

Inspection of Dovedale Nursery

102 Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 0JQ

Inspection date: 4 July 2022

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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are incredibly well supported at this inspiring setting. They settle quickly and become confident and independent explorers. An extremely passionate and dedicated staff team creates a calm, nurturing and stimulating environment where children thrive. Staff have remarkably high expectations for children's learning. They consistently set challenges and encourage independence from a young age. Staff know children very well. They effortlessly follow children's interests and help them to develop a highly established sense of belonging and emotional stability.

The exciting environments, both indoors and outside, are organised to provide children with outstanding experiences across all areas of learning. Children are able to freely choose where to play. They are highly engaged in activities from the exceptionally well-planned and individualised curriculum.

Children's behaviour is exceptional. The setting's behaviour coordinator is highly trained and supported by the leadership team. Together, they lead staff to guide children to understand emotions. Staff consistently teach behavioural expectations by using story characters. These characters, such as 'Elsa the elephant', are learning to follow rules, such as sharing, taking turns and using kind words. The stories are taught in all rooms, and children gain a strong understanding of the concepts. Through this, children learn vital behaviour and social skills for future learning, and for building friendships.

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

- The management team has high expectations and fosters a culture of self-reflection. The team seeks advice and feedback, creating plans for improvements. The manager hosts regular parent forums and attends meetings with other managers in the area. As a result, the nursery provides the highest standards of care and education.
- Routines and transitions are managed extremely well. Room leaders are confident and delegate jobs effectively. Staff support leaders, using their initiative. Routines are understood by children. As a result, children calmly tidy up rooms and follow instructions.
- Observation and assessment systems are highly effective. Staff assess children's progress regularly. They work closely with the manager, assessing how best to support children. The 'Pyjama Drama' company provides group sessions and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, all children are well supported.
- Snack and mealtimes are exciting social experiences. Staff interactions are incredible. They engage children in sharing experiences and opinions. Older children are encouraged to put waste into the bin, and food is served on plates

similar to those at school. As a result, children gain maximum learning, ready for school.

- Teaching standards are outstanding and staff are clear about learning intentions. They set challenges and link activities. For example, an activity using real food to make meals is linked to mark making in the ice-cream shop. A child is encouraged to create the orders she has written down. Learning is extended to discuss smells, textures and tastes. As a result, children develop deep understanding and strong imagination.
- Rooms for younger children have environments rich in language. Staff model and repeat sounds, words and phrases, letting children take the lead. As a result, babies experiment with sounds and toddlers learn new words and phrases rapidly. Consistency across the nursery results in children becoming confident communicators.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is confident and knowledgeable. She is proactive in reporting concerns and creating care plans. The SENCo works closely with the local authority and schools to ensure smooth transitions and support are in place. As a result, children with SEND are settled and make pleasing progress.
- Visiting students from the on-site college are strongly valued and supported. They offer fresh ideas and energy to the nursery. Students receive outstanding examples of provision, which they adopt in their practice. As a result, teaching and interactions remain outstanding across the nursery.
- Staff welfare is a high priority. Staff have regular supervision sessions with the manager, who swiftly puts support in place. She is proactive in researching sector-wide issues and is aware of current difficulties that staff face. As a result, staff are understood and feel well supported and valued.
- Partnerships with parents are superb. Parents appreciate the regular communication with the nursery. They are knowledgeable about their children's development, reporting that their children settle quickly and enjoy nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are highly knowledgeable of their safeguarding responsibilities to keep children safe. They are confident in their understanding of safeguarding principles and safety on site. The setting has stringent processes for reporting safeguarding concerns, both within the setting and beyond, when needed. Staff's understanding of wider safeguarding aspects, such as the 'Prevent' duty, are strong, and staff know the possible signs to look out for. Thorough risk assessments of areas and the extra security in place ensure children's safety.

Setting details

Unique reference number	203907
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10127343
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 7
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	111
Name of registered person	Chelmsford College
Registered person unique reference number	RP527372
Telephone number	01245 293045
Date of previous inspection	13 October 2015

Information about this early years setting

Dovedale Nursery opened in 1991. It operates from a purpose-built building on the Moulsham Street campus of Chelmsford College. The nursery opens from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery employs 33 members of staff, 25 of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marianne Brown

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk of the nursery, to discuss the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity.
- Staff, children and parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection, sharing their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff.

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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