

Inspection of St Nicholas Day Nursery

St. Nicholas Day Nursery, Runcorn Road, LINCOLN LN6 3QP

Inspection date: 21 March 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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy their time at this welcoming nursery. Staff provide a range of adult-led activities that children actively engage with. For example, pre-school children are keen to take part in small-group activities to develop their early mathematical skills. Staff encourage children to take turns to roll dice and carefully count the number of spots they see. Other children volunteer to count the spots, checking if this is correct. Staff recognise the children's different abilities and provide additional challenges, enabling all children to build on their skills and knowledge. They pose questions to encourage children to estimate, subtract and add spots. Staff praise children's good work, which in turn motivates children to clap their friends' achievements.

Children have multiple opportunities to develop their muscle strength and coordination skills. For example, staff entice younger babies to stretch their core muscles by placing interesting toys just beyond their reach. Babies keep trying and are full of smiles when they reach their toys. Staff safely supervise older babies as they take their early steps. Toddlers use their leg muscles to push themselves along on ride-on toys as staff help them think about how to navigate obstacles. Pre-school children giggle as they work with friends to make the see-saw move up and down.

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

- The nursery leadership and management team has recently changed. Staff say they have been presented with new opportunities to help widen their experiences within the nursery. Staff report that managers are fully supportive and provide a range of training to help them build on their existing skills and knowledge.
- Staff provide opportunities for children to strengthen their small muscles and practise the skills they need for early writing. For example, staff encourage younger babies to press buttons on musical toys and shake rattles to make sounds. Toddlers sit with staff and play a game of 'pop-up dinosaur'. Toddlers concentrate as they push small plastic swords into slots in a barrel. Pre-school children work with staff to make bird feeders. They focus intently as they pick up small hoops of cereal and thread them onto pipe cleaners.
- Children learn to behave well. Staff are good role models and help children to share, tidy away activities and use good manners. Staff provide gentle reminders as they encourage children to remain seated at the table until they have finished eating. Pre-school children are supported to notice when their friends need resources passed to them to make shapes in their play dough. Children show kindness and readily offer to pass and share the resources they are using.
- Staff generally plan changes to daily routines well. However, some transitions,

such as before mealtimes and after outdoor play, are not as well organised in the baby rooms. On these occasions, younger babies are sat in highchairs waiting for lunch for long periods of time. In addition, older babies who return indoors from outside play sit waiting for staff to start the next activity. Consequently, during these times, children's learning is less effectively promoted.

- Staff encourage children to develop their growing independence skills. For example, babies learn to use cutlery as they eat while staff lend a helping hand when required. Toddlers are supported to wash their hands and put paper towels in the bin. Pre-school children are encouraged to help staff set up for lunchtime. They set out the cups and collect their cutlery. Staff encourage pre-school children to place dirty plates and cups on the trolley. This helps children learn to do things for themselves.
- Staff recognise the importance of promoting children's good health. They provide children with healthy snacks, meals and fresh drinking water. The managers implement a robust procedure to ensure that children's dietary needs and intolerances are carefully considered and met. Children's plates are colour-coded and labelled with children's names to ensure that they are kept safe.
- Overall, staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their key children. They explain how they use assessments and observations to establish children's starting points and identify the next steps in their learning. However, this information is not consistently shared, particularly when children transition between group rooms. As a result, children's next steps are not consistently understood or supported.

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:

- improve transitions between activities, particularly in the baby rooms, to ensure that babies' learning needs are met at all times
- support staff to develop a more consistent approach to sharing information about children's development and learning priorities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY364811
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10334401
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	101
Number of children on roll	199
Name of registered person	Lifeline Family Care Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527464
Telephone number	01522 812 470
Date of previous inspection	5 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Nicholas Day Nursery is based in Lincoln. It registered in 2007. The nursery employs 29 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. 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

Inspectors

Susan Hyatt
Lora Teague

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 senior manager, manager and the inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspectors viewed the nursery provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- Children communicated with the inspectors during the inspection.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors observed the interactions between the staff and the children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors 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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