

# Inspection of Saffron Walden Nursery School

Saffron Walden Nursery School, Shire Hill Industrial Estate, Saffron Walden, Essex  
CB11 3AQ

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Inspection date:

16 May 2023

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## Overall effectiveness

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## Requires improvement

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Inadequate

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

### **The provision requires improvement**

The committee, managers and staff work together to make some improvements to the nursery school. However, not all legal requirements are consistently met. There are some weaknesses in leadership and management which affect the quality of education and overall experiences of children. The weaknesses identified affect how settled and engaged older children are in some aspects of learning. Daily routines in this room are not clearly established or consistently in place.

Consequently, older children do not clearly understand what is expected of them. At times, such as when going from outside to inside, unpredictable routines unsettle some older children. Staff know children very well and chat to them about their families. However, they do not consistently use their interactions to help older children develop their understanding and thinking.

Younger children and babies benefit from a particularly calm, purposeful and engaging experience. Their needs for rest and comfort are very well met. Staff working with them show how they use play to further their learning. They speak to children clearly and repeat words to them. Staff design play opportunities to help children develop their strength and coordination. For example, babies learn to climb a slope in the garden as they paint on a large piece of paper. Young children focus their attention on finding minibeasts with staff and concentrate intently as they study them.

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

- Leaders have addressed the actions raised at the previous inspection, including those relating to safeguarding. This has improved safety within the nursery school. For example, fire evacuation procedures have been fully reviewed and practised so that staff and children understand how to follow them.
- There is not an appropriately qualified manager in place to lead and guide staff in their practice. This affects how well leaders and managers can identify any safety or practice issues which need addressing. It also means that support to help staff further develop the curriculum and improve its delivery is not fully effective.
- Staff report that changes to the nursery school have been positive and that they are well supported by leaders and managers. Leaders and managers promote a positive and open culture and are considerate towards staff's well-being. Staff complete relevant professional development.
- Despite not always being well delivered, the planned curriculum is now more purposefully designed to help children make progress in their learning. Younger children receive skilled guidance from staff. For example, staff tell children what is happening as they tip water down a pipe and talk about the progress of getting a container full up to the top.

- Staff are not always deployed effectively across the setting to ensure that children receive a consistently good quality of education. For example, there is a higher ratio of qualified to unqualified staff in some rooms than in others. The minimum qualifications ratios of those adults working with children are not consistently met.
- All children share songs and stories as a regular part of their day. This helps to develop their understanding of language. Staff recognise when children need extra support to develop their communication and language skills. They use new and interesting words with children, which helps to build their vocabulary.
- Staff identify and support children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They help children to make progress in their learning. Staff work with parents to ensure that children receive an education tailored to their needs. They also seek guidance from other professionals and use this to develop comprehensive support plans for children.
- Relationships between staff and children are respectful. Staff encourage children to develop their independence. Children are inquisitive learners. They experiment and challenge themselves in the well-designed outdoor areas. Older children enjoy imaginative play with one another and staff.
- Communication with parents is effective. A variety of methods keep parents well informed about what children are working on and their life at the nursery school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff understand how to recognise and respond to indicators that a child may be being abused or neglected. Leaders have strategies in place to continuously develop and evaluate staff's safeguarding knowledge. Those with responsibility to work with other agencies to safeguard children do so promptly and maintain appropriate records regarding their actions. Recruitment procedures are robust. The provider demonstrates that all those working with children are suitable to do so.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:**

	Due date
ensure that the manager is suitability qualified and experienced for the role	26/07/2023
ensure that the qualifications requirements for the adults working directly with the children are consistently met	26/07/2023

deploy staff effectively to deliver high quality of education and support for children at all times	15/06/2023
strengthen risk assessment procedures and ensure that they are consistently reviewed and carried out as intended	15/06/2023
develop further the curriculum to support older children to develop their understanding of routines and expectations; and support them to understand the impact of their behaviour on others and how they can keep themselves and their peers safe.	26/07/2023

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

- support staff to consistently extend and build on what children know and can do through their frequent interactions with them.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	650123
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10267459
<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>	1 to 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	49
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	65
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Saffron Walden Nursery School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901952
<b>Telephone number</b>	01799522108
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 November 2022

## Information about this early years setting

Saffron Walden Nursery School registered in 1993. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff, 11 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 8am to 4pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Kate Hipperson

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The manager and individual room leaders joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with a room leader.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery school.

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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