

Inspection of The Old Schoolhouse Kindergarten

239 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex CO3 8PB

Inspection date: 9 August 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
--	-------------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children flourish at this warm and welcoming kindergarten. They are greeted by enthusiastic and caring staff as they arrive and separate from their parents confidently. Children develop close relationships with staff and seek them out for reassurance or support. Children learn how to behave because staff act as good role models, supporting them to be respectful to each other and the environment. Children respond positively to praise. They are happy, polite and kind.

Children use their imaginations in the role-play areas. They create freely with paint sticks and practise early writing skills with a range of media. Young children wrap dolls in blankets and carefully rock them. Older children excitedly gather resources for a pretend picnic. Children develop good social skills. They are confident to talk to visitors and independently introduce themselves and their friends.

Children thoroughly enjoy playing outside. They develop their physical skills as they push themselves along on the bicycles, cars and scooters, showing good control. Children experiment with water, pouring it into guttering pipes, watching curiously as it flows along and giggling as they watch it fall into a bucket. They concentrate and persevere as they use different tools to fill containers in the sandpit and mud kitchen.

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

- The dedicated and passionate management team is enthusiastic and has a clear vision of how to provide high-quality care and education. It evaluates the provision consistently and is committed to implementing any improvements to raise the standard to the highest level. Staff report their well-being is given a high priority. As a result, staff are enthusiastic in their roles and there is a happy atmosphere throughout the kindergarten.
- Staff have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. For example, recent training completed by the whole team has extended staff's knowledge of supporting children's behaviour. Staff receive regular supervision meetings to support them to reflect on and improve their practice.
- Babies thrive in the kindergarten. They benefit from warm, loving interactions from attentive staff. When staff sit on the floor to read stories, babies snuggle up to them, listen attentively and point to the pictures. Staff encourage babies to investigate and interact with the resources. For example, they model how to push and twist buttons and flaps on interactive toys and encourage babies to try themselves.
- Generally, children experience a broad curriculum. Staff plan activities to follow children's interests and target learning to build on their individual next steps. However, staff do not plan purposeful and sequential learning opportunities to

challenge children further in all areas of learning.

- Staff interact well with children during activities, modelling how to complete tasks and encouraging children to think independently and have a go themselves. However, sometimes, during group activities, staff do not use effective strategies to help all children remain engaged and interested in their learning.
- Older children have opportunities to learn about different occupations, such as the police, doctors and vets. They celebrate festivals such as Easter and Diwali. However, staff do not consistently support children to develop further knowledge about different families, cultures and celebrations that are important to them and their friends at the kindergarten.
- Partnership with parents is a strength. Staff work hard to know the children and their families well. Managers form strong bonds with the parents of the children who attend. They offer parents guidance and support with any issues that arise. Parents value the continuous information they receive about their children's care and learning. Parents say that staff 'place the well-being of the individual children at the centre of everything they do'.
- The kindergarten cook provides children with freshly cooked meals, considering all dietary requirements or allergies children may have. This helps to ensure children have a healthy and well-balanced diet. Children sit together at mealtimes, demonstrating good social skills, and feed themselves from a very young age.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All members of staff know how to identify the possible signs and symptoms that a child may be at risk of harm. They have a secure understanding of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child's well-being or the conduct of a colleague. Staff complete training and have regular discussions to ensure their safeguarding knowledge remains up to date. Recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous and ensure all adults are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance planning to ensure children experience purposeful and sequential learning opportunities to challenge them further in all areas of the curriculum
- support staff to use effective strategies during group activities to ensure that all children are engaged and interested in their learning
- expand children's learning about different families and the different cultures and festivals that are important to them and their friends.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402180
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10127262
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	1 to 5
Total number of places	46
Number of children on roll	70
Name of registered person	The Old Schoolhouse Kindergarten Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP907013
Telephone number	01206 213800
Date of previous inspection	25 June 2013

Information about this early years setting

The Old Schoolhouse Kindergarten registered in 1996. There are 16 staff members who work directly with the children. Of these, 14 hold relevant childcare qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 8am until 6pm, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and one week over the Christmas period. The kindergarten provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marisa White

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the kindergarten and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector reviewed parent testimonials and talked to staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection, taking account of their views.
- 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 inspector carried out a joint observation with the early years practice manager.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the kindergarten.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022