

Inspection of Marmalade Caterpillar

St Judes Chuch Hall, Heslop Road, London SW12 8EG

Inspection date: 4 March 2025

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children settle exceptionally well in this extremely nurturing, highly inspiring nursery. Staff carefully build very close relationships with children by carrying out initial visits to children in their homes. They send each child a video of their key person reading a story, which helps to develop excellent bonds between children and staff. All staff, not just the key person, have excellent knowledge of all children and value each child highly. Staff create personal calendars for each child, which contain details about special events or occasions that are important to them, such as cultural or religious events. They discuss and celebrate these occasions with children. For instance, staff donate items brought in by children to local charities to celebrate Eid.

Children behave in very positive ways, and older children remind younger children of group rules. Staff manage children's behaviour in carefully considered and very effective ways. They have high expectations of children and always encourage children to do their best.

The curriculum is enriching, carefully considered and inspiring. All children make excellent progress. Staff help children to gain an excellent understanding of the world. They make planters containing wildflower seeds with children to attract pollinators. Children learn that this supports food production and the ecosystem. Staff use an innovative approach to teach children about planets in the solar system. For instance, they use elements from the 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' story to teach children that mars is 'too cold' and the sun is 'too hot', which children really relate to very well.

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

- Children develop excellent creative skills. Staff provide children with experiences that are focused on the process of creativity, rather than the outcomes. For instance, children engage in transient art using a wide range of natural materials, such as flowers and leaves, to experiment with patterns and design. Children thoroughly enjoy using a pestle and mortar to change the texture of grains.
- Staff support children's mathematical skills exceptionally well. Children skilfully sort graded shapes in order of size. Children count reliably to 10 and beyond. Staff teach children how numbers are formed by providing textured numbers, and children gain exceptional mathematical skills.
- Children have excellent communication, language and literacy skills. For instance, children use the word 'constellation' to describe a group of stars that form a pattern. They have a clear understanding of rhyme and even younger children say, 'Dish rhymes with fish.' Staff organise small-group activities with

children where they create their own group story. Children are highly articulate, imaginative and have very good vocabulary.

- Children are extremely independent and highly motivated learners. They select baskets of toys from shelves and settle down to complete challenging tasks. Children prepare their own snacks by spreading paste on rice cakes and chop fruit. They put on their coats and shoes and fetch tissues to wipe their noses. Staff organise small friendship groups where children generously take turns to share their toys with each other.
- Staff work exceptionally well with parents. Leaders organise online parent coaching sessions covering different areas, such as behaviour management to support children's development. Parents say the nursery is 'amazing and has excellent links with the community'. Staff keep parents very well informed of children's activities and progress in highly effective, flexible ways.
- Leaders monitor and support staff in excellent ways. They observe staff formally and informally and provide in-depth feedback, in regular supervision meetings, to enhance their skills. Leaders model best practice to staff, and staff exchange visits with other nurseries to learn from each other and continually build their skills and knowledge.
- Leaders are wholly committed to the professional development of staff. They ensure that staff have ongoing opportunities to attend a vast range of training courses. For instance, staff attended a course on health and nutrition in early years, which led to better understanding in this area.
- Leaders carry out periodic reviews of the nursery's strengths and areas for development. They set ambitious goals for ongoing improvement. For example, leaders aim to enhance the outdoor area further to continually promote best outcomes for children.
- Children develop excellent physical skills. Staff provide challenging and interesting obstacle courses where children step and balance carefully over stones and beams. A sports coach regularly visits the nursery and provides stimulating challenges to support children's physical coordination skills.
- Staff provide excellent focus on supporting children's well-being. They ask children how they are feeling, and children select wooden 'mood' spoons to match their mood. Staff provide regular yoga sessions for children where they learn how to slow down and be calm. This helps children to regulate their emotions very effectively, and children gain an excellent awareness of their feelings.

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	2702411
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10368655
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	40
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	Marmalade Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2702404
Telephone number	0208 6753137
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Marmalade Caterpillar registered in 2022. It is located in Balham in the London Borough of Wandsworth. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, from 8.45am to 4pm, during term time only. There are nine staff, including the manager, eight of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. This includes one staff member who holds qualified teacher status; one member of staff who holds early years professional status; two staff members who hold a degree in early years; one member of staff who holds a level 4 qualification in childcare; and three staff members who hold a level 3 qualification in childcare. The nursery accepts government funding for childcare places.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Beckles

Inspection activities

- During the inspection, the inspector went on a learning walk around the nursery with leaders.
- Leaders and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children and spoke with children, when appropriate.
- The inspector held a meeting with the leaders and sampled some documentation.
- During the inspection, the inspector considered the views of staff and parents.

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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