

Inspection of Toddlers University

Toddlers University, Park Road, Ilkeston DE7 5DR

Inspection date: 2 July 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 are happy and excited as they enter the nursery. They confidently leave their parents and carers to begin their day. Children thoroughly enjoy being physically active in the garden. Staff play games with children to encourage them to move their bodies in different ways. For example, when staff call out 'crab', children quickly bend their knees and walk sideways. This helps children develop their larger muscles. Staff support younger children as they attempt to use balancing beams, holding their hands if necessary to support them. Older children take turns with their friends and confidently hold their arms out to the side while walking quickly across the beam, showing good balance and coordination. Staff praise children's efforts, helping them build self-esteem.

Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their independence, such as through daily routines. They guide young children to carefully pour themselves a cup of milk from a jug. Children learn how to serve themselves snacks. Staff give older children the responsibility for finding their hats on their coat pegs in readiness to play outside in the warm weather, to keep themselves safe in the sun. Children are kind, and they help others to find their hats when they need it. Children become increasingly independent.

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

- Staff offer activities to support children's literacy skills. For example, staff read factual books about insects. Children enjoy looking at the pictures with their friends as they learn about the different stages in a life cycle of a butterfly. Staff regularly read a wide range of stories throughout the day, and children listen enthusiastically. They enjoy sitting with staff in cosy spaces and engross themselves in the story. Furthermore, children enjoy borrowing books to take home. This supports children to make good progress.
- Staff ensure that children learn to take turns and share, such as when they play games with bats and balls in the garden. However, staff do not use some behaviour management strategies consistently across the nursery. For example, when children display unwanted behaviours, staff do not always help children to understand expected and appropriate behaviours. Therefore, children do not always understand what staff expect of them and, occasionally, repeat unwanted behaviours.
- Staff are skilled at supporting children with their mathematical development. Throughout the day, staff encourage children to use their counting skills and mathematical language. When children confidently build with bricks, they talk about making the tower bigger and wider.
- Staff have a clear understanding of children's interests, needs and stages of development. However, children are not always provided with the right level of

challenge. For example, staff do not recognise when some babies wander around the room and become disengaged from the activities that are provided. In pre-school, children who talk confidently are not always challenged to think more deeply. As a result, some children lose interest and miss out on learning opportunities that help them make the best progress.

- Leaders and managers have designed a curriculum that is based around children's individual needs, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, staff work with specialist teachers and professionals from the health sector and use a range of strategies that have a positive impact. However, when staff plan some activities to support older children's learning, they do not fully implement the learning intent. Therefore, children are not able to make as much progress as possible.
- The manager supports staff's well-being successfully, both professionally and personally. All staff receive thorough inductions and mentoring when they start in their new roles. Staff go on training courses to refresh their knowledge on children's ages and stages of development as they move rooms to work with children of different age groups.
- Parents are happy with the care that staff provide. Staff provide parents with information about their child's development and the progress they have made. Parents feel supported with ideas to further develop their child's learning at home.

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 staff to apply consistent behaviour expectations, so children receive clear messages about acceptable behaviour
- ensure that staff consistently use their knowledge of each child to plan and deliver activities that support and challenge them
- support staff to implement the intent of planned activities to build on older children's learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY500179
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10394676
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	66
Number of children on roll	77
Name of registered person	Toddlers Uni Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901158
Telephone number	01159444294
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

Toddlers University originally registered in 2004 and re-registered in 2016. The nursery is open five days a week, from 7.30am to 5.30pm, excluding bank holidays and a week at Christmas. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of whom, one holds an early years qualification at level 5 and nine hold qualifications at level 3 in early years education. The nursery offers government funded places.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Francis

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years foundation stage curriculum.
- 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 inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation.
- 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 nursery.

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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