

Inspection of Little Owl Childcare Limited

Highfields Primary School, Elder Lane, BURNTWOOD, Staffordshire WS7 9BT

Inspection date:

24 September 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children settle exceptionally quickly because staff prioritise their well-being from the very start. The nurturing staff provide warm welcomes and highly individualised care, which helps children feel safe, valued and emotionally secure. As a result, they build trusting relationships with staff, giving them the confidence to explore, embrace new experiences and develop a strong sense of belonging.

Children thrive outdoors, where they enjoy a wealth of opportunities to explore, learn and challenge themselves. Before going outside, they join staff in simple risk assessments, checking the area together and considering the weather to decide if they need a coat or jumper. This shared responsibility helps to nurture independence, decision-making and an early understanding of risk. Children show impressive physical skills and confidence outdoors. They skilfully ride tricycles and balance bicycles, steering with control and navigating the track with ease. They slow down at corners, give way to friends and even create their own rules to keep everyone safe, showing early awareness of road safety. Children navigate the grassy slope with confidence, testing their balance and control as they run up and down.

Children delight in exploring pumpkins in the role-play area. They eagerly lift and compare them, proudly announcing, 'This one is so heavy, but I am strong.' Staff expertly build on children's curiosity, introducing mathematical language and encouraging children to problem-solve, deepening their understanding through play. Children line the pumpkins up and confidently point out which are the biggest and smallest, noticing that the largest is also the heaviest.

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

- Leaders and staff show an unwavering commitment to excellence. They share a clear vision that places children at the centre of everything they do. A strong culture of teamwork and reflection drives continuous improvement. As a result, the setting adapts swiftly to meet children's needs, ensuring that they flourish in an environment focused on giving them the very best start.
- The curriculum is carefully sequenced and shaped around children's individual needs and interests. Staff build knowledge step by step, ensuring that it is secure before moving on. Well-planned activities both capture children's curiosity and prepare them effectively for the next stage in their learning.
- Leaders and staff work closely with teachers from the host school. They share information and initiatives that ease transitions and help children start school with confidence and enthusiasm.
- Partnerships with parents are highly effective. Families are invited to join stay-and-play sessions and workshops, helping to strengthen links between home

and setting. Parents receive detailed updates on their child's learning and care, and feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive, praising the welcoming atmosphere, excellent communication and the rapid progress their children make.

- Communication and language naturally flow through every part of the day. At circle time, children join in songs, rhymes and stories, gaining confidence to speak in front of others and developing important social skills. Staff give children time to respond to questions and make choices, creating a culture where every voice is valued.
- Children develop a strong awareness of the world around them and the importance of diversity. Outings in the local community and celebrations of different cultures are woven through daily practice, helping children to develop respect for others and an early understanding of difference.
- Children display exceptional behaviour. Even though many have only been at the setting a short time, they already follow the well-established routines with confidence. Staff teach children simple strategies to help manage and understand their emotions, such as taking a deep breath to calm down. Children not only use these for themselves but sometimes say to staff, 'I think I need to take a big breath'.
- Children develop a strong love of books. They choose stories independently and enjoy snuggling up with staff, who read with expression, bringing stories to life and pausing to explain the meaning of new words. Stories also inspire children's play. For example, in the mud kitchen they use porridge oats and different-sized bowls to re-enact a traditional story about three bears.
- Children form early friendships as they join in one another's imaginative games, taking on different roles and suggesting ways to keep the play going. They have lots of fun pretending to be doctors, confidently naming the pretend equipment and proudly announcing, 'I can hear a heartbeat with my stethoscope.'
- Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is exceptional. Staff act swiftly when needs are identified. They put tailored support in place and work in close partnership with parents and professionals. Practice is highly inclusive, with strategies such as Makaton, now-and-next cards and sensory play used confidently alongside highly effective one-to-one sessions. Together, these approaches help to give children the focused support they need. As a result, children with SEND make impressive progress from their starting points.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY457077
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10410184
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Little Owl Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP902740
Telephone number	07964 888720
Date of previous inspection	3 February 2020

Information about this early years setting

Little Owl Childcare registered in 2012. It is situated in Highfields Primary School in Burntwood, Staffordshire. The setting employs three members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The setting opens from Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 8.50am until 3.20pm. The setting provides funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Angela Hulme

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on the children's learning and development.
- Leaders joined the inspector on a learning walk to discuss how the curriculum is planned and implemented.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection. She also read written feedback from parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector and the manager completed a joint observation of an adult-led activity.
- The inspector spoke to staff and the children during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and checked evidence of the suitability of the 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025