

Inspection of Chestnut @ Cottenham

Cottenham Nursery, Lambs Lane, Cottenham, Cambridge CB24 8TA

Inspection date: 20 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish in this extremely welcoming nursery. The dedicated and committed management team have created a highly stimulating environment. They have thoughtfully planned the playrooms to encourage cooperative play and enhance children's language and social skills. Staff display resources very attractively, so children can easily access them and make choices about their play. This, along with staff's high-quality interaction, successfully supports children to become highly confident and independent learners. Children happily skip into the nursery, excited to start their day. The friendly and caring staff greet the children and their families warmly. Throughout the nursery there is a calm atmosphere as children become engrossed in their play, exploring the wealth of enticing activities planned for them. Staff make brilliant use of activity trays and babies eagerly explore a superb range of resources.

Children benefit from an extremely exciting and ambitious curriculum, based on stories. It offers a wealth of learning activities and experiences that capture children's interests and builds on their knowledge and skills. Older children learn about healthy foods as they enjoy the book about 'Oliver's Vegetables'. They eagerly explore real vegetables in the role-play areas. Toddlers thoroughly enjoy listening to the story about 'The Boy Who Switched Off the Sun'. They become fascinated with rockets and 'going into space'. Staff extend children's vocabulary, as they explain words, such as 'solar-powered', 'dazzling' and 'spiralling'. They expertly prepare older children for school. For example, they take children to meet their teachers and visit their classrooms before they start.

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

- Staff give children's emotional well-being their highest priority. They have created a culture in which children can freely discuss their feelings. Staff provide children with key vocabulary and relevant resources that will help them to identify and label their emotions. They use stories, role-play situations and discussions to support children to reflect on their experiences.
- The manager successfully monitors and reviews the quality of the nursery provision and the progress children make. Any gaps in their learning are swiftly addressed. Staff provide highly effective support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They attend specific training, and work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that children receive tailored, individual programmes of support. The manager makes excellent use of additional funding to enhance individual children's nursery experiences.
- There is a strong ethos in the nursery that encourages children to care for each other and their environment. Staff are excellent role models and have extremely high expectations of all children. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff provide

clear and consistent boundaries to help children understand what is expected of them. For example, they warn children that they have 'five minutes left to play before tidy-up time'.

- Children develop their excellent mathematical skills through hands-on activities. They weigh fruit and vegetables, discovering if they are 'heavy' or 'light'. Staff continually introduce simple mathematical concepts in children's play. For example, children make play-dough pizzas, cutting them into halves and quarters and counting the pieces.
- Children learn about the wider world through a superb range of play resources and visitors to the nursery. Exotic creatures, such as snakes, tarantulas and geckos, are brought into the nursery to meet the children. Children enjoy learning interesting facts about them.
- Children quickly become independent. Babies and toddlers find their own drinks and feed themselves very well. Older children confidently use their knives and forks and put them together on their plates to show they have finished eating. They scrape their plates and wash them up. Staff support older children to use knives safely as they make fruit kebabs. Children show high levels of perseverance as they cut up their fruit and thread the slices onto skewers.
- Parents are extremely complimentary about the nursery and the exceptional progress their children are making. Staff encourage them to be actively involved in their children's learning. Parents are keen to attend events, such as open days, stay and play sessions and special occasions, including 'Father's day breakfasts'. Parents appreciate the excellent support they receive when seeking interventions for children with SEND. The strong partnerships with parents mean that children's learning is supported in the nursery and at home.
- The management team has high expectations of the staff and provides them with excellent support and training opportunities. The manager has exceptional leadership skills and is extremely proud of the enthusiastic and hard-working staff team. Her regular supervision and monitoring of staff practice has resulted in consistently outstanding practice across the nursery. All staff say that they thoroughly enjoy working at the nursery. They comment that feel highly valued and extremely well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is an important part of everyday life in the nursery. The management team and staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the signs that may suggest a child is at risk of harm. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and know to refer any concerns to the designated safeguarding leads in the nursery. The provider and manager use robust recruitment procedures to ensure the suitability of all staff. They complete thorough risk assessments that cover all areas used by the children, to identify potential hazards. Fire drills are practised monthly, on different days and at various times, to ensure that all children and staff experience the evacuation procedures.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2645545
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10295778
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	51
Number of children on roll	57
Name of registered person	Chestnut Nursery Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP520854
Telephone number	07515170491
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Chestnut @ Cottenham registered in 2021. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including two staff who hold a level 6 qualification. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, all year round. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jacqui Oliver

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery has 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 provision.
- The manager showed the inspector around the areas that children access. They discussed how staff organise the nursery and plan the curriculum and experiences for children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents. This included evidence about staff suitability and training.

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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