

Inspection of Harmony House at Castle Green

Castle Green Centre, Castle Green, Gale Street, Dagenham RM9 4UN

Inspection date: 11 March 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 start their day. They separate easily from their parents and carers, coming in, self-registering themselves and hanging up their coats. Staff welcome children with cheerful greetings and cuddles for those that need some extra reassurance. The setting has a broad and ambitious curriculum in place for children that spans both indoors and outdoors. Children show high levels of focus and concentration as they tackle different tasks and participate in activities.

The behaviour of children is good. Staff are good role models and use 'please' and 'thank you' when speaking with children. Children model these interactions with their peers during play. Golden rules are in place within each room and children are reminded of these during group times. Children form friendships with other children and begin to play cooperatively together. In the garden, children laugh as they take turns to roll cars faster and faster down the pipes into the large tray.

The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a particular strength of the setting. Staff work in partnership with parents and external agencies to put in place consistent plans to support children's learning and development.

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

- Staff know children well. They confidently talk about children's starting points, the progress children have made and what they would do if they identified any gaps in children's learning. Staff accurately track children's development and ensure they have challenging next steps in place, which build on what it is children need to learn next. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- The curriculum for communication and language is excellent. All staff understand the importance of using verbal and non-verbal means of communication to ensure all children, including those with SEND, understand what is being asked. Staff are currently training in British Sign Language, and Makaton is also used. Visual timetables are available within every room. A sign of the week helps children to learn and communicate with their peers.
- Children develop a love of reading and books. They enjoy sitting down together to share stories before lunchtime. They curl up on bean bags in the garden and share stories with each other or independently. All rooms have a 'book of the month' which forms a focus for lots of different activities. As children in pre-school explore the book of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', they take part in activities that explore the different concepts in the books. For example, they look at quantities, learn language, such as 'big' and 'small' and retell the story independently.

- Children are imaginative and use their knowledge and past experiences to develop games with others. Children enjoy using the free choice they have within the enabling environments to be creative and expand their ideas. Children playing in the construction area talk about building a swimming pool and, in the garden, children use drumsticks to light their imaginary bonfire.
- Staff provide children with a wide range of opportunities throughout the day that allow them to learn and consolidate different skills. However, on occasion, staff can be too quick to problem solve for children rather than allowing them to work things out through trial and error, to build confidence and resilience. For example, staff put blocks the right way round so they automatically fit.
- Parent partnerships are excellent. Parents describe the setting as a very warm and welcoming environment. Parents feel that staff are nurturing and caring and that their children have thrived since attending. Parents comment that they feel very well informed of how their children are progressing and the support that is available to them as a family.
- Practitioners within the setting are reflective. They regularly seek the views of parents and others using their service to look at what additional enhancements they can make to their practice. Staff at the setting feel well supported in their role. The setting offers regular training opportunities. Staff are encouraged, when ready, to continue their professional development by undertaking further qualifications.

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:

- make better use of strategies to enable children to develop problem-solving skills and build independence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2700017
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10372465
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	81
Number of children on roll	97
Name of registered person	Harmony House Dagenham CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2700015
Telephone number	02087241530
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Harmony House at Castle Green re-registered in 2022. The setting is based within the Castle Green Centre in Dagenham which is located in the London borough of Barking and Dagenham. The setting is open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday for most of the year. The setting employs 20 members of staff, of these one staff member is qualified to level 6, nine are qualified to level 3 and nine are qualified to level 2. The setting offers the government funded places for childcare.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Natalie O'Leary

Inspection activities

- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- 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 inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity with the manager and deputy manager.
- 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 setting.

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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