

Inspection of The Old Fire Station Nursery

The Old Firestation, The Street, Reading RG7 5ES

Inspection date: 11 December 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

Leaders place a strong focus on building children's personal, social and emotional well-being. Staff warmly greet children into the nursery. Children are eager to see their friends and tell staff about their home and family life. Children are listened to and taught how to value, love and respect themselves and others. Children develop strong bonds and trusting relationships with staff. This helps them to settle well, feel safe and secure, and develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Staff provide children with a wide range of learning experiences that promote their overall development. Staff know children well and plan specific activities that target children's learning. All children make good progress from their starting points. Babies and very young children are supported to be independent in their feeding and show good self-help skills in relation to their age. Older children enjoy learning about numbers, quantities and addition through creative activities. For example, children delight in selecting the correct number of items to complete their snowman and understand that they need two more pompoms to add to the six they have to make eight. Leaders understand the importance of supporting children's love for stories, books and fairy tales.

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

- The management team is strong. Leaders support staff to deliver a clear curriculum that prepares children well for their future. The staff team works together well to ensure that children benefit from high-quality care and learning. Children are treated with respect and kept safe. There are good arrangements in place to support their eventual transition to school.
- Managers monitor children's progress closely. They accurately identify where children may need extra support and work closely with parents and other professionals to implement strategies as needed. Managers use additional funding very thoughtfully, always with children's best interests in mind, to ensure their inclusion in the setting and extra-curricular activities.
- In general, children behave well. Staff act as good role models and encourage children's use of good manners. However, children's behaviour is not consistently managed across the nursery. For example, at times, such as mealtimes and during adult-led activities, noise levels become loud and overbearing, and staff do not support children to understand what is expected of them. This does not consistently provide children with an environment that supports their listening and attention skills, and some children become distracted and lose interest.
- Staff value the unique cultural backgrounds and experiences of each child. They celebrate days that are special and provide opportunities for all children to learn about a wide range of cultures other than their own. For example, children learn about Diwali as they make lanterns and visit local theatres to watch early years

performances. Children learn about these traditions as staff share stories and promote discussions about recognising and celebrating the similarities and differences between themselves and others.

- Parents speak very positively about the nursery. They say staff are kind and caring, and they feel completely confident that their children are happy and kept safe. Staff share a range of information with parents, including daily activities and children's overall progress. Staff suggest ideas for learning and development at home, and parents comment on how positively this has been used to continue learning, particularly in relation to children's personal, social and emotional development.
- The management team is extremely reflective and has worked hard to meet actions set at the last visit. In addition, managers are working proactively with others, such as the local authority and parents, to improve further the nursery experience for children. For example, managers have creatively used additional resources to purchase children's technology for them to record their own learning, and they have reviewed safeguarding and the use of technology policies to ensure children's welfare and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers follow robust recruitment procedures to make sure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff receive a thorough induction into the nursery's policies and procedures. Staff have developed their knowledge of safeguarding and risk assessments. For example, they have introduced new measures to ensure that areas used by children are regularly checked for hazards and all outings are carefully planned and safely managed. Staff can identify a wide range of possible signs of abuse or neglect. They understand what to do if they have a concern about a child or the behaviour of a colleague.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to communicate clear expectations for children's behaviour to help them understand what is expected of them and to create a calm environment for learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY544223
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10320269
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	26
Number of children on roll	56
Name of registered person	Pathfinder Child Care Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901317
Telephone number	01189306981
Date of previous inspection	5 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

The Old Fire Station Nursery registered in 2017 and is one of two settings run by Pathfinders Childcare Limited. It is located in The Old Fire Station, Englefield, on the outskirts of Reading, Berkshire. The nursery operates on weekdays, throughout the year, except for a week at Christmas. It is open from 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two-, three- and four-years old. It employs 11 staff. Of these, 10 hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Leanne Merritt

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 leaders explained the curriculum intentions to the inspector during a learning walk.
- The inspector observed staff and children throughout the day.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector sampled relevant documents and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery during the inspection, and these were taken into account.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.

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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