

Inspection of Apple Daycare Ltd (Oxlease House)

Oxlease House, Travellers Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 8TJ

Inspection date: 6 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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

Children arrive keen and eager to take part in the exciting and stimulating activities provided in this outstanding environment. They select from a treasure trove of resources and activities to lead their play. Children use mirrors to look at their faces and copy this onto dough, using vegetables to make eyes, mouths and noses. They dig in soil looking for bugs and worms and show great excitement when they hit something metal and find a spoon. Children remain actively engaged and thrive with the support of staff, who are passionate about what they do.

Children are highly independent. Even very young children are competent at taking their coats off and hanging them up, and they empty their own plates after lunch, placing them into bowls ready for washing. Routines are deeply embedded into the day and this helps children to understand what will happen next. This gives them a sense of security and supports their emotional well-being. Children's behaviour is exceptional and they readily share resources. Staff skilfully support younger children who require help to take turns and explain the importance of 'sharing with our friends'.

The highly effective key-person system enables children to form deep relationships with their key person. This means children benefit from a superb early years experience that is tailored to their individual needs.

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

- Children experience an ambitious curriculum that is bespoke to their learning needs. Staff gather detailed information about children's learning to plan for their next steps. This enables them to progress quickly in their development and helps them to reach their full potential.
- Babies' physical development is highly promoted. Staff encourage them to stand at the side of tables to take part in activities and attentively support them. Babies lie down to watch twinkling lights on the ceiling as they listen to relaxing music. When babies become tired or upset, caring staff cuddle them and gently talk to them. Babies nestle into staff's arms as they look at books together.
- Inspirational leaders have high ambitions for their staff and ensure that they have excellent opportunities to continue their professional development. Leaders ensure that staff have time to embed new knowledge gained from training. Staff report their morale is high, and they are proud to be part of a team that puts children at the heart of what they do.
- Parents say that the staff at the nursery are amazing. They report how exceptionally well informed they are about their children's learning and provide very positive comments about their children's experiences at the nursery. They say that staff are supportive, approachable and always have time for them.

Parents talk about their children making excellent progress with their speech in very short periods of time.

- Children experience a highly effective settling-in procedure. Staff gather pertinent information from parents about their child, so that they know each child's likes, interests and existing routines before they start. Experienced staff recognise that each child is individual and settling-in procedures change to suit the needs of each child. This enables a positive relationship to build between the parents, child and staff.
- The special education needs coordinator (SENCo) talks with passion about supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She puts the child and their family at the heart of her practice. The SENCo values working in partnership with parents and other professionals. Together, they review children's progress and development to make sure that children receive the support they need to help them be successful learners.
- The highly qualified staff are aware of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children's development. They use their wealth of experience to support areas of concern. For example, they provide rich opportunities to support and extend children's communication and language. Children make prints with fruit and vegetable sponges. They curiously hold one up and ask what they are called. Staff explain that it is an aubergine. Children enjoy practising saying the word over and over again.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are extremely knowledgeable about how to ensure children remain safe in their care. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse. All staff understand their role and responsibility regarding the 'Prevent' duty. There are robust recruitment procedures in place. New staff complete a thorough induction, so they have an excellent understanding of safeguarding. All staff understand what to do should they have a concern or allegation about a colleague. Staff undertake regular training to ensure their safeguarding knowledge remains up to date.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2628731
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10280876
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	40
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Apple Daycare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP905802
Telephone number	01707872949
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Apple Daycare Ltd (Oxlease House) registered in 2021. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including two at level 6 and one with early years teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Denise Clayton

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 of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to/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 spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 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 inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager 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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