

Inspection of Dolly's Daycare At Squirrel Lodge

Furley Park Primary Academy, Reed Crescent, Ashford, Kent TN23 3PA

Inspection date: 22 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive in this welcoming, child-centred and caring nursery. The manager and staff are enthusiastic and dedicated to improving outcomes for all children. Staff greet children with genuine warmth and kindness and settle them straight into activities in the morning. A strong key-person system supports children to feel safe and ready to explore their surroundings. Children often cuddle up to staff and giggle as they engage them playfully.

Staff are consistent and fair with their expectations and rules for children. Children respond to these very well and show they are clear about the rules and routines of the day. They enjoy forming friendships with their peers and regularly invite their friends into their play. Children are often heard laughing, exclaiming with joy and seen beaming with pride at their achievements.

Staff provide many resources and activities throughout the day that are engaging and exciting. They are well planned to include children of all ages and abilities. Children are keen to be involved in all activities and show great focus and determination when learning new skills. Staff play closely alongside children, supporting them to further their understanding, their vocabulary and to provide new challenges for them. Staff support children well to learn many skills that will support them in the future. They quickly help children develop independence, confidence and a love of learning.

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

- The manager and staff work hard to implement and embed an ambitious curriculum that supports children's development in all areas of learning. Activities are meaningful and planned with clear progression to build on children's existing knowledge. For example, for 'bird week' staff support children to increase their fine motor skills and language. Children excitedly take part in making binoculars, bird feeders and play dough birds.
- Staff support children's language development well. They add interesