The Gillingham Nursery

Unique reference number (URN): EY421060

Address: Unit 2, Conqueror Court, Campus Way, Gillingham Business Park, GILLINGHAM, Kent, ME8 0RR

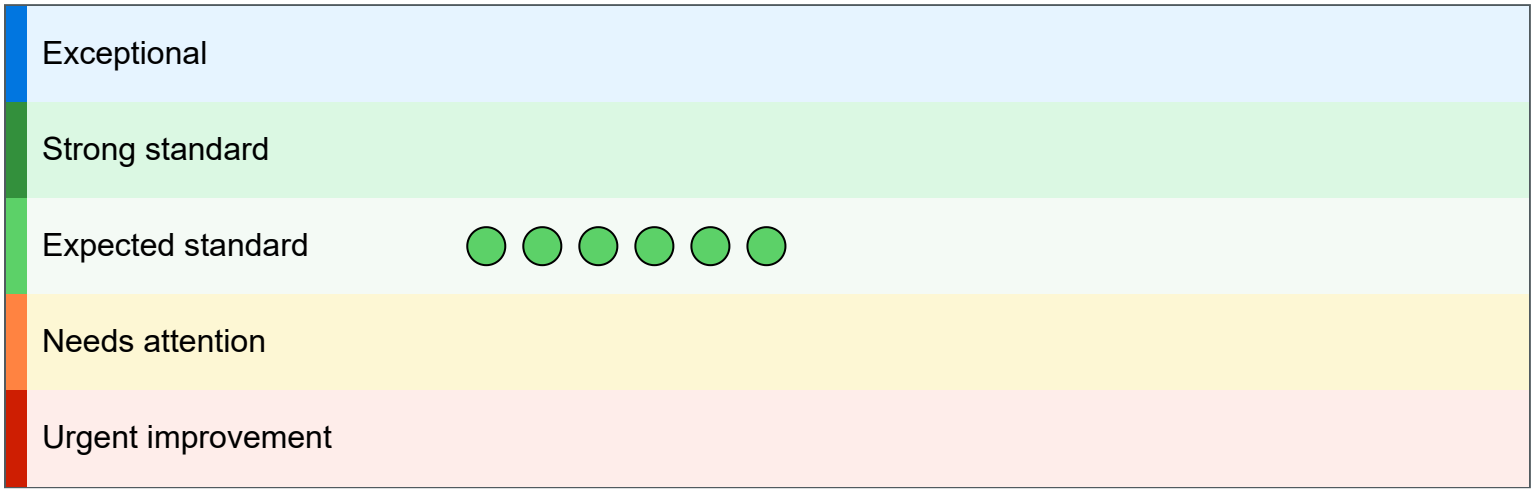
Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 26/11/2010

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Ivata Limited

Inspection report: 10 February 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language, progress in the 7 areas of learning. Pre-school children demonstrate skills in collaboration, negotiation and turn-taking with their peers. These abilities will aid them as they transition to school.

Children demonstrate a 'can-do' attitude. They demonstrate their autonomy as they make decisions, for example, to move play outdoors. Children persevere at tasks, bringing friends in to support them. They show excellent levels of concentration at succeeding in what they set out to do.

Children, including those with SEND, make progress from their starting points. Where children speak English as an additional language and where children have gaps in learning, these gaps typically close, and children make progress alongside their peers.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Leaders hold high expectations for every child. Staff consistently show kindness and are prompt in reminding children about the significance of being kind to their friends. They consider the children's ages and abilities when establishing expectations. For instance, staff have implemented sand timers to assist children in learning how to share and take turns. They have noted the positive effects this has had, as children are now using this method independently to manage their play.

Staff and children have formed strong and trusting bonds. For example, the youngest children who are separating from their parents for the first time show delight when they see a trusted adult in the room. Children regularly approach staff for comfort or support and often invite staff into their play.

The daily routines are clearly defined. This helps children to feel secure, as they know what to expect next. Staff are always ready to modify these routines if children indicate a need for something different. For instance, when children demonstrate that they are prepared for a more active experience, the staff will promptly discuss this with them and move their playtime outdoors.

Children are provided with valuable opportunities to discover more about their peers, including their similarities and differences. The staff team is culturally diverse, and this diversity is shared with the children to enhance their understanding of the community around them.

Leaders collaborate with parents to promote attendance and highlight the advantages of children attending regularly.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders understand the challenges faced by families. They are responsive to individual circumstances and offer advice and guidance where needed to help. They provide flexible sessions to help parents return to work and signpost families, to further support them. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are offered tailored support, and this is monitored effectively by managers to ensure that children make positive progress.

Staff assist children in learning how to handle their own personal safety. For instance, staff who work with babies make sure they receive help when using the new climbing frame and educate them on how to take safe risks. Pre-school children are taught the rules of the setting and come to understand that these rules exist to ensure everyone's safety. Staff also motivate children to explore their emotions. They offer guidance when helping children understand the effects of their actions. This support enables children to identify, express and effectively manage their feelings.

The key-person system is well embedded. Children have secure relationships with their key person and with other staff who care for them. Staff have a secure knowledge of children across the setting. They speak confidently about the children's interests, preferences, dislikes and the next steps in their development.

Collaborating with parents allows staff to collect vital information regarding each child's unique requirements. When children have allergies or specific medical needs, this information is communicated to ensure that they receive the necessary support and remain safe.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The curriculum is thoughtfully planned to enhance every aspect of learning, both indoors and outdoors. Staff have a clear understanding of the curriculum and how to put this into practice. They plan efficiently to support children's individual needs. Staff also make necessary adjustments to ensure that every child, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or other barriers to their learning, can learn and achieve consistent progress. However, the physical opportunities for the youngest children are lacking. This can sometimes lead to moments of frustration for babies when they do not have the resources to

cruise and pull themselves up to a standing position. However, leaders have recognised this issue and are working on strategies to address it.

