Inspection of Dawes Community Childcare Centre

The DCA Centre, The Playing Fields, Fostall, Hernhill, Faversham ME13 9JG

Inspection date:	5 September 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	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive in the nurturing environment created by staff. They say goodbye to their parents and eagerly hang their bags up. They are keen to discover what they will be learning. Every day, children and staff sit together to say good morning. They use sign language to indicate how they are feeling and discuss what is making them feel happy or sad. Children work as a team to gently stretch their muscles while counting both forward and back. They say that they are 'ready to play' and their bodies have 'woken up' after stretching. Children are learning how exercise helps to keep their bodies healthy.

Children are very happy, well mannered and friendly towards each other. Staff role model expected behaviours as they interact and play with the children. Staff have high expectations for children to be confident and independent. This is skilfully built into routines of the day, so children have plenty of practice. For example, children serve themselves a snack using tweezers and spoons. They clear the table after eating then wash and dry up their own plates. Younger children and those new to the setting learn quickly from their peers. Parents feedback that children are keen to use the skills at home that that they have learned at nursery.

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

- Leaders implement an ambitious curriculum that supports all children's learning and development. They use effective assessment methods to identify those who may need more support. Swift referrals mean that children get any additional help they need from other professionals. This prevents them from falling behind and ensures that they make good progress.
- Staff successfully help children to develop a love of books. Children enjoy group story time throughout the day. They listen attentively and try to guess what is going to happen next in the story. Younger children benefit from 1-1 story time with their key person. They select books to read with enthusiasm and giggle as they lift up flaps.
- Staff provide a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities based on children's interests. Children demonstrate high levels of motivation and engagement. However, on occasion, staff do not recognise the impact of interrupting children who are engrossed in their play to move them on to another activity. At these times, children do not fully benefit from fully exploring and testing out their ideas.
- Children learn about different cultures and customs. During celebrations, staff wear their traditional dress and introduce food from different countries. Children learn how to say words in different languages. Staff help children to share aspects of their own home life and cultural heritage. This supports children to appreciate diversity and learn what makes them unique.

- Snack and lunchtime is a lovely social occasion which staff and children enjoy together. They hold conversations while staff discuss different fruits and vegetables. For example, children explore a fig and use words like 'squidgy' to describe its texture. Children are learning about healthy eating.
- There is a focus on developing children's language. Staff model and repeat tricky words to children so that they can practice their pronunciation. However, sometimes staff do not always give children time to respond to questions. This does not always allow children to fully develop their communication and language skills.
- Parents feedback that they love the homely and family feel of the nursery. They feel fully supported by staff with changes like toilet training. Parents receive information daily about what their children have been doing. They know what they will be working on next. Children benefit from this partnership work as parents can extend learning at home.
- Staff benefit from ongoing, good-quality supervisions. They receive support from leaders who check on their well-being. Staff say they feel part of a team, and this is evident when they work with the children. There is a culture of sharing best practice so that staff can develop their skills even further, which improves outcomes for children.
- Staff build strong relationships with other settings that children attend. They take children to visit the local school to attend open play sessions and meet the teachers. This supports children to feel secure in new environments. Staff are preparing children for a successful transition to school.

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:

- strengthen the support for children to follow their own interests and explore their own ideas to embed their learning
- support staff to use language and interactions that encourage fuller responses from children to further encourage their communication and language skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	160294
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10351055
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	2 to 11
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	91
Name of registered person	The Dawes Community Association
Registered person unique reference number	RP523079
Telephone number	01227751665
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

Dawes Community Childcare Centre registered in 2001 and is situated in Hernhill, near Faversham, Kent. The setting is open for pre-school children on Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm. The setting also offers a breakfast club everyday from 8am to 8.45am, and an out-of-school club on Monday to Thursday from 3.15pm to 5.30pm and until 5pm on Friday. The setting operates during term time only. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs four members of staff. The manager has achieved early years professional status and the deputy manager holds a relevant qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jennie Winchcombe

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 inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy manager, manager 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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