

Inspection of Little Owls Day Nursery

20 School Lane, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1LR

Inspection date: 16 January 2024

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

The nursery provides an environment that helps children to flourish and thrive and puts their needs at the heart of everything that they do. Children have formed close attachments with staff, who greet them with a warm and friendly welcome. Staff support children to quickly become absorbed in activities that ignite their curiosity and thirst for learning. For instance, they enthusiastically gather around blocks of ice and consider ways in which they can get the flowers out that are stuck in them. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour and are good role models. They teach children to be respectful, empathetic and considerate to one another. For example, when children struggle to put their coats on, their peers offer them a helping hand and staff quickly praise their kind behaviour.

The quality of teaching is exemplary across the whole of the staff team. Children of all ages consistently demonstrate extremely high levels of interest and engagement. Staff plan activities effectively, based around the children's interests and focus on teaching them new skills, celebrating children's achievements throughout. They support children to learn how to regulate their emotions by exploring in the well-designed sensory room. Staff encourage them to join in with daily yoga sessions and use the relaxing meditation area in the garden. This supports children's sense of self-confidence and emotional well-being.

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

- Leaders devise a curriculum that is ambitious and gives children the breadth of knowledge, skills and experiences they need to succeed in life. Staff expertly adapt learning experiences to support children's individual needs and next steps. They know their key children incredibly well and ensure that all activities have a purpose and goal. All children make excellent progress in their learning and development and are prepared for when they move on to school.
- Children are excellent communicators who speak clearly and engage in meaningful conversations with staff. They show exceptional recall and fluency as they repeat phrases from familiar stories and discuss what will happen next. Staff pose questions and give children time to process their thoughts. They closely monitor children's language development and share detailed progress with parents. This ensures children, including those who speak English as an additional language, become confident speakers and achieve highly.
- Staff develop excellent relationships with parents. They keep them well informed about their children's development and parents praise the staff's in-depth, face-to-face and online communication with them. Parents are very complimentary of the professionalism and support they receive and feel involved in their children's education. They regularly attend stay-and-play sessions and 'transition brunches' to see what their children are learning.

- Children develop a love of nature. They help staff to plant and water trees and excitedly make bird feeders for the garden. Children participate in forest school activities with their friends. They enthusiastically make a fire around the firepit as they listen to stories and learn about fire safety and keeping themselves safe.
- The highly skilled and professional special educational needs and/or disability coordinator ensures children are provided with outstanding support to help them make effective progress throughout their time at the nursery. For instance, they have developed an engaging and stimulating sensory room to meet the learning needs of the children in their nursery. They maintain professional relationships with parents and external agencies to ensure that referrals are completed as quickly as possible.
- Healthy lifestyles are rigorously promoted. Children join in with 'mini master chef classes' where they taste and review new meals and decide whether they should be added to their menu. They have ample opportunities to play in their well-resourced garden and go on a variety of outings to learn about the world around them. Staff implement daily teeth cleaning after meals to teach children about the importance of good oral health.
- The management team are inspirational and have a clear vision for continually improving the quality of practice that they offer to staff, children and families. They are passionate about supporting staff's well-being and developing the highly experienced team even further. Staff benefit from a wide variety of professional development opportunities to keep their training and knowledge up to date. They speak with enthusiasm about their roles and how they love working at the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY365260
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10308235
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	100
Number of children on roll	186
Name of registered person	Little Owls Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535250
Telephone number	01362 699700
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

Little Owls Day Nursery registered in 2003. The nursery employs 28 members of childcare staff. Of these, 20 hold appropriate early years qualifications from levels 2 to 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Laura Redmond

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 management team completed a learning walk of the nursery and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector through written and verbal feedback.
- The management team showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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