

Inspection of The Old Station Nursery –Northfield

19 Woodland Road, Northfield, BIRMINGHAM, West Midlands B31 2HU

Inspection date: 1 August 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Leaders have designed a curriculum that grows with the children and is delivered through well-chosen books, carefully planned enhancements, and familiar routines. Staff use books to introduce new concepts and vocabulary across all age groups. They revisit stories throughout the week and link these to hands-on experiences, such as cooking. Children learn key skills like mashing, scooping, and pouring, before progressing to weighing and preparing ingredients independently.

Staff respond to children with warmth and care. Children show they feel safe, happy, and emotionally secure. Key persons take time to build trusting relationships with each child, offering comfort, reassurance, and consistent routines that help children settle and feel confident to explore. For example, leaders have recently changed practice so that children's nappies are changed by their key person to further strengthen bonds.

Staff model calm, respectful interactions and use consistent language to help children understand expectations. They support children to identify and talk about their feelings, using resources, such as puppets and emotion books to build emotional awareness from an early age. When children struggle to share or express themselves, staff guide them gently and help them find solutions. Staffs' consistent approach supports children to develop positive relationships.

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

- Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the setting, with a strong focus on raising quality. Since the last inspection, they have taken purposeful steps to strengthen staff knowledge and improve curriculum implementation. Leaders regularly evaluate practice through observation, planning reviews, and staff discussions. They act on their findings to make meaningful enhancements. However, monitoring of staff practice is not extended as well as possible to fully embed recent improvements and ensure consistency of the highest quality planning and teaching across the setting.
- Staff are well supported through a positive team culture and strong leadership. New staff benefit from a thorough induction process that ensures they understand safeguarding, routines, and curriculum expectations. Those moving into leadership roles receive tailored support. Leaders recognise and value staff contributions, promoting well-being through regular check-ins and appreciation initiatives. They match ongoing training and professional development to staff roles and the setting's priorities for the children.
- Parents are generally happy with the care and education their children receive. They value the warm relationships their children have with staff and describe strong communication through daily handovers, the online app, and regular

parent meetings. Staff share ideas to support learning at home and provide clear updates on children's progress. Most parents speak positively about the improvements made under current leadership and say they feel listened to and involved in their child's experience.

- Staff implement a well-planned curriculum supported by enhancements and continuous provision. Leaders have recently helped staff improve the learning resources for babies so they are always accessible, varied, and available to support choice and exploration. However, staff's planning for older children sometimes reduces children's independent choices. There are fewer times when older children can make decisions, which reduces opportunities for them to lead their own play and learning.
- Leaders and staff provide effective support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders and key persons work closely with families and external agencies to identify needs early and put tailored plans in place. Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of each child's individual profile and use strategies, such as visual supports and sensory tools, to support emotional awareness.
- Staff are skilled in helping children recall and apply what they know in different contexts. For example, staff introduce vocabulary through stories and group times then provide opportunities to revisit this through role play, discussion, and hands-on activities. Children deepen their understanding and build confidence. For example, they apply their understanding about emotions to manage their feelings and behaviour.
- Overall, children show positive attitudes to learning. They are curious, motivated, and eager to take part in activities, especially when they can explore freely and follow their own ideas. During outdoor play, babies stop to listen to the sounds they can hear and ask, 'what is it?'. They enjoy games of peekaboo and hide and seek with objects. Staff encourage independence, such as supporting them to serve their own meals and dress themselves.

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:

- extend monitoring further to embed recent improvements and ensure consistency in the highest quality of planning and teaching across the setting
- achieve a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities to increase opportunities for older children to make decisions and lead their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	227230
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10391537
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	72
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	Buds Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP909284
Telephone number	0121 4758416
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2025

Information about this early years setting

The Old Station Nursery - Northfield reregistered in 2022 and is located in Birmingham. The setting currently employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 with one at level 2. The setting is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. The setting provides funded early education for children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anne Dyoss

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children interacted with the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 SEND.
- 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.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- 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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