

Inspection of Fordfield House Nursery & After School Club

Fordfield Road, Millbrook, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK45 2HZ

Inspection date: 20 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and settle quickly in the nursery. They are motivated to learn and explore with their friends and with the attentive staff. For example, babies and very young children feel play dough. They listen intently to the words staff use to describe what they are doing, such as 'squeeze' and 'stretch'. Staff praise children when they have a go at repeating the words, contributing to their expanding communication and language development.

Children take advantage of the outdoor environment. For example, children jump in puddles with great delight, watching how high the water reaches up to their wellington boots. Others collect water in pans and cups before announcing to staff that they are going to 'cook' in the mud kitchen. Children spend time in the nursery allotment. They learn about the fruit and vegetables they grow and eat, contributing to their recognition and appreciation of a nutritious diet.

Children enjoy challenges, such as negotiating an obstacle course. Before they begin, staff encourage them to feel their chests to check their heart rates. Children compare the changes before and after exercise, helping them understand important facts about their bodies. This contributes to children's growing awareness of making healthy choices.

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

- The owner of the nursery has tremendous drive and passion to ensure that children are cared for in a stimulating environment, helping to fuel children's learning. Leaders share a strong ethos: to foster a nurturing and respectful environment in which children learn and develop. Staff demonstrate this through their positive interactions with children. Leaders embrace opportunities to make continual improvements throughout the nursery, which frequently stems from recognised research. The provider opens opportunities for parents to pay for additional activities, such as on-site swimming lessons with a qualified instructor.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Staff work closely with parents and external agencies to help ensure that children receive the most appropriate care, resources and support they need, both in the nursery and at home. When the time comes for children to move on to school, staff ensure that all the information they have gathered about children is passed on to the most appropriate staff at the new school, helping to make transitions as smooth as possible.
- Children quickly form strong bonds with their key person. This contributes to children's growing confidence and sense of security in the nursery. Working patterns enable key persons to both greet children when they arrive at nursery and take them back to their parents and carers when they leave at the end of

the day. This helps to quickly establish good partnerships between parents and nursery staff. Additional information is communicated through a secure electronic application, allowing parents to find out even more about what their children have experienced and enjoyed during their day, triggering further conversations and learning at home.

- Staff support children's learning through a wide range of experiences reflected in planned activities and children's self-chosen play. Managers and staff introduce topics and themes, helping to capture children's imagination and interest. This helps them learn about the world around them. For example, staff talk to children about holidays. Children investigate items in a suitcase and decide that they could go to a beach. However, not all staff have a clear plan of how to link activities to what each child needs to know and understand next in their sequence of learning and development. As a result, some staff do not consistently make the best use of activities to optimise children's individual progress.
- Generally, staff help children to manage risk in their play. However, at other times, staff do not consistently support children to identify when or how to take responsibility to help keep themselves and others safe. For example, when older children come inside from the garden, they remove their boots and shoes, leaving them in doorways and areas where others are playing.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to record and report any concerns they might have about children's well-being. They know which members of staff hold responsibility to make referrals to the local authority, and they understand their personal responsibility to remain vigilant. All staff, including those who have a leading safeguarding role in the nursery, regularly refresh and update their knowledge and understanding about child protection and keeping children safe. Managers ensure that new staff and students quickly familiarise themselves with key policies in the nursery, including those relating to health and safety and child protection. Consequently, all staff play an active role in keeping children safe from harm.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- support staff to focus more precisely on what each child knows and needs to learn next when they plan activities, helping children make the best possible progress
- support staff to consistently encourage children to contribute to keeping themselves and others safe through taking responsibility of where they leave resources and possessions.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219075
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10289248
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	80
Number of children on roll	107
Name of registered person	Fordfield House Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP523247
Telephone number	01525 405 524
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Fordfield House Nursery & After School Club registered in 1988. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. This includes one member who holds qualified teacher status and one at level 6. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Katrina Rodden

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 owner and managers and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the nursery.
- Two managers took the inspector on a learning walk of the nursery and grounds. Following this, the inspector held a video call with the manager responsible for the curriculum, who provided further information.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with managers and assessed the quality of teaching and interactions they saw.
- Documents, including evidence of the suitability of staff, accident records and activity plans, were seen by the inspector.
- The inspector observed activities in the group rooms and gardens. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider and managers.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents. She took their views and comments into consideration.

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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