

Inspection of Little Raccoons Nursery Finchley

42a Hendon Lane, London N3 1TT

Inspection date: 19 September 2023

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children receive a warm and caring welcome from staff at the start of their day. Staff have a good rapport with children and get to know them well. Children separate well from their parents. They show that they feel safe and secure in the care of staff. Children comfortably approach their key persons for hugs and cuddles. Staff expertly promote children's positive interactions. Babies maintain good eye contact as staff sing and read to them. They enjoy meaningful back-and-forth interactions from games, such as 'peekaboo'. Staff value children's comments, ideas and opinions. There is a respectful culture across the nursery. Children are confident to express their individual preferences for their play and activities.

Leaders have devised a broad curriculum. Staff plan a good variety of activities involving sensory exploration. For example, children learn to recognise different colours as they mix paints and observe change. Staff use spontaneous play to engage younger children and build their good concentration. For example, toddlers enjoy creating different sounds as they join staff to rustle metallic fabric. Across the nursery, children focus well during their play and learning. In general, children behave well. Younger children take turns and learn to share because staff quickly intervene to resolve minor conflicts appropriately.

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

- Staff promote children's developing language and communication well. They offer a clear running commentary of children's actions. Staff name and describe objects as they play with children. Babies quickly move from babbling to using intentional speech. Children who speak English as an additional language have good opportunities to learn words in English.
- Staff encourage children's early enjoyment of books and stories. Babies independently choose books to sit and look at. Older children learn to confidently recall the events of their favourite stories.
- Children gain good skills to manage their independence. They wash and dry their hands after playing and before eating. Staff teach children how to eat with good manners as they sit in groups at mealtimes. Children serve their own portions and drink from cups. They display positive attitudes towards eating healthy food.
- Children listen to staff and follow the routines. For example, children wait patiently and line up before going to lunch. They know they must walk inside and be kind to their friends. However, at times, staff do not consistently teach individual older children why rules are important. Therefore, not all older children display the level of understanding of the expectations which they are capable of.
- Staff promote children's good physical development. Children enjoy scooping

and filling containers when they play with coloured sand. They learn to make controlled arm and hand movements during collaborative mark making.

- Outdoors, children play actively. They climb energetically as they mount the slide. Children develop good coordination and balance as they travel over equipment and jump across pads. Children have opportunities to learn about life cycles through activities linked to books, such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. They enjoy occasional opportunities to observe growth and change from planting seeds.
- Partnership with parents is excellent. Parents speak highly of the manager and staff at the nursery. They comment how leaders and staff support them. For instance, staff offer advice and suggestions to parents about how they can promote their children's physical and language development. Leaders involve parents in the life of the nursery. They proactively consult them for their views and hold workshops and special event days that help build a sense of community.
- Staff are mindful of the goals that they want children to reach. They use their knowledge of each child and of child development to give praise and to set the next step of learning. Children benefit from staff's knowledge and skills. They make good progress in their development. Staff help children to acquire the skills necessary for starting school. Children learn to recognise letters and their sounds. They learn to talk about past events and sit together during carpet times.
- Leaders adopt a dynamic approach to support staff. The manager provides tailored mentoring for individual staff. She encourages staff to reflectively evaluate their practice and the impact of their teaching. This helps to identify areas for development or change. Staff benefit from effective training and access to ongoing professional development opportunities. This ensures that the quality of education continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They are alert to any signs or symptoms that may indicate that children's safety is compromised. Staff are aware of how to respond should they have a concern about a child's welfare. Leaders ensure that staff have regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. Leaders have good recruitment procedures and rigorous background checks to ensure that children are always cared for by suitable adults. Staff know children's individual dietary requirements. They make sure that sleeping children are always supervised and regularly checked.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- teach older children why rules are important and further develop their understanding of expectations.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2667231
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10308899
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 3
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	67
Name of registered person	Little Raccoons Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP530922
Telephone number	02031501616
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Raccoons Nursery Finchley registered in 2021 and is operated by a limited company. The nursery is situated in Finchley, in the London Borough of Barnet. It operates Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, except for a week during Christmas. The nursery employs 16 members of staff, including the manager. Of these, eight staff hold qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery provides early funded education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Olivia Awolola

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector viewed the nursery and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activities with the manager.
- 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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