

Inspection of The Lemon Tree Nursery School

Lemon Tree Nursery School, Orchard Portman, TAUNTON, Somerset TA3 7BQ

Inspection date: 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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 free to play and explore the outdoors at this child-focused, nurturing nursery. Parents report that their children are flourishing. They feel the nursery 'nurtures the whole child and develops a genuine love of learning'. They praise the level of communication that the nursery provides about what their child is doing each day and how they are progressing developmentally.

Children develop strong, caring bonds with the dedicated staff. A combination of stay-and-play and settling-in sessions ensures that staff, children and families get to know each other well before children start. This helps children to settle quickly and feel safe at the nursery. Furthermore, staff develop a clear picture of each child's strengths, interests and areas to develop. This helps them to tailor the curriculum for each child effectively from their very first day. High ratios of staff to children provide additional opportunities for children to receive close care and attention. Staff support children to become resilient learners who are not afraid to try new things. Children make excellent progress.

Children excitedly run, ride and climb in the large open spaces, getting plenty of fresh air and exercise. Staff provide French, yoga, forest school and music sessions to enrich the curriculum further. Children's behaviour is excellent. Staff use positive reinforcement and regularly remind children of the setting's rules. This helps children to understand the behaviour that staff expect and teaches them how to keep safe.

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

- Staff are highly skilled at introducing new vocabulary to the children. For example, during an experiment with a large block of ice, staff encourage children to observe how it changes with the addition of heat and salt. Staff use words such as 'transforming', 'melting', 'smooth' and 'rough'. They skilfully extend children's learning by asking carefully thought-out questions about what is happening. They explain the process at an age-appropriate level. Children look at the ice at different points during the day to observe how it transforms into water. This frequent revisiting of the activity provides further opportunities for children to understand and consolidate the new vocabulary that they are hearing.
- Staff develop high levels of curiosity in the children. They provide a wide range of experiments to support children's understanding of the world. For example, children predict and test which objects float and sink and which are magnetic and non-magnetic. Children are highly engaged in their learning. They are developing the early scientific skills that they need to become inquisitive learners.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are exceptionally well supported. The dedicated special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) work with the rest of the team to identify children who require additional support. They quickly refer for advice from external professionals and work proactively with parents to ensure that all children make the best possible progress.
- There is a strong emphasis on developing children's levels of independence in the setting. Children learn to take care of their own belongings and manage their own personal needs. Children help themselves to the healthy selection of foods on offer at snack time. When they have finished, they independently wash up their own plates and cups.
- Children learn how to look after the planet. For instance, staff show older children pictures of sea creatures that have been negatively affected by pollution. Children then engage in activities where they need to 'free' toy animals wrapped in litter. They learn how to sort rubbish ready for recycling and use this knowledge to recycle the rubbish from their lunch boxes and at home. This shows that children apply what they have learned in a meaningful way.
- Staff support children to recognise and regulate their own emotions and sensory needs exceptionally well. They share strategies and resources with parents so that they can provide the same support at home. They arrange spaces and sensory resources that children can independently access to help them calm down when needed. This significantly enhances children's ability to manage their feelings and behaviour.
- The manager and her well-qualified team are extremely passionate about the care that they provide. They consistently evaluate their practice and constantly look for ways to improve. For example, after feedback from a recent survey, the manager is organising a summer picnic for families so that parents can get to know each other. The manager prioritises staff well-being. Staff feel highly valued, appreciated and supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff take their safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously. All staff attend regular training in safeguarding awareness and can confidently identify signs that may indicate that a child is at risk of abuse. They know what action to take if concerned about a child's welfare, including reporting directly to the local authority should they need to. They also show a thorough understanding of the whistle-blowing policy and know when to use it. The manager's robust recruitment processes, checks and ongoing supervision ensure staff are suitable to work with children. A thorough induction programme provides new staff with the information that they need to keep children safe. Staff support children to risk assess situations for themselves. For example, they help children to identify hazards, such as stinging nettles, brambles and uneven ground, that may be present in the woodland before entering.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY494576
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10289060
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	80
Name of registered person	Parker, Ian
Registered person unique reference number	RP517015
Telephone number	01823 251307
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Lemon Tree Nursery School registered in 2015. It is situated in Orchard Portman, on the outskirts of Taunton, Somerset. The nursery opens from Monday to Thursday from 8am to 5pm, and on Friday from 8am to 12.45pm, during term time only. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 14 staff, three of whom hold qualified teacher status, one holds early years professional status and another holds early years teacher status. Of the remaining staff, five hold an early years qualification at level 4 and three have a qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Rogers

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 inspector and the manager carried out a learning walk to discuss how the nursery is organised, their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed staff interactions with children and the impact these have on children's learning.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The manager and the inspector implemented a joint observation and discussed the quality of teaching.
- Parents shared their views with the inspector, and these were considered to assess the effectiveness of partnerships with parents.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in 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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