A strength of the curriculum is its emphasis on language and communication and children's personal social and emotional development. From an early age, staff use sign language to support children's communication skills. Staff provide a language-rich environment where children show delight at looking at and reading familiar books with staff. Furthermore, staff working with the youngest children ensure that they position themselves so babies can see their facial movements. Staff babble back to babies to introduce the concept of a conversation.

Staff are skilled at introducing mathematical ideas to children. For the youngest, this begins with staff demonstrating language related to shapes and numbers. As children progress through the setting, they begin to investigate concepts such as weight and size. For instance, children demonstrate their understanding of scales by using terms such as 'heavy' and 'light'.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders are dedicated to offering inclusive care. They successfully strategize the use of additional funding to establish sensory and calming environments that cater to the unique needs of children and to facilitate further training for staff. Leaders effectively monitor the outcomes of these interventions to ensure that they are adequately addressing the children's individual needs.

Managers provide support to staff in understanding the graduated approach and how to identify and refer concerns about children. The setting ensures that there is effective collaboration with parents when addressing any concerns about children's learning and development. Staff demonstrate a firm understanding of the individual needs of children and the action they are taking to support progress, including when children have special educational needs and/or disabilities or speak English as an additional language.

Regular assessments assist staff in quickly recognising any barriers to children's learning. Furthermore, leaders have built strong and effective connections with local professionals and partners to ensure that children and families receive the necessary support to help close developmental gaps. As a result of their effective interventions and referrals, all children are making progress from their starting points.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear and ambitious plan for supporting continual progress. They offer a curriculum that supports children to be independent, learning through creativity and exploration in the setting's well-planned and well-equipped indoor and outdoor spaces. Leaders know the families attending and the local community.

Leaders demonstrate their ability to correctly identify the strengths of the setting and any areas for improvement. They are currently working with staff who care for the youngest children to ensure that they communicate with each other effectively to enable all children's needs to be consistently met. There have been some recent staffing changes in the room.

These have had a positive impact, but leaders recognise there is more to be done to ensure complete consistency.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face disadvantage benefit from managers and staff who are hard-working and committed to their roles. Partnerships with parents are positive. They appreciate the advice and guidance they receive to help them understand early education and to access additional funding and support. Supervision arrangements are in place to ensure that staff have opportunities to discuss their key children and any concerns and receive support. Staff report that they are happy and fulfilled in their jobs, and feel they can approach managers at any time.

There are robust systems established for safer recruitment, and leaders provide secure induction, supervision and mentoring for staff. Additionally, staff gain from coaching and peer support to enhance their knowledge and exchange skills. Staff express that they feel well supported and appreciated. Training is effective, and staff communicate what they have learned with other colleagues and parents. For instance, recent safeguarding training resulted in staff designing posters for parents to highlight the support available in the local community for them to utilise.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children and their families are warmly greeted at this friendly and inclusive setting. Children settle quickly and with ease, as they have formed secure relationships with staff who know their individual needs and interests. Additionally, parents are invited into the children's rooms to share important information with the staff and to help their children settle in before they leave. This approach fosters children's wellbeing and enhances their sense of security.

Children of every age find joy and maintain remarkable focus during activities. For instance, the youngest children are particularly drawn to baby role play, which enhances their communication skills as they request assistance and imitate routines, such as changing nappies and feeding. Meanwhile, older children expand on this by critically considering how to assemble train tracks so that the pieces connect properly. Children are also provided with various activities, such as using tweezers to grasp objects, which helps develop their fine motor skills in readiness for writing.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, face learning barriers or speak English as an additional language are accurately and swiftly identified. Staff are eager to understand each child's individual needs and make sure that the necessary support is provided. Staff collaborate closely with parents and other professionals involved in children's

care. For instance, staff have completed training to ensure that they can fulfil the medical requirements of the children. The setting prioritises inclusion, ensuring that every child receives the support they need to progress in their learning and development.

Children show positive behaviours throughout the environment. The staff consistently communicate with the children, offering reassurance and support when their behaviour does not meet expectations. For instance, in the pre-school room, children promptly remind their peers to walk indoors. They are polite and respectful towards one another and the staff.

Children develop positive attitudes to learning. This is further supported by leaders who work closely with parents to ensure that children attend regularly and understand the importance of this. Transitions into the setting, through the setting and on to school are well planned in collaboration with parents and staff. Key information is shared at each transition to ensure that children's needs are met.

Next steps

- Leaders should review and strengthen the physical environment for younger children to ensure that it offers appropriate opportunities for them to develop their large physical movements.
- Leaders should continue to strengthen the communication between staff working with the youngest children to ensure that children's needs are consistently met.

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with managers, leaders, staff and the special educational needs coordinator during the inspection.

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.

The inspection started on 10 February 2026. Inspectors returned on 6 May 2026 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.

Inspectors:

Victoria Salisbury

Kelly Southern

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): EY421060

Address:
Unit 2, Conqueror Court
Campus Way, Gillingham Business Park
GILLINGHAM
Kent
ME8 0RR

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 26/11/2010

Registered person: Ivata Limited

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday : 08:00 - 18:00

Local authority: Medway

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

This data is from 10 February 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

0 to 4

Total number of places

67

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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