

Inspection of Duchess Nursery Steventon

The Hay Barn, By The Meadow Farm, The Green, Steventon, Abingdon OX13 6RP

Inspection date: 17 July 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 Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children demonstrate that they are happy at the nursery. They settle quickly as they are greeted by staff who know them well. Staff support children to feel safe as they explore the environment and access the available resources. Children behave well and are kind and considerate to others. For example, at the beginning of the day, the children join together for breakfast. Older children are seen to be attentive and help the younger children in preparation for this. Staff praise the children well, which helps to build their self-esteem. Staff embed the key-person approach effectively. For instance, they ensure all children have their individual needs met and build secure and trusting relationships.

Staff work hard to ensure children's next steps in learning are well sequenced and planned for. Children enjoy a range of activities that offer interest and support their overall learning well. For example, babies have many opportunities to develop their physical skills as they learn to walk with walkers and learn to climb safely on the small climbing equipment. Toddlers enjoy creative activities that enable them to bring their imagination to life as they pretend to create birds and a birthday cake from dough, feathers and sticks. Older children are enthusiastic storytellers, and their imaginations come to life as they recreate well-known stories and films in their play.

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

- The management team has made significant changes to the nursery, staff practice and the environment since the last inspection. For example, the team has recruited new staff and provided a wealth of training, support and supervision to enhance the quality of teaching. Staff comment that they feel well supported by the management team. They explain that they receive ongoing appraisals, feedback and guidance that help them to continually reflect and enhance their practice and skills. The manager shows a commitment to continual improvement.
- Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the curriculum intent. The management team offers a learning environment that meets the needs of the children and the learning intention shared by the management. Overall, staff interact well with all children and offer a narrative as they play. As a result, older children are confident communicators. However, at times, staff do not give children sufficient time to think and respond to questions to develop their own ideas and solve problems.
- Children play and explore in a clean and safe environment. Recent changes to the layout of the baby room have improved the learning environment provided. For example, children now have designated places for sleeping, eating and free play. Renovation plans for the garden are well under way, and temporary

garden spaces are available to allow all children safe spaces to play. This helps to support the learning and development of those children who prefer to learn outdoors.

- Staff support children's independence skills well. For example, younger children are given cutlery to help them learn how to feed themselves independently. Older children are encouraged to have a go at putting on their own apron, coat and shoes. Older children are learning the importance of protecting themselves and others from germs. For example, staff talk to them about the reasons why we catch our coughs and wash our hands. However, staff working with the babies do not consistently ensure children are cleaning their hands with the wipes provided before eating to reinforce hygiene practices. This results in some children not washing their hands at all before eating.
- Children behave well, share and take turns accordingly. They are engaged in a good range of activities that support their interests and help with their future education. For example, as children play with magnetic shapes, staff skilfully weave mathematical concepts through their play. Children make choices about what they would like to do. However, at times, staff working with the toddlers and older children do not consistently organise change effectively. As a result, these children do not have time to finish what they are doing before being moved to planned group activities.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are strong. Parents talk fondly of the staff and the changes that have been made. They comment that their children are happy and that the staff are amazing at supporting their children. Parents are kept well informed about their children's day and progress through daily communication and an online programme. This supports children's learning at home effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team and staff have a secure knowledge of how to safeguard children. Since the last inspection, the designated safeguarding lead and all staff have attended appropriate child protection and safeguarding training. This has helped them to gain a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the processes to follow if a concern arises. The nursery is safe and secure and suitable risk assessments are in place to keep children safe. Robust vetting and recruitment procedures are maintained to ensure all staff working with the children are safe to do so.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- create more opportunities to inspire children's thinking and encourage them to

solve problems and initiate with their own ideas

- support staff, specifically in the baby room, to ensure good hygiene practices are followed consistently
- review the organisation of daily routines for older children to give children more time to adapt to changes in activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2614921
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10279268
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	56
Name of registered person	Swinbrook House Nursery Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2551542
Telephone number	01235 835108
Date of previous inspection	2 February 2023

Information about this early years setting

Duchess Nursery Stevenson registered in 2020. The nursery is located in Stevenson, Abingdon. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, from 7.45am to 5.45pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 13 staff, six of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tracy Bartholomew

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- 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 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 of a planned small-group activity.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.

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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