

Inspection of Pathways Day Nursery Balsall Common

Balsall Common Primary School, Balsall Street East, Balsall Common, Coventry CV7 7FS

Inspection date: 12 September 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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are welcomed warmly into this inviting and nurturing provision. From the moment they walk through the door, they are sensitively supported to do things for themselves. Staff encourage children to self-register and cast their vote for the story that they will listen to later on in the day. They explain the options of the stories to children, which also extends their knowledge of popular books. Staff have high expectations, and children rise to the occasion by offering their thoughts and making choices about how they spend their time.

The skilled and enthusiastic staff team deploy themselves highly effectively to ensure that all children receive high-quality interactions. Staff tune in carefully to the thoughts and actions of the children and expertly add value to their play as they offer new language or create further challenge. For example, children develop their mathematical skills as staff line up vehicles and support them to sort items according to size and colour. Children enthusiastically join in with the game, which then encourages their peers to become involved in this fun activity.

Leaders and staff take an expert lead from children's interests and learning styles. This means that each child accesses a curriculum that meets their individual needs. As a result of thoughtful observation and skilful teaching, children make strong progress and reach their full potential.

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

- Leaders are exceptional. They lead with integrity and ensure that staff are well supported and feel valued. Leaders recognise the strengths of the team and ensure that staff are motivated in their role. They plan learning and development opportunities that impact positively on the service they offer to children and their families.
- Together, leaders and staff develop a well-sequenced curriculum that builds on what children already know and can do. A consistent and dynamic staff team creates feelings of safety and security for children. A highly effective key-person system supports children to develop a sense of connection and belonging within the group. This ensures that all children make the best possible progress.
- Staff offer just the right amount of support to children as they encourage development of their independence and self-care skills. They support children to wash their own hands competently, and even the youngest children use knives and forks to eat their lunch. Staff use highly effective teaching skills to support children to develop, practise and refine new skills.
- Children behave impeccably. Staff expertly and consistently support children to understand the impact of their actions on others. The language of emotions is skilfully woven across adult-led experiences, such as circle time. This equips

children with the necessary skill to play cooperatively with their peers. Children respond positively to recognition and praise from staff as they take turns with resources and demonstrate kindness.

- Staff are joyful play partners to children. They respond with enthusiasm to children's imaginary play and delight in the sense of humour that children develop. For example, they spend time laughing together as children use broccoli in their play as a baby turtle. Children giggle together as they share funny stories with the staff and their peers.
- Children delight in participating in physical play. Staff enthusiastically lead an active circle time where children learn about the positive impact of exercise on their bodies. Children develop their large-muscle skills as they copy large movements while joining in with action rhymes.
- Staff skilfully play alongside children to model squashing, squeezing and rolling play dough in order to develop the small muscles in their hands. Children also make connections across the curriculum. For example, while a member of staff is sharing a story with children in the cosy corner, others use the dough to model a home for a character in the book.
- Parents are delighted with the provision on offer. They are hugely appreciative of the transition into nursery and then on to school. Parents comment positively on how well staff know their children and the positive, caring and nurturing relationships that are developed. They are thrilled with the strong progress that children make across all seven areas of learning through the huge range of opportunities on offer.
- The skilled and intuitive special education needs coordinator (SENCo) supports staff with her expertise. This ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive swift and impactful intervention. The SENCo and staff work in close partnership with external agencies to ensure that children with SEND make the best possible progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are extremely knowledgeable about their role in keeping children safe. They understand the importance of effective recording and reporting of concerns. They are clear about the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the action they need to take when they identify concerns about a child. Staff involve children in assessing risks in their outdoor learning environment and support them to develop an awareness of their own safety. Staff attend regular training sessions and safeguarding is a priority across the organisation. Discussion in staff meetings around keeping children safe is open and transparent. This further supports staff to reflect on their essential role in protecting children from harm.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY364440
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10289110
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	2 to 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	Pathways Nurseries and Childcare Centres Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP905164
Telephone number	01676 532 298
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Pathways Day Nursery Balsall Common registered in 2001. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate qualifications at level 6, four hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 and one is unqualified. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year, from 7.30am to 6pm. A before- and after-school club also operates from 7.30am to 9am and 3.20pm to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Gadsby

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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at nursery.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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