

Inspection of Small Wonders Day Nursery

Tavistock Road, Springfield, CHELMSFORD CM1 6JN

Inspection date: 7 February 2024

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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and are warmly welcomed into the nursery. Staff focus on building strong relationships with children, which helps them to settle quickly. Children are happy and interact well together, demonstrating they feel safe and secure in their surroundings. Children are motivated to explore the activities on offer. Babies explore sensory activities. They eagerly scoop up oats and feel the texture with their hands. Older children work together in the garden as they use their imaginations. They discuss how fast their pirate's ship needs to sail to avoid being captured.

Leaders place a high priority on supporting children's communication and language. Children benefit from continuous conversations with staff, who speak clearly. Staff use adult-focused activities to introduce more complex words to build on children's vocabulary. For example, during a cooking activity, staff encourage children to observe what happens to chocolate as it is warmed. They introduce key words such as 'solid' and 'liquid'.

Children behave well. Staff are good role models and are calm and consistent in their approach. Leaders have created spaces for children to go, away from busy areas to relax. Children know the routines of the nursery and expectations for behaviour as staff have a clear and consistent approach. Staff provide children with plenty of praise and encouragement, helping to boost their self-esteem and confidence.

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

- There have been some significant changes since the last inspection. The provider has addressed the actions raised, including those relating to safeguarding. For example, fire-evacuation procedures have been reviewed and means of escape, for younger children and staff, have been improved. This helps to maintain children's safety.
- The provider has given leaders training to support them in their roles. This has helped them improve their management skills and raise the quality of the provision. Furthermore, staff are clear about their responsibilities to safeguard children. They know the processes to follow to report any concerns about children and staff, including how to escalate these to external agencies if needed.
- Leaders know what it is that they want children to learn. They design a curriculum to build on the skills children need to learn next. However, at times, less-experienced staff do not always implement the curriculum effectively. For example, some staff are not consistent in supporting babies' physical development to guide their emerging mobility. This does not help children to

make the best possible progress.

- Staff provide an environment where children make independent choices in their play. They provide children with some opportunities to help develop their self-care skills and independence. For example, children wash their hands and older children select their cutlery at mealtimes. However, there are some tasks that staff do for the children which they can do for themselves. For instance, they put on children's coats for them and wipe their noses. This has an impact on children's independence and the development of their self-care skills.
- Children thoroughly enjoy spending time in the nursery's garden. Young children spend time filling buckets with sand. Staff teach older children the importance of spatial awareness as they join in with warm-up exercises before riding on the tricycles around the garden. Other children demonstrate persistence and resilience as they play with bats and balls with the staff.
- Staff focus on supporting new children's well-being and confidence as a priority. They use signs, gestures and simple words to make sure that all children, including children who speak English as an additional language, understand the meaning of words. As a result, new children settle quickly and are comfortable in their environment.
- Partnerships with parents are positive. Parents value the feedback that they receive from staff. They feel that their children are making good progress in the nursery and are cared for by staff, who know them well.
- Staff say that they feel supported and valued by the management team. They receive regular supervision meetings where they reflect on their practice and identify professional development opportunities. For example, staff complete additional training to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps to improve their personal effectiveness and improve outcomes for all children.

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:

- support less-experienced staff to understand how to implement the curriculum effectively so that children make the best possible progress in their learning and development
- help staff to provide consistent opportunities for children to develop their independence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY453646
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10310476
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 11
Total number of places	46
Number of children on roll	71
Name of registered person	Small Wonders Day Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP910814
Telephone number	01245493437
Date of previous inspection	23 August 2023

Information about this early years setting

Small Wonders Day Nursery registered in 2012. It is one of two nurseries which are privately owned and managed by Small Wonders Day Nurseries Ltd. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above, including one member of staff with qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, except for one week at Christmas. Sessions run from 7.30am to 6.30pm. In addition, there is a before- and after-school club and holiday club. The nursery is in receipt of funding for early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Shelly McDougall

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy managers and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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