivers short courses during this time, such as on understanding British values. This ensures staff have regular opportunities to further their knowledge and that of the children in the nursery.
- Parents are very complimentary about how well their children have settled in the nursery. They comment on how children form secure relationships with their key person. Parents say the nursery provides regular feedback about their children's progress through an online assessment tool. They praise the presence of the headteacher at pick-up time to allow for more feedback or a conversation. Parents compliment staff and say it is obvious they care deeply for the children in the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a confident knowledge of safeguarding procedures. They clearly identify signs of neglect and abuse. Staff know the process involved to report a concern about a child or an adult. They know where to access the safeguarding policy for more information. Staff are aware of safeguarding posters around the nursery and where they are located. They often discuss safeguarding topics or concerns as a team and during meetings. Staff have access to regular safeguarding training and can extend their knowledge online. They aim to ensure children are in a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide more opportunities for children to complete more simple tasks for themselves to extend their independence skills even further
- support staff to implement a more consistent approach to helping children understand that they have a choice and can self-select.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY284428
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10276151
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 3
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	57
Name of registered person	The Ambleside Centre Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP903588
Telephone number	0118 377 6444
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Ambleside Centre registered in 2004. The centre is situated in Woodley, near Reading, Berkshire. The Ambleside Centre includes Pastures nursery, which is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, all year round, for children aged three years and under. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two and three years. There are 11 staff, including three apprentices and eight who hold appropriate qualifications at level 2 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynne Murray

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 headteacher and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The headteacher and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The headteacher showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability 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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