

Inspection of Ashbourne Day Nurseries at Bricket Wood

St. Stephens Parish Centre, Station Road, Bricket Wood, St. Albans AL2 3PJ

Inspection date: 17 April 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are eager to arrive and explore the wealth of exciting learning opportunities in this small and friendly nursery. Enthusiastic leaders and staff are waiting to greet families on arrival. They use this as an opportunity to catch up with children and parents about key events at home and discuss upcoming events. These warm interactions support children to feel secure and settle well in their learning environment.

Staff have a flexible approach to planning children's learning. They create a wealth of exciting activities and learning opportunities based on children's ever-changing interests. Children play an active role in determining what they learn. They discuss topics of interests that staff skilfully incorporate into their planning. For example, children are excited about creating 'potions' with flowers and plants based on their current favourite story book.

Children are learning to be independent in age-appropriate ways. Staff encourage children to complete tasks and take on roles of responsibility in the nursery. For example, babies identify their photos at mealtimes and place them on their chairs. Older children serve themselves meals, use cutlery with ease and complete essential hygiene routines with minimal help from staff. These small yet significant responsibilities support children's growing confidence.

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

- Having undergone recent changes in leadership, the current management team are passionate about their role in promoting children's learning. They have worked hard to develop a robust curriculum that is well implemented by staff across all areas of the setting. Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of children's different learning needs. Babies form close attachments with staff, whose nurturing approach allows them to feel safe and secure in their environment. Older children are encouraged to be independent, completing tasks that prepare them well for their next stage of learning.
- Children's safety is paramount. Staff complete robust risk assessments on all areas of the environment. They are aware of potential hazards and consider this well when planning exciting activities that support children's interests and learning. For example, older children explore intricate beads in a safe environment where babies cannot access them.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and respectful. Families receive regular home learning packs that provide support in specific areas, such as toilet training and preparing children for school. Children look forward to taking home the setting's mascot, 'Ashley Bear'. They document and share their adventures with their friends during circle time. Parents attend regular stay-and-play sessions,

where they gather a more detailed insight into children's learning and how they can further promote this at home.

- Staff routinely adapt children's learning during activities to meet the varied needs of those involved. For example, during water play, staff encourage babies to mimic the sounds they make when splashing their hands in the water. Older children explore how they can channel the water into vessels using different lengths of piping. As a result, all activities provide appropriate challenge and support children to remain engaged in play, developing a positive attitude to their learning.
- Children generally behave well, are kind and demonstrate good manners. Staff use daily group sessions to develop children's understanding of appropriate behaviours and the impact these have on their friends. Older children show empathy for their younger friends and are considerate of their needs during activities. However, at key moments during the day, staff are not always deployed appropriately. For example, when staff administer sun cream prior to outdoor play, children become restless, which can lead to unwanted behaviour.
- Staff are committed to enhancing their skills and acknowledge the positive impact this has on children's development. Leaders support this enthusiasm well by providing precise training opportunities based on staff's interests and needs. They conduct regular supervisions to identify strengths and areas of development in staff practice. However, a more consistent approach to ongoing coaching will allow staff to identify ways they can enhance their interactions with children and promote their learning further.

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:

- reassess staff deployment at key times during the day to ensure children are engaged with staff who are able to fully support their learning and behaviour
- further promote staff skills and knowledge by establishing effective means of coaching and mentoring.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2720209
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10388660
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	15
Name of registered person	Ashbourne Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901058
Telephone number	01923 279999
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Ashbourne Day Nurseries at Bricket Wood re-registered in 2023. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff, four of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The setting offers the government funded places for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- The inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to several during the inspection and reviewing feedback letters.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and leaders completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of children.

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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