

Inspection of Shotley Kidzone

C/O Shotley CP School, Shotley, Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 1NR

Inspection date: 19 May 2025

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	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The friendly staff team welcome the children on arrival. Children often run to hug their friends and the staff, showing their evident good relationships. In the morning, the children are split into two groups. The older children use a room beside the Reception class and benefit from regular use of a shared outdoor area, which makes the Reception class familiar for those who will transition in September. Staff know the children very well and are always on hand to join in their play and have fun with them.

Children take advantage of the large outdoor provisions. Both areas are thoughtfully set up by staff who plan the environment with children's independence in mind. The variety on offer is vast. Children can practise their physical skills, building their muscles as they run in the large space and develop their finger strength as they play in the water tray. They use their imaginations when they role play different scenarios. Staff are fully supportive of children taking measured risks. For example, children push their bikes to the top of a slope and race to the bottom as fast they can. Staff are genuinely happy when a child who is scared gives it a go. They praise the child's efforts and tell them how proud they are, which supports children's growing self-esteem.

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

- The dedicated staff team's plans are highly effective and support children's ongoing development. Staff support children to understand their emotions through 'The Colour Monster' book. At the end of each session, staff ask the older children to find their name and peg it to one of the emotion monsters and explain how they feel. As a result, children are very able to regulate their emotions and understand other children's feelings, which means there are very few disagreements.
- Overall, children's ongoing communication and language is very well supported by staff. Staff pay close attention to the pronunciation of letter sounds and focus support for children who are struggling. They work well with professionals to ensure that targets are challenging. Staff animatedly read with the children and ensure there are a variety of books and mark-making opportunities available indoors and outdoors. Staff take every opportunity to model good vocabulary but do, however, limit children's ability to develop their critical thinking skills when they ask closed questions or offer options for answers.
- The curriculum for mathematics is highly successful. Staff create a rich learning environment, where they add numerals to encourage children to count, compare and use mathematical terms in their play. As a result, children can use words such as 'big' and 'small' correctly. Children work cooperatively together and develop their problem-solving skills. For example, one child adds too much soil

to a mud soup. They quickly work out that they need to add water to re-make their soup.

- Children marvel when they take part in a volcano activity, and wait with anticipation as the volcano explodes. Staff add lots of new vocabulary and ask children to predict what happens if they add more vinegar, to help children to learn about cause and effect.
- Staff expertly support children's keen interest in nature. They build on children's interest and provide clipboards with drawings of insects to find. Children find a 'billy witch beetle' and are curious to learn facts about it. Children use their initiative as a billy witch beetle is not one of the options on their sheet, so they draw a picture beside the other insects.
- Healthy eating is promoted by staff. They provide a range of fruit, vegetables and crackers for snack. However, staff have not considered how to support parents to encourage children to make healthy choices for their drinks. For example, many children bring squash from home and drink this during their day. Staff skilfully support children's personal skills. They encourage children to follow good hygiene practices and embed good routines, such as hand washing before eating.
- Partnerships with parents are very strong. Parents comment about the caring dispositions of staff. Leaders place an emphasis on supporting everyone's well-being. They support their local community through the provision of food schemes. Leaders ensure that staff have regular opportunities for both informal discussions and supervisions, both of which ensure that they feel valued and, consequently, staff morale is high.

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:

- support parents to encourage and promote children's good health and well-being.
- support staff to develop questioning techniques, so they consistently make the most of all interactions to help children develop their critical thinking skills more effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	251629
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10380765
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	1 to 10
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Shotley Kidzone Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523515
Telephone number	01473 787873
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2019

Information about this early years setting

Shotley Kidzone registered in 1968. The setting employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above and one has early years professional status. The setting opens Monday to Friday during term time, from 7.45am to 5.30pm. It provides funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Emily Holt

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises with the leadership team.
- Staff talked to the inspector throughout the inspection and discussed how the curriculum is planned and implemented and how children's progress is monitored.
- Parents spoke to the inspector and the inspector took their views into account.
- The manager carried out a joint observation with the inspector.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children throughout the inspection inside and outside.
- Children talked to the inspector.

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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