

# Inspection of The Co-operative Childcare Sussex

Childcare Centre, University of Sussex, Southern Ring Road, Falmer, East Sussex  
BN1 9BT

---

Inspection date: 25 July 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

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

### **The provision is outstanding**

Children thrive in this exceptional nursery. They arrive each day with anticipation, enthusiasm and excitement for their day. One parent expressed the view of others by saying: 'My child bounds in with a smile, and leaves each day thankful and happy.' Staff build extremely strong, trusting relationships with the children and create a particularly calm, homely and safe environment. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff role model kindness, courtesy and respect in all their interactions with children. From a very young age, toddlers quickly learn to share, take turns and form friendships with others.

The nursery curriculum is ambitious and equips children with the skills they need for future learning. Staff plan activities precisely, taking account of every child's interests and what they need to learn next. Children become active, inquisitive learners with a keen interest in extending their wealth of knowledge and skills. They develop an extremely positive attitude towards learning. Babies and toddlers become inspired to explore the beautiful learning areas staff create. This encourages them to show increasing interest, focus and engagement in the spaces around them. Staff build on these skills well and gently nurture children to become confident, resilient learners. For example, older children are captivated and enthralled during an exciting 'sound hunt' in the garden, and are motivated to keep trying when tasks are initially difficult.

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

- The nursery's management team is relentless in its approach towards ensuring children's care routines and children's learning are consistently of the highest quality. Leaders work tirelessly to support the team. They ensure the nursery's curriculum is fully understood and embedded across all age groups. Room leaders have excellent management skills. They direct their teams well to ensure teaching is continually outstanding. Parents note the dedication shown by leaders in ensuring quality across the nursery and the support they offer families. Many parents described how leaders go 'above and beyond' to support staff and monitor the quality of provision.
- The quality of teaching is exceptional. Children benefit from a well-sequenced curriculum and meticulously planned activities which allow them to build on their knowledge and practise their skills. As babies move through to the toddler rooms, staff ensure they have the relevant skills they need to feed themselves independently and manage the more challenging climbing equipment in the older children's outside area.
- Staff prepare children extremely well for starting school. Pre-school staff empower children to take care of their own needs. Children express their ideas independently and are confident to question others. They become increasingly

knowledgeable about their role in being socially responsible. For example, they learn about the importance of using plastic responsibly to create 'eco bricks'. They then use these purposefully to make a sustainable table and chairs. Children take considerable care of their environment and learn about the importance of protecting species such as bees and butterflies.

- Children make exceptional progress in their learning, including those who need extra support. Leaders use funding wisely to buy additional resources and provide staff training. Following the pandemic, staff recognised the need to close gaps in children's language development. Managers have taken concerted action to train staff in using alternative ways to help babies and toddlers communicate, such as by using signs. This has significantly contributed towards the younger children's ability to convey their needs and feelings.
- Children's views are consistently valued and acknowledged by all staff. Children play a fundamental part in some of the important decision-making processes. For example, when the chef plans a change in menu options, a group of children sample the proposed new foods first and offer their feedback. Staff also value children's choices around the organisation and provision of activities. Children continually learn the simple principles of democracy. They confidently use lolly sticks to vote for their preferred options. This helps children to feel listened to and promotes their sense of self within the nursery.
- The nursery's curriculum is enriched through many exciting, well-planned activities and community events. Parents are fully involved in their children's learning. They attend many social events and visit the nursery to share professional skills. The nursery has successfully achieved an award which reflects its strong commitment towards promoting children's well-being. Additional activities, such as learning to ride a bicycle and yoga, help to promote children's healthy development.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety is given the highest priority. The nursery's stringent safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented robustly. Staff have an excellent understanding of the signs and symptoms that might indicate a child is at risk of harm. They take swift action if they are concerned about the suitability of a colleague or if a child makes a disclosure to them. Meticulous attention is paid throughout the nursery to children's safety. The premises are fully secure. Rigorous risk assessments are completed to identify and minimise any hazards. Children learn how to play safely as they take managed risks when using the climbing equipment outside. Staff teach them how to use equipment safely to prevent the risk of injury. This helps children learn how to take relevant precautions to keep themselves, and others, safe.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY473592
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289594
<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>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	101
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	110
<b>Name of registered person</b>	The Midcounties Co-Operative Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP900862
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 678356
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 2017

## Information about this early years setting

The Co-operative Childcare Sussex registered in 2014. It is run by The Midcounties Co-Operative Limited and operates from the Childcare Centre on the campus of the University of Sussex, in East Sussex. The nursery opens each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm, all year round. Funding is accepted for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. A team of 35 staff work with the children. Of these, 28 are qualified to at least level 2 and above. Two staff hold qualified teacher status and two hold early years teacher status.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Jo Caswell

## 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 completed a joint observation with the nursery manager and evaluated the quality of teaching.
- The nursery manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and explained the nursery's curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Children told the inspector what they enjoyed doing at nursery.
- A small number of parents spoke to the inspector and shared their views of the nursery. The inspector also took into account the written feedback provided by parents.
- The inspector talked to staff about how they plan for children's learning and what they do to keep children safe.
- The nursery manager showed the inspector some written documentation. This included safeguarding records, the complaints log and the checks completed to make sure staff are suitable to work with children.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023