

Inspection of Choochoos Day Nursery

Whitstable Railway Station, Railway Avenue, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1QS

Inspection date: 30 March 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children and babies explore happily at this nursery. They learn to be independent and choose from a selection of interesting activities and resources. Children behave well. Staff are good role models and provide positive praise to help children gain a sense of achievement. Children are encouraged to use good manners. For example, older children thank the nursery cook for their 'lovely dinner'.

All children make good progress in their physical development. Staff provide a wide range of opportunities to extend children's core strength, balance and coordination both indoors and outside. For instance, babies confidently negotiate the sloped garden and delight as they mount the steps to use the slide. Young children operate bikes, throw and catch balls, and roll hoops in the garden. Older children role play on the large pirate ship climbing frame as they walk the plank and swing from the rope.

Children of all ages love to listen to staff read. Older children excitedly predict what might happen next as they become immersed in the plot of a familiar story. Babies snuggle on staff's laps as they eagerly anticipate turning the pages. Children access a wide and diverse range of books. They develop important literacy skills that prepare them for their future learning.

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

- Children have free choice to decide what they want to play with. Staff deliver activities that cover all areas of learning, one to one and in small groups. However, at times some children move between activities or do not have as much confidence to get involved. Staff do not consistently identify when these children could benefit from further encouragement to maintain their focus and make the most of the learning opportunities.
- Staff give the development of children's speaking skills high priority, especially when they are learning English as an additional language. Staff use every opportunity to clearly emphasise keywords within their interactions and model new language. Staff use some Makaton signing with all children to support communication and language skills. Children make good progress. However, staff do not always make the most of their interactions to fully extend children's learning even further.
- Staff provide effective support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify gaps in children's development at an early stage and act promptly to address them. Staff plan precisely to help children to achieve key steps. Staff work closely with other professionals to ensure that children receive the specialist help or support that they require.
- Children are provided with a wealth of experiences to broaden their

understanding of the world around them. Staff regularly plan outings in the local community. They are linked to children's interests and provide them with new experiences, such as visiting the harbour, library and local shops. Staff invite parents into the nursery to share their occupations with the children. Children gain a sense of belonging within their local community.

- Children's mathematical knowledge is supported well. Staff help children to notice numbers in the environment and count throughout their activities and routines. Children learn to recognise numerals and use positional language in conversations.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents are extremely happy with the care their children receive at this nursery. They highlight the careful care and attentiveness their children receive from staff, and state that they feel their children's needs are met well. Parents praise the continuous communication they receive about their children's learning and the support staff give to help children progress at home.
- Children's individuality is successfully valued and celebrated. Staff provide an environment that promotes inclusion and equality. For instance, staff display positive images of children's different cultures and languages spoken at home. This helps to encourage discussion about differences and creates a sense of belonging and inclusion.
- The manager is motivated and enthusiastic. Regular self-evaluation and effective teamworking contribute to a well-organised provision. There are good opportunities for staff's professional development. For example, staff access a range of training topics and support from the manager.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager is knowledgeable about safeguarding and child protection. She ensures that her staff team are well trained to understand and recognise the signs and symptoms that a child might be at risk of abuse. Staff are aware of how to record and report any concerns they might have about a child or the conduct of adults working with children. Leaders follow effective recruitment and induction procedures. These ensure that staff are safe and suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to improve teaching further to enrich children's learning experiences
- help staff to identify when less confident children need more support in joining in activities and developing their knowledge.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2630365
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10281150
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 4
Total number of places	87
Number of children on roll	106
Name of registered person	The Old Station Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP520274
Telephone number	01227280077
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Choochoos Day Nursery re-registered in 2021. It is located in Whitstable, Kent. The nursery is open five days a week from 8am to 6pm, all year round. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children age two, three and four years. There are 19 members of staff. Of these, nine staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and a further two hold qualifications at level 6 and one at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kimberley Luckham

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection. They discussed what they most enjoy doing at nursery.
- 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 viewed written feedback from parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.

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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