

Inspection of Ladybirds Pre-School

Village Hall, Salmons Lane, Thorrington, COLCHESTER CO7 8HQ

Inspection date:

7 December 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

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are welcomed into this most inviting, child-friendly and inspiring environment. The staff team deliver an exciting and challenging curriculum and all children attending make rapid progress. This welcoming pre-school has been created by the highly professional, dedicated manager. She is passionate in her vision and commitment to provide children with the highest quality care and education. Her team of knowledgeable attentive and nurturing staff are equally motivated to ensure children flourish and make exceptional progress in their development. Therefore, children are extremely comfortable, confident and ready to learn. Children arrive at pre-school and leave their parents with ease. They demonstrate curious minds, ask lots of questions and quickly become absorbed in the activities provided.

Staff create an exciting outdoor environment. They encourage children to prepare themselves for outdoor play and children competently put their coats and boots on with enthusiasm. Children work together as they negotiate how to make obstacle courses and large structures using planks and crates. They take photos of their creations and proudly show their friends and key person. An effective key-person system is in place and children have formed trusting and secure relationships. Staff have extremely high expectations of children's behaviour, which is exemplary. Children engage visitors to the pre-school in conversation and invite them to participate in making tea. They discuss the smells of the different tea and use words, such as 'infusions' and 'straining', when describing what they are doing, as they skilfully pour the tea.

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

- The curriculum is planned effectively around children's spontaneous interest and experiences. Staff build on and extend children's learning as they invest ample time in getting to know the children. Teaching is outstanding. Children demonstrate that they are keen and eager learners and show sustained concentration at activities. Staff are extremely skilful in how they support children and pose questions that encourage children to think critically and explore further to build on their existing knowledge.
- Staff provide a language-rich environment and children readily participate in spontaneous singing and rhyming sessions. They demonstrate a wide vocabulary and imagination as they use props, such as 'story stones', and give running commentaries as they make up their own stories. Children know stories have a start, a middle and an end. They enthusiastically and confidently engage in interactive group stories that are familiar and excitedly predict what will happen next, recalling information that they have previously learned.
- Superb, professional relationships have been established with the parents who

are positively encouraged to share information about their children's development. They welcome the use of exciting and meaningful home learning resources, and story sacks available to continue learning at home. Through sharply focused activities children learn the skills they need to prepare them for school and continued successful learning.

- Children have a strong sense of self. They take responsibility and have the skills they need to be independent and make choices. Practices are securely embedded in the daily routine. For example, children self-register on entry and vote by placing a brick next to a book they would like read at story time. They decide when to have snack so that play is uninterrupted. Children make friendships and are extremely kind to one another. They are exceptionally adept at helping one another prepare for creative activities and offer one another reassurance.
- The manager positively encourages and facilitates staff's continuous professional development. She is forward thinking and embraces new challenges, building on her teams existing skills to enhance the service provided. The sessions run seamlessly and the whole team make sessions feel effortless. Staff understand their roles and speak with genuine enthusiasm about their time at work. Staff retention is very good as their welfare is considered and they feel valued and fully supported.
- Parents commented extremely positively of all aspects of the pre-school. They are very complimentary about the staff, saying they are exceptionally knowledgeable of their children, provide excellent communication and treat each child with kindness, warmth and respect. Written comments detail how grateful parents are for their children's 'excellent progress' since attending and that the superb team go 'above and beyond' their expectations.
- Positive links with outside agencies involved in the care of the children are established to ensure a consistent collaborative approach. The pre-school special educational needs coordinator is very knowledgeable, regarding her role. Therefore, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported exceptionally well and make excellent progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety and welfare is a priority. Robust risk assessments are completed to ensure children play in a safe environment and children's understanding of how to stay safe is fully embedded in daily practice. The manager and her team have completed comprehensive safeguarding training, which includes a wide range of child protection issues. They talk competently about how to report any concerns and the process to follow. The staff team have a thorough understanding of the whistle-blowing procedures and demonstrate a secure knowledge in identifying any possible signs or behaviours that may suggest children are at risk of harm. A thorough recruitment, induction and mentoring programme means children are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY436427
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10316828
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	Ladybirds Pre-School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP516107
Telephone number	07592 344 367
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

Ladybirds Pre-School registered in 2011. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. All of whom, hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school is opens Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 8.30am to 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider has 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 pre-school.
- The inspector and manager completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what the team wants the children to learn.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at the inspection.
- Parents spoke with the inspector and gave written feedback.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and manager. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff members.

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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