

Inspection of Little Birches in Sonning Common Ltd

Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common, Reading, Berkshire RG4 9BT

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

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 settle well in this calm and nurturing nursery. They form strong bonds with staff, which helps them to feel safe and secure. Children are happy and confident. Children engage in the activities on offer, which often trigger their curiosity. For example, babies smile and giggle as they enjoy exploring sensory toys. Children develop a love for reading. Staff create ample opportunities for children to look at books. Older children enjoy recalling familiar stories and using their imagination, recreating dens that link to the familiar stories they have read. Staff have created a nursery library to encourage children to borrow books to read at home. This further supports children's early literacy skills.

Staff encourage children to be increasingly independent. They offer them lots of praise as they try to do things for themselves, helping to build their sense of responsibility effectively. For example, Children put on their coats for outdoor play and help to serve themselves food at lunchtime.

Staff provide opportunities to enhance babies' physical development well. Babies enjoy climbing steps to use an indoor slide and show great excitement when crawling through the tunnel, encouraged by staff who give them praise when they reach the other end. Older children are keen to show the skills they have learned. For example, children joined in with each other to hop and jump, staff furthered the children's interest by singing songs enabling children to continue to practise these skills.

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

- The manager is clear of the curriculum intent for all children. The curriculum is age appropriate, broad and ambitious. Parents receive regular updates and assessments of their child's learning and development. They work closely with parents to understand each individual child's likes and needs. Staff keep parents up to date about their child's progress, which enables them to continue children's learning at home.
- Staff benefit from regular supervision meetings, where they can discuss their key children, their general well-being and professional development. The manager is reflective of her own and staff practice. She monitors staff through observations and uses this to help identify any specific training needs that staff might benefit from. This helps them to raise the quality of the provision.
- Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities well, they work with parents and other agencies to help ensure the children get the support they need and progress well.
- Staff introduce numbers from an early age. For example, babies enjoy playing with an abacus while the staff counted the beads with them. Older children

enjoy counting bricks as they create houses. Staff support them to add and take away numbers and children enjoy the challenge.

- Staff generally provide a challenging curriculum for all children. They identify the skills that children need to acquire before they move to the next room or on to school. Although on occasions the intent for learning within the activity provided by staff lacks clarity and focus, children generally concentrate for long periods. They receive good levels of support from staff, who talk to children about what they are doing and ask questions to help them think for themselves.
- Overall, staff support children to develop their vocabulary and language skills. Staff read stories and sing songs with children throughout play. Older children benefit from hearing complex words, such as 'orangutan', 'floor plans' and 'mallet'. However, this is not consistent across all rooms, with some staff not using correct grammar with the children. This means that some children do not hear the correct pronunciation of words.
- Overall children behave well. Staff supervise children well and ensure they remain safe at the setting. Staff model expected behaviour well. They remind children to use their 'walking feet' and 'kind hands' and support them well to behave during their play. Staff engage with children at mealtimes. Young babies skilfully feed themselves with a spoon and let staff know when they have finished. However, as mealtime approaches, children often experience long periods of waiting, and this leads to them becoming restless and unsettled.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff update their safeguarding training regularly, so that they know what to do if they have any concerns about children's welfare or if any allegations are raised against staff. Managers have good systems for recruiting staff. They make sure staff are suitable to work with children and check this regularly through supervision meetings, once staff start working at the nursery. There are clear processes for recording and monitoring accidents and incidents in place. Parents are informed of any accidents and incidents within the nursery, and any concerns are dealt with appropriately. This helps to keep children safe. Staff implement thorough risk assessments and help children learn safe behaviours so that they can all play together in safety.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure the implementation of planned activities within the curriculum is consistently effective and that all staff understand what they want children to learn
- review staff's use of vocabulary when interacting with children to use clear

words to help children build on their already good communication skills

- review the organisation of mealtimes, so that the needs of all children are considered, and the length of time children spend waiting is reduced.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY273422
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10282579
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	128
Number of children on roll	97
Name of registered person	Little Birches in Sonning Common Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP906538
Telephone number	01189 722196
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2017

Information about this early years setting

Bishopswood Day Nursery registered 2004. It operates from five rooms in a converted school in Gallowstree Common, on the Berkshire/Oxfordshire border. The nursery is open each weekday, from 7.30am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. A team of 27 staff are employed, 17 of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Claire Boparai
Nicky Butler

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 setting.
- The manager joined the inspectors on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspectors talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspectors spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors held a meeting with the manager and looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working at 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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