

Inspection of The Lodge

SOUTHCOTE CHILDRENS CENTRE, 85 Coronation Square, READING, Berkshire
RG30 3QP

Inspection date: 6 August 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The re-organisation of the nursery has helped to create a nurturing and welcoming environment. This supports children to settle well, and feel safe and secure. Staff are learning to support children to quickly understand what they need to do and when. Staff place a strong focus on building children's personal, social and emotional well-being. Children benefit from the trusting and respectful relationships they develop with staff and their friends. Younger children and those who are new settle happily, as staff offer a warm welcome to them. Where children need extra help with regulating their feelings and emotions, staff sensitively help them. Children listen to staff and respond well to them as they learn to wait patiently and take turns with toys and resources. This good practice has a positive impact on children's behaviour.

Children show lots of enthusiasm and enjoy their time at the nursery. There is a broad continuous provision of resources available for children to explore. For example, they enjoy digging in the mud or playing in the role-play kitchen. However, there is a strong focus to support children to develop a love of books, stories and rhymes at this nursery. Leaders sit and read books, using puppets and props throughout the day. Children sit and share books together when they want some quiet time. Staff use stories to help children make sense of the world and develop a rich vocabulary, modelling new language for toddlers to hear clearly pronounced. This supports all children to make good progress in all areas of learning.

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

- The manager is a strong leader. She continues to strive for improvement and the raising of standards in the quality of education and care that children receive to the highest possible level. The provider has taken steps to meet the actions required to ensure that they meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage. Leaders and staff work together to ensure children benefit from high-quality care and are kept safe.
- The provider has devised a clear and carefully sequenced curriculum, which has been shared with staff and parents, and staff have been provided with an abundance of training and support strategies surrounding this. However, staff are not always clear about the best way to teach different skills to children. Some staff struggle to identify what skills are best taught through more structured activities and which can be best supported as children play independently. As such, the new curriculum is not yet fully embedded.
- Staff are alert to children's safety, especially during mealtimes. They sit closely monitoring children's well-being and support them to develop a growing

understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, children are reminded to remain sitting on their bottoms, and not to overload their cutlery when eating. Staff also diligently check food brought from home to ensure any allergens or food that could pose a risk of choking has been suitably cut before it is served. They explain what and why they are doing this to children, and this helps children to begin to assess risk for themselves and others.

- Staff closely supervise children's play, providing them with the language and support to help them regulate their feelings and behaviour. For example, staff take the time to explain why it is not acceptable for children to push their friends and how this might make them feel. They ask the children to think about what might make their friend feel better. This restorative approach supports children's personal, social and emotional development well, and helps children learn what is expected of them at the setting.
- Staff understand the importance of providing children with opportunities to be physically active each day. Children enjoy running, rolling, digging and bouncing as well as climbing and riding tricycles in the garden. As well as helping them develop the control and coordination over their growing muscles, these opportunities are essential for later literacy and maths skills and prepares children well for school.
- Partnership with parents is a strength. Managers make all families and children feel valued and respected. Parents' feedback shows how their children enjoy attending and the good progress that their children make, particularly their communication and language and personal, social and emotional development.

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 confidently and consistently implement the new curriculum to further encourage children's engagement and extend their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY563487
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10404903
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Brighter Futures For Children Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP563486
Telephone number	0118 9373849
Date of previous inspection	28 April 2025

Information about this early years setting

The Lodge registered under new ownership in 2018. The setting operates Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs nine members of staff. Of these, all hold an appropriate childcare qualification at level 2 or above and four staff, including the manager and deputy manager, have a level 6 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Leanne Merritt

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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector discussed the intent of the activities on offer and observed staff's interactions during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this had on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection, including about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of 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.

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