

Inspection of Thurnby & Bushby Playgroup

St Lukes School, Main Street, Bushby, Leicester, Leics LE7 9PN

Inspection date: 18 September 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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy a stimulating and nurturing environment where their independence, curiosity and communication skills are actively encouraged. On arrival, they are encouraged to self-register, wash their hands and collect their drinks. Children develop confidence and learn to take responsibility for personal hygiene routines. In the home corner, staff model caring for dolls and encourage sharing, praising children for kindness and cooperation. During small-group story sessions, children engage in related activities, such as counting fruit, identifying animals and participating in repeated phrases. Staff extend learning by introducing new vocabulary, modelling sentence structure and asking open-ended questions that encourage children to think and respond. Children are encouraged to observe birds in the trees and at the nearby bird feeder, marking or ticking off the species they have seen. This supports their observational skills and fosters a connection with nature.

Outdoor play supports physical development, problem-solving and exploration. Staff guide children as they ride bicycles, steer toy cars and engage with nature. They encourage gentle handling and scientific curiosity as children show an interest in ladybirds and snails. Children's behaviour is positively reinforced through praise, encouragement and structured support. This helps children manage emotions and cooperate with peers. Staff adapt activities to support children's individual needs, provide one-to-one support for speech and language, and they use small-group sessions to build confidence. Overall, children experience a safe, inclusive and engaging environment where staff actively plan and model learning, ensuring that each child can participate, explore and make progress.

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

- Children participate in purposeful, child-centred learning experiences. Staff implement consistent routines, one-to-one sessions and adult-led activities to support the development of speech, language and social skills. For instance, children work individually with staff who introduce new vocabulary, helping to build confidence and communication in larger group settings. Singing sessions are engaging and interactive. Staff often link these to hands-on activities that connect language to real-life experiences, reinforcing learning in meaningful ways.
- Children are encouraged to develop independence through well-established routines. For example, at mealtimes, staff model how to open food packets and support children to attempt this themselves using the 'pinch and pull' method. Independence is further promoted through activities such as retrieving their own name cards and taking responsibility for personal belongings. Staff model language effectively, provide consistent praise and use open-ended questioning

to extend children's thinking and learning. Social and emotional development is nurtured through positive behaviour management and sensitive conflict resolution strategies.

- Staff set clear expectations for behaviour and manage routines consistently. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and manage emotions. Staff model strategies such as gentle touch and discussion of feelings. Behaviour is monitored, and staff reflect on approaches to ensure that all children can participate safely and confidently.
- Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in activities and respond positively to praise, for example by choosing stickers after successfully using the toilet. Overall, staff plan outdoor activities that support children's physical development and exploration. However, they do not consistently consider the organisation of the outdoor environment. For example, congestion and obstacles sometimes restrict children's movement as they ride bicycles and other wheeled toys, which limits their ability to fully focus on their learning.
- Transitions into and out of the setting are well supported. Staff work closely with parents and other settings to prepare children for school, including familiarisation activities, school visits and the discussion of routines. Children gain confidence in group participation, develop social skills and are encouraged to express themselves.
- Staff provide individual support where needed, including for children with speech and language delays or special educational needs and/or disabilities. Tailored routines and collaborative working with families ensure that children's needs are met and that progress is monitored effectively.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to high-quality practice. Staff supervision sessions are structured to support professional development, mental health and reflective practice. Recent training to support further children's communication and language has been beneficial, with staff using the skills they gained in their interactions with children.
- Leaders maintain strong communication with parents and other settings, ensuring continuity of care and learning for children. Parents and carers speak positively about the support they receive and value opportunities to be involved in the life of the setting, such as attending events like a Mother's Day tea party. Ongoing evaluations of practice, including observations, reflective discussions and supervision, are used effectively to drive continuous improvement.

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:

- strengthen the planning of the outdoor area so children can focus on their learning without unnecessary obstacles.

Setting details

Unique reference number	226497
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10407349
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 3
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	Thurnby & Bushby Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522318
Telephone number	07817 695 643
Date of previous inspection	7 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

Thurnby & Bushby Playgroup was first registered in 1986. It is a charitable organisation run by a committee and operates from a classroom in the grounds of St Luke's School in Bushby, Leicester. The playgroup employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an early years qualification at level 5 and four hold qualifications at level 3. The playgroup is open from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday. Additional afternoon sessions are offered in the spring and summer terms. The playgroup provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Betty Ekberg

Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing while at the playgroup.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views and knowledge.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this is having on the children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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