

Inspection of Meaford Day Nursery

Meaford Nursery School, Meaford, STONE, Staffordshire ST15 0PX

Inspection date: 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

There is a friendly and sociable atmosphere at this nursery. Children are warmly welcomed by caring staff. Staff form nurturing bonds with children. They have a good understanding of children's needs. This helps them to support children securely. Babies very quickly settle into new routines. They make strong attachments to their key persons, who build warm relationships with them from the start. Staff implement a broad and interesting curriculum that engages children in learning. Toddlers develop their hand muscles as staff encourage them to freely explore paint. Older children show an enjoyment of creative arts and express themselves through their drawing and artwork.

Children gain a good awareness of expected behaviours, such as using good manners and being kind. Staff teach children skills, such as turn-taking and sharing, as they play with their friends. Staff use books to help children recognise and manage their emotions and feelings. They have a confident knowledge of strategies to use when children need extra support in their learning and development. The outdoor play area provides all children with ample opportunities to take regular exercise. For instance, children dig in sand and enjoy riding bikes and playing games with their friends. Staff have created an environment where children are confident to explore and express themselves freely.

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

- The manager has designed a curriculum that prepares children for the next stage in their learning. Staff implement this well. They accurately assess children's development and know what they want children to learn. They introduce a range of experiences to support children to build on their prior learning. Staff embed children's diverse festivals and celebrations into daily activities. The curriculum is sequenced well to help children build on their learning over time.
- Overall, staff work effectively to develop children's communication skills. For example, staff model language; they regularly sing songs during routine activities and read stories to children. However, sometimes, staff do not develop conversations to provide children with even more information. As a result, children are not able to contribute with a response to further extend their vocabulary and speaking skills.
- Children's independence is encouraged from an early age. For example, staff encourage children to manage things for themselves, such as washing their hands, pouring drinks and serving their own food. This helps to build on the skills children need in preparation for school. Staff identify specific needs early on and provide targeted support. They seek help from outside professionals readily, where necessary, and this contributes well to supporting children's

further development.

- Staff provide young children with frequent sensory opportunities. Babies babble and make sounds as they investigate their environment. Older children develop their curiosity as they explore different smells and textures. Staff promote a love of reading throughout the nursery. Children of all ages enjoy listening to staff read their favourite stories aloud. Children develop their writing skills by making marks on boards and paper with increasing control.
- Children are developing an understanding of healthy lifestyles. Staff ensure that children's dietary needs are met and implement good hygiene procedures. Staff discuss the importance of eating healthy food as children engage in pretend play and identify fruit and vegetables. However, some staff do not use skilful questioning well enough to help children clarify their thinking and fully explore their own ideas.
- There are good partnerships established with parents. Parents say their children are happy and that they can see the progress they are making. Staff share information with them about their children's learning and development. All children have a key person. Staff understand the importance of this role in helping children to build attachments and to feel safe and secure.
- The manager has an accurate overview of the nursery. She has identified positive actions to help to drive further improvements. The manager provides staff with regular supervision and supports them to develop their professional practice. Staff say that their ongoing professional development and well-being are considered during supervision sessions, and they display a sense of pride in working at the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities securely. They have a good knowledge of how to recognise signs and indicators of concern and what to do about these. The designated safeguarding lead demonstrates a secure knowledge of their responsibilities, including making prompt referrals. Staff understand how to keep children safe in their care, including completing risk assessments and safety checks. Staff recruitment is robust. Staff's suitability to work with children is regularly reviewed after their initial employment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to develop their teaching to the highest level so that interactions consistently enrich children's communication and language development
- support staff to develop their questioning techniques, to further extend children's critical thinking skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY498885
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10311867
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	81
Name of registered person	Meaford Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901039
Telephone number	01785812578
Date of previous inspection	12 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Meaford Day Nursery registered in 2016. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2, 3, 4 or 6. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 7am to 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jacqueline Coomer

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across all areas of the nursery to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation of a teaching activity was carried out by the inspector and the nursery manager.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents at appropriate times 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 setting.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the nursery manager.

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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