

Inspection of Apple Blossom Day Nursery

Apple Blossom Day Nursery, Durham Road, SUNDERLAND SR3 4AG

Inspection date: 31 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 enjoy their time in the nursery. Parents comment on the progress their children have made since starting. They say that the nursery is a 'hidden gem'. Parents explain how their children love coming. Children have good relationships with staff and other children. For example, one-year-old children enjoy sitting on their key person's knee as they read a story. Two-year-old children thoroughly enjoy playing alongside older children, drawing fires on the chalkboards. Children learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn how to use tools, such as knives and scissors, safely and with control.

Staff have high expectations for children's learning. This is evident as they listen to two-year-old children counting and model counting to 10 and beyond. They then play hide and seek together, where children then begin to count to 15 and beyond. Children demonstrate high levels of engagement. For example, two-year-old children thoroughly enjoy spraying water on the chalkboard and pretending to put the 'fires' out. Later, they demonstrate the same high levels of engagement as they listen to books that staff read. Children listen and comment on the illustrations. They pick several books in succession and really enjoy talking about the books and what they see.

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

- The manager and staff evaluate their practice and identify areas that they can improve. Recently, they have reflected on the organisation of mealtimes for two-year-old children. Changes they have made have had a positive impact on children's behaviour and concentration.
- Staff attend a range of training to strengthen their practice. For example, staff working with children aged under two years have attended training on safer sleeping and have reflected and adapted their practice as a result of this. Staff have recently attended training on oral health and have given clear advice to parents. This includes signposting parents to local dentists. Children enjoy a range of healthy meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Staff working in the 'sunflower' room are very keen for children to make the best possible progress. They plan a range of activities to help children to develop the skills they need for school, such as writing and reading. However, staff do not have a sufficiently in-depth knowledge of how they can support older children to develop skills, such as writing. This means that, on occasions, some activities do not support children's stage of development.
- Staff know where children are in their learning and talk confidently about how they are helping children to develop their skills. They are attentive and spend a lot of time talking to children. However, staff working with children aged under two years do not always adapt their language effectively when talking to

children. They use long phrases and questions and this impacts on younger children's ability to learn new vocabulary.

- The manager has thought carefully about the order in which children develop skills, such as feeding themselves. Clear progression is evident throughout the nursery. For example, children in 'buttercups' begin to use forks to feed themselves. Two-year-old children practise these skills and feed themselves confidently. By the time children move into the 'sunflower' room, children serve themselves their meal and can use a knife and fork with good control.
- The staff in the nursery have a very good relationship with parents. They talk to parents about what children have been doing and find out information about children's interests at home. Staff use a range of methods to communicate with them. These include regular meetings and electronic communication, as well as talking to parents about their child's day. Parents feel that the staff keep them really well informed.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and is keen to continue to develop her skills further. Staff identify any concerns about children's learning swiftly. They put additional support plans in place and liaise with a range of professionals as appropriate. Staff act on any advice given to help children to make the best possible progress.
- The manager knows children well and ensures that she uses any funding effectively to help children to make good progress. A recent example is the development of a soft-play room, which staff use to help children to regulate their emotions and to meet children's needs effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of how they can keep children safe. They constantly check the environment to ensure that it is safe for children. When they identify any hazards, such as toys on the floor, they remove them immediately. The manager ensures that staff attend a wealth of training on child protection to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Staff talk confidently about what they would do if they had any concerns about children's welfare. They know the local authority's procedures.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend understanding of the ways in which to help older children to develop their literacy skills
- strengthen communication with younger children and provide more opportunities for children to develop their vocabulary.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY394728
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10280543
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	93
Number of children on roll	69
Name of registered person	Apple Blossom Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP529026
Telephone number	01915288388
Date of previous inspection	24 August 2017

Information about this early years setting

Apple Blossom Day Nursery registered in 2009 and is located in Sunderland. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold qualifications at level 3 or above, including one member of staff who is a qualified teacher. The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elizabeth Fish

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 staff and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager showed the inspector around the nursery and explained how she organises the nursery.
- The inspector observed children playing and learning and evaluated the quality of education.
- The manager evaluated an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Parents spoke to the inspector and talked about their experiences at the nursery.
- The manager showed the inspector a range of documents, including those relating to staff's suitability.
- The inspector asked the manager about how she keeps children safe and about the management of the nursery.

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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