

Inspection of Mulberry Outdoor Preschool

Mulberry Centre, 12a Calais Street, London SE5 9LP

Inspection date: 25 March 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children receive a warm welcome from the kind and friendly staff as they arrive at the pre-school. They eagerly wave goodbye to their parents. Children go into the building and change into their outdoor suits, ready for the day ahead. They form close bonds with staff, seeking them out for support when needed. Children settle quickly and feel safe and secure.

Once everyone has arrived, staff and children gather around the campfire to provide a positive start to the day. They sing songs and take part in 'show and tell'. Staff and children listen with interest as children wait for their turn to speak. They have high expectations for all children. Therefore, children make good progress in their learning. For example, staff encourage children to ask questions, which leads to interesting conversations. As children hear about eagles, they confidently discuss the foods they eat and identify other animals that eat the same. These conversations help all children to become confident speakers.

Staff have clear expectations about behaviour and consistently support children to work together, share and take care of the environment. Children work together to collect and dispose of litter in the waste bag. Children behave well and demonstrate good levels of engagement in both adult-led and self-chosen activities. Staff offer praise and encouragement, which supports children's self-esteem.

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

- The manager provides strong leadership for the team, which results in good outcomes for children. Staff say they feel well supported and benefit from opportunities to meet daily to evaluate the provision. All staff are highly motivated to continue their own professional development and are exploring opportunities to attain further qualifications.
- Staff provide a good range of interesting resources to promote children's curiosity and motivate them to learn. For instance, a group of children decide to build a walking bridge. They confidently carry crates across the garden, collect wood planks and work collaboratively. Children take it in turns to walk across the structure, demonstrating good balance and coordination skills.
- Staff plan around children's interests and what they need to learn next. As a result, children concentrate for long periods at their chosen activity. Staff identify any gaps in children's learning and development and swiftly put in place additional support if needed. As a result, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points.
- Staff build on children's urge to learn about living things. For example, they closely observe the life cycle of tadpoles together. Staff introduce new words,

such as 'froglet' and 'wiggly', to expand children's vocabulary. They encourage children to paint tadpoles, using their fingers, and describe the tadpoles heads as 'oval'. Staff compare the shape to a long circle to support children's deeper mathematical understanding. Children proudly display their artwork in and around the pre-school.

- Staff provide lots of opportunities for children to explore and find things out. They interact well with children. However, at times, staff do not challenge children to consistently focus on building on what they already know and can do.
- Staff provide children with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. They are eager to teach children about sustainability. For example, during snack time, they encourage children to place their fruit peel into a bowl, which they then take to the compost area. Children manage their own personal needs well. They use the toilet independently and frequently visit the handwashing stations around the outdoor area. Children take tissues and wipe their noses when needed. Children show good levels of independence.
- Staff support children to develop their problem-solving skills, such as when they consider how to make wooden planks stand up. Staff celebrate their ideas and achievements and share children's delight as they step back and admire their structures.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff share regular information about children's development, which supports them to continue their learning at home. Parents comment positively about the staff and pre-school. They say that their children are well prepared for their next stages of learning.
- Staff plan an abundance of opportunities for children to freely explore and be physically active. For example, children confidently ride bicycles around the outdoor area and are further challenged as they navigate up and down sloped areas. Older children have access to a water tap where they can independently fill buckets. Children enjoy their learning. They are confident to experiment and find things out for themselves. For instance, they decide to make concrete and investigate what happens when they mix the sand and water.

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 staff to enhance their existing good practice to fully challenge children during activities to help consistently build on what they already know and can do.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2661296
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10332886
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Urban Nature London Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2661297
Telephone number	0207 122 0480
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Mulberry Outdoor Preschool registered in 2021. It is open from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.30am to 3.30pm. Five members of staff work directly with the children, including the manager. Of these, two members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school offers funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Louise Drewett

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector had a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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