

Inspection of Little Oaks Day Nursery

East Kent Hospitals N H S Trust, Kent & Canterbury Hospital, Ethelbert Road,
CANTERBURY, Kent CT1 3NG

Inspection date: 18 January 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are greeted by their keyworker and quickly settle into their morning activities with smiles on their faces. Children have a lovely, close bond with staff and with each other. They behave very well and know how to share and take turns in conversation, which has been modelled by staff. Staff have carefully planned the layout of the environment to allow children to develop their independence and develop their physical skills. For example, in the baby room, the youngest children can pull themselves up to stand and climb steps on the slide. In the rooms for older children, children develop their mark making and writing through engaging activities such as using chunky paintbrushes in flour to make patterns and using play dough to mould shapes.

Outdoors, children play in the natural environment, ride bikes, and read in their reading shed. Staff teach children about the seasons in the year and the changes that happen. For example, children learn about ice and why this forms and explore what happens to it throughout the day. Staff plan fun and engaging trips for children to learn about the world around them. Children visit the parks, cathedral, and theatre within their local area. The older children also visit a local forest school and beach school to enhance their experience at nursery.

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

- Staff understand the importance of songs and rhymes to develop children's communications skills and build vocabulary. Children listen to nursery rhymes and join in with singing and actions throughout the day, which they enjoy. The youngest children begin by listening and learning familiar rhymes, and the older children learn new songs in small groups on the carpet.
- Managers create a wonderful atmosphere in which for staff to work and children to learn. Staff work well together as a team, and managers support staff to develop their skills. Training is updated regularly, ensuring all staff are kept up to date with current issues.
- Parents speak highly of the nursery and of staff. They receive daily communication about their child's well-being and activities and regular updates on their child's progress and development. Parents are invited in for stay-and-play sessions to create a link between home and the nursery. Managers work well with parents to ensure all children are included and all needs are met. For example, parents are invited to discuss their child's needs, such as dietary requirements, so the lunch menu can be adapted according to their allergies or intolerances.
- Staff plan relevant and engaging activities for children. However, on occasion, they do not give as much thought and attention to ensuring children achieve the skill intended. At times, children do not receive all the support they require to

practise and embed new skills.

- Stories are encouraged throughout the setting with the aim to create a love of reading. Parents can access a lending library so children can share books with their families at home. Children are also encouraged to share their favourite books with staff and a 'book of the month' display is created. In the baby and toddler rooms, children read with staff in smaller groups where children can join in with parts they are familiar with. When children are ready, they sit in larger groups to listen, and staff teach children to discuss the story.
- Staff provide an ambitious and broad curriculum for all children. Children's interests are captured well, and themes and topics are used as a vehicle for learning. For instance, all rooms had activities for children to access linked to the theme of 'cold', which is linked to several areas of learning. Children thoroughly enjoyed taking part in these activities and using all their senses.
- All children are seen as an individual, and staff seek to meet their needs. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works with parents and other professionals to support children. Managers support the SENCo by giving them time during the week to complete their work and to develop their knowledge through training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen planning of group activities to help all children achieve the intended learning outcome.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY449585
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10312233
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	57
Number of children on roll	91
Name of registered person	Little Oaks Canterbury Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP531751
Telephone number	01303850203
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Little Oaks Day Nursery registered in 2012. It operates in a building in the NHS hospital grounds of the Kent and Canterbury Hospital in Canterbury, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday, from 7am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The provision also operates a holiday scheme for children of primary school age during every school holiday. The nursery employs 21 staff. Eighteen members of staff hold a relevant early years qualification, ranging from level 2 to 5, and one member has early years professional status. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jade Mellin

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 managers joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff 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 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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