

Inspection of The Oak Tree Neighbourhood Nursery

Old Medical Centre, Marlborough Road, Ilfracombe, Devon EX34 8JL

Inspection date:

28 February 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

Babies and children immediately immerse themselves in the stimulating and engaging activities on offer. Older children develop their small movements when carefully pouring sawdust from one pot to another, deeply focused so as not to spill it when using various-sized containers. Younger children enjoy drawing, showing confident pencil grip. They comment on their pictures, saying, 'This is eyes and long hair.' They take pride in what they have achieved, stating, 'This is my mummy.' Babies relish in the sensory experiences of feeling cornflour, showing fascination as highly skilled staff squeeze and let go of the cornflour. They introduce and repeat key words, such as 'squeeze' and 'wet'. All children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access a targeted curriculum that staff plan based on children's individual needs. As a result, all children excel in their development.

Children have an excellent awareness of others and the impact of their behaviours on others. Older children take turns when playing small-group games, and they show exceptional patience and perseverance when younger children join the game. Staff allow time for children to manage conflicts and problem-solve. For example, children decide their roles in their puppet show, asking, 'Can I be that next if you go first?' Passionate staff have high expectations and are excellent role models. Babies and children have formed wonderful relationships with staff, and they feel extremely valued, safe and secure.

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

- Managers and staff use their expertise to plan a highly effective and ambitious curriculum. They meticulously plan the environment, ensuring that it is effective in supporting the learning and development of all children. As a result, children deeply engage with their learning experiences.
- Staff use robust systems for observing children's development. They use children's starting points to plan for what they need to learn next. Staff use their exceptional knowledge of child development to naturally take children to their next stage of learning. For example, staff challenge babies when steadily walking up a purposefully sloped plank, testing their balance and strength.
- Staff provide consistent opportunities for babies and children to enhance their communication and language skills. Babies watch intently and babble as staff use sign language and expressive facial movements when communicating. Younger children listen and interact with stories and songs using props, such as puppets. Children share their love of literacy when using the lending library to enjoy books at home.
- Children develop healthy practices. Older children wipe their own noses, and younger children enjoy independently washing their own hands and faces.

Children have daily access to the outside garden. For example, babies develop their big movements when chalking on the ground, and younger children practise mindfulness when exploring nature.

- Older children revisit and recall previous learning experiences. They refer to photos of recent learning and comment, 'This is a pyramid in Egypt where mummies live.' Younger children show a keen interest in birds they see out of the window and excitedly reach for a bird figure, stating, 'It is a blue and purple bird.' Children recently made bird feeders to encourage more birds to the nursery. Children develop a wonderful knowledge of the world around them.
- There is exceptional support for children with SEND. Staff work with the team, parents and other professionals to ensure the early identification of gaps in children's learning. This enables them to target early support to close gaps and seek additional training, funding and referrals swiftly.
- Managers support staff exceptionally well to ensure that they receive the support to feel empowered in their roles. Staff report high levels of well-being. They undertake specific training that further enhances their skills and knowledge. For example, staff have recently completed training about two-year-old children to ensure that they support children to reach their full potential.
- Parents comment on their strong partnerships with staff, reporting that staff 'genuinely care' about their children's needs and learning. They can see the impact of teaching on their children's learning and how this supports them to make excellent developmental progress.

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	EY279877
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10317421
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	42
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Registered person unique reference number	RP900844
Telephone number	01271 865334
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Oak Tree Neighbourhood Nursery registered in 2004 and is managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA). It is located near the centre of Ilfracombe, in Devon. The nursery is open each weekday, from 8am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. There are 12 members of staff employed to work with the children. The nursery has an on-site cook and cleaner. The manager is qualified to level 3 in childcare. Two members of staff hold an early years qualification at level 6, and eight staff hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3. There are two members of staff who are unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Chelsea Woollard

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents and children during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed children's activities and staff teaching, inside and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke to staff at convenient times and assessed their safeguarding knowledge.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the management team to discuss leadership.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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