

Inspection of The Early Bird Pre-School CIC

Lime Tree Childrens Centre, West View, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, Hertfordshire
SG6 3QN

Inspection date: 16 July 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

Children are at the heart of this unique and inspirational setting. Leaders and staff create a captivating and fascinating environment that ignites children's curiosity and sense of discovery. Children arrive with a big smile on their face, wave their parents goodbye and quickly become engrossed in this enriching learning provision. Staff provide meaningful opportunities for children to decide what they would like to access and explore next. For example, children are very inquisitive to explore snails. They hold them gently in their hands as staff prompt them to observe their distinctive features. Staff engage children in very detailed discussions about what snails look and feel like, while guiding them to be soft and caring towards all living things. This helps build on children's understanding of the world while extending their learning experiences.

Staff are incredibly warm and supportive. They have very high expectations of children, whose behaviour is exemplary. Children rise to the challenge exceptionally well and confidently understand the setting's routines and boundaries. For example, at snack time, staff encourage children to make their own healthy choices. As a result, children feel empowered to also assist with cutting their own fruits and vegetables to become positive and independent learners. Nurturing staff value children's achievements and praise them for their efforts. Their work is proudly displayed across the setting. This helps children feel involved and appreciated during their time at this setting, building on their confidence, self-esteem and emotional resilience.

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

- Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that is extremely well sequenced. All staff have a clear vision of what they want children to learn. They take into consideration children's interests, needs and abilities when planning a wide range of inspirational activities. Staff are exemplary role models and have caring relationships with all children. For example, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to explore a wide range of sensory activities such as water play and making sounds with various utensils. Staff carefully adapt these activities and, as a result, children with SEND are fully included and make remarkable progress in their learning.
- Tailored settling-in sessions and home visits mean that staff get to know the children very well. Staff value early intervention and ensure that children make rapid progress right from the start. They complete regular observations, assessments and next steps in children's learning that are shared with the parents.
- Staff create fantastic opportunities for children to develop their role-play skills and literacy skills and strengthen their social interactions. In the garden, children

have a great time re-enacting their favourite story about going on a bear hunt. Staff clearly demonstrate the actions and prompt children to become immersed in the narratives. Children skilfully hop, tip toe and splash in the water while completing the missing words from the story and repeating some refrains. Staff introduce new words, such as 'squelch' and 'stumble', and explain their meaning. This helps to enrich children's communication and language skills.

- Children laugh and giggle with excitement as they jump around in the large puddle. They display high levels of energy and fascination as staff encourage them to balance on the uniquely built structures. This helps strengthen children's balance and coordination. Furthermore, staff prompt children to closely observe how rubber ducks float and count them out loud. This supports children's cognitive development and mathematical skills.
- As children have great fun exploring mixing colours, knowledgeable staff encourage them to be creative and explore different mark-marking tools. Children use mashers to splash paint around and are fascinated by the patterns they create. Staff also support children to manipulate the tools with control to further develop their fine motor skills and dexterity.
- Leadership across the setting is inspirational. Leaders create a supportive and positive culture for all staff. Their continuous commitment to ensuring all children receive the best start to their early education is embraced by all staff with passion and dedication. Staff benefit from robust training opportunities to keep their knowledge current and they receive focused supervision meetings. As a result, they feel valued, appreciated and involved.
- Partnership with parents is exceptional. They feel very well supported and involved in their children's learning. Parents praise the progress their children make in their learning and appreciate all the fun and exciting activities that are provided, including the trips and outings.

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	EY536671
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10351646
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Early Bird Pre-School CIC
Registered person unique reference number	RP536670
Telephone number	07907 860991
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Early Bird Pre-School CIC registered in 2016. The setting employs 11 members of staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting opens Monday to Friday during term time only, from 8am until 3.30pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anca Sandu

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector discussed with the manager how the curriculum is organised and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching and education and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with the staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Children spoke with the inspector about the activities they were doing.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents spoke about the setting to the inspector, who took account of their views.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and directors. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of the staff working at the setting.

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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