

Inspection of Little Raccoons Day Nursery (Elstree) Limited

The Hollybush, High Street, Elstree, Borehamwood WD6 3EP

Inspection date: 25 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children joyfully enter the setting with a skip in their step. They eagerly explore the stimulating activities in a purposeful way. The indoor and outdoor environments are carefully planned with age-appropriate resources that naturally encourage children to challenge and develop new skills. Children's physical and emotional well-being is a priority. Children develop self-esteem as they help to construct an obstacle course, jumping for joy when they master and accomplish it independently. Children are exceptionally well-behaved. They are patient and kind to one another, and staff are excellent role models. Children's unique characters flourish with the expert and tailored teaching to support individual needs.

Babies and young children are extremely relaxed and show that they feel safe in the care of the nurturing and attentive staff. Their happiness and contentment are evident in the laughter and giggles that flow throughout the setting. Children are highly motivated learners who develop resilience and perseverance. Staff respond to young children's first words exceptionally well. Children develop a love of reading. Stories and books are read to children in a way that excites and provokes thoughtful and meaningful discussions about the subject being taught. Staff respond to babies' babbles and gestures as they learn to communicate. All children make significant progress in their speech and language development.

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

- Teaching is of an exceedingly high standard. A clear and ambitious curriculum is securely embedded throughout staff practice. A robust key-person system and meticulous assessment process ensure that any gaps in learning are identified. Additionally, sequenced learning means children are building on what they already know. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive swift support from outside professionals such as speech and language therapists. As a result, all children make significant progress in all seven areas of learning.
- Staff continuously extend children's learning further through play. For example, they introduce mathematical concepts, such as 'big' and 'small', while children peel onions as part of a sensory and discovery activity.
- The way that staff champion children's individuality is exemplary. Staff are incredibly intuitive to the individual needs of babies and young children. For example, babies sing a nursery rhyme about a spider that ran away. A baby pulled a sad facial expression, indicating that they were sad that the spider had gone. Staff respond empathetically by suggesting they sing 'Incy wincy spider'. As a result, babies feel empowered and listened to, as they merrily sing about a different spider.
- Staff interactions are of a high quality across the provision. The manager is

passionate about continuously improving teaching standards. Staff benefit from a wide range of training opportunities and report excellent well-being and contentment in their role.

- Parents provide overwhelming reports of 'caring and trustworthy' staff, who their children admire. They say that 'communication is first class'. Parents feel an integral part of their child's daily learning experiences. They appreciate daily face-to-face communication and online updates of what their children have been learning. Assessments are regularly shared with parents, and they feel they know how to further support their children's learning at home.
- Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour and conduct. They support children's understanding of why behaviour rules are in place, and children respond well to gentle reminders of what is expected from them. For example, children use a sand timer to support them in turn taking with their peers. Staff give consistent and meaningful praise for children's positive behaviour and efforts. As a result, children show excellent manners and learn to self-regulate their emotions effectively.
- Children learn about diversity and the world around them by celebrating religious festivals. Children learn to respect and look after the environment through recycling activities, and learning about life cycles through planting and growing.
- Staff model meticulous hygiene routines. Babies and young children are becoming increasingly independent in their personal needs. Children self-serve their food at mealtimes. They take pride in clearing up after themselves and washing their hands and faces independently before going to play. Healthy meals are freshly prepared daily. Children develop good eating habits and learn the importance of healthy lifestyles.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is given unquestionable priority. The provider implements effective risk assessments to ensure that children can play safely indoors and outdoors. The provider and all the staff have regular safeguarding training and have robust knowledge to ensure the safety of children in their care. Additionally, regular safeguarding quizzes and staff meetings ensure that their safeguarding knowledge is up to date. Staff demonstrate that they can identify children who may need early help or are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation. There is a secure recruitment process to ensure staff's suitability to work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2633886
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10285482
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	79
Name of registered person	Little Raccoons Day Nursery (Elstree) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2633885
Telephone number	07515699550
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Racoons Day Nursery (Elstree) Ltd registered in 2021 and is situated in Hertfordshire. The nursery is open each weekday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, all year round, except public holidays and a week at Christmas. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff and a chef. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, with 3 staff holding a qualification at level 6. The provider is in receipt of funding for free early education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Louisa Taylor

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discusses the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The nursery manager and the inspector completed a tour of the setting, both indoors and outdoors, to understand how the early years provision and curriculum are organised. Additionally, the manager showed the inspector the premises and discussed how they ensure those are safe and suitable.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this had on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of group activities with the manager.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection. Parents and carers shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and also discussed self-evaluation. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the setting, and a selection of other records.

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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