

# Inspection of Little Owls Nursery

Century House, Well Lane, Danbury, Essex CM3 4AB

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Inspection date:

16 March 2023

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## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is outstanding

Children are at the centre of this unique and exquisite nursery. Children arrive and quickly become deeply engaged in their enriching learning environment. They are incredibly confident and make informed decisions about what they would like to do. They freely explore and show interest in all areas of their accessible environment. Children thoroughly enjoy the stimulating activities available inside and outdoors. They thrive during their time in the garden and cooperate as they dress for all weathers. They squeal with delight as they excitedly play number games in the garden with friends.

Children develop a love of literature from a young age. Staff implement creative ways to broaden children's vocabulary. They introduce a 'book of the week' and identify five key words for children to learn. This is shared with parents at home to support consistency in children's learning. Older children discuss a new concept of 'big' with staff when exploring with wooden logs and diggers in the messy tray.

Children behave extremely well. Supportive staff have high expectations of them and children rise to the challenge by following the nursery routine exceptionally well. Children develop the skills needed to become resilient learners. Staff share pride in children's achievements and praise them for their efforts. This helps all children to feel valued and happy during their time at this nursery.

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

- Leaders have created a rich and meaningful curriculum that is extremely well-sequenced, and all staff have a clear vision of what they want children to learn. Staff are exemplary role models and have warm and caring relationships with children. For example, young babies enjoy having a cuddle with their key person when joining for their settling-in visit and older children enjoy exploring and predicting with staff while engaging in a science experiment. Children listen intently to adults and respond well to their instructions.
- Tailored settling-in sessions mean staff get to know children exceptionally well. Carefully planned visits ensure that all children make rapid progress right from the start, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Young babies make substantial progress in their physical development. They enjoy the sensory experience of exploring oats in their hands, promoting their fine motor skills. They learn to climb on the climbing equipment and go down the slide, supporting them to strengthen their leg muscles.
- Children have an array of opportunities to develop their independence skills throughout the day. Staff ensure that this is sequential and children develop the necessary skills to move through the nursery. Babies transition from a highchair to a low-level seat and confidently feed themselves with a spoon. Toddlers

master learning to put their own coat on and begin to attend to their own toileting needs. Older children skilfully pour their own water to drink and scrape their plates at mealtimes. This allows children to learn the necessary skills to support them with their next stage in education.

- Children's natural curiosity is fostered through reading stories with a member of staff. They confidently identify the names of dinosaurs in the book, which leads to a discussion about the world they live in. Children relate images in the story to the recent weather they have experienced and enthusiastic staff expand on this to encourage children to think about the clothing they wore to keep themselves warm.
- Partnerships with parents are exceptional. Parents state that staff are 'extremely supportive and nurturing'. They highlight the outstanding education their children receive and are thankful for the detailed updates they receive regarding their child's learning. This supports them to continue this learning at home and helps children to make substantial progress in their development. Parents comment that their children 'flourish' during their time at the nursery. They state that staff go 'above and beyond' and know the children incredibly well. Parents benefit from access to an extensive range of support from the nursery, such as a consultation with their own sleep therapist.
- Leadership across the nursery is inspirational. Leaders' and managers' continuous drive and commitment to ensure that all children receive the best start to their early education is shared with all staff. Leaders and managers create a supportive culture for all staff. Their innovative methods for supporting staff's well-being have a profound impact on them and ensures that staff feel valued. They receive focused supervision and unique training opportunities to ensure that the teaching and support provided to children is at the highest level.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safety and well-being of children is a shared priority for all staff and leaders. Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding issues. They are knowledgeable about wider safeguarding issues that may affect children and families in the local area, such as county lines. Staff are confident in taking prompt action if they are concerned a child may be at risk of abuse. They know the actions to take if they are concerned regarding the conduct of a colleague and understand how to escalate these concerns to outside professionals, if necessary. Staff use effective teaching methods to support children to learn about keeping safe when using technology. This information is shared with parents to help them keep children safe from harm while at home.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY297422
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10280730
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 11
<b>Total number of places</b>	108
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	182
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Owls Nursery Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP525167
<b>Telephone number</b>	01245 221333
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 August 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Little Owls Nursery registered in 2005 and is located in Danbury. The nursery employs 36 members of childcare staff. Of these, 21 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Holly Todd

## 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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the managing director and the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.

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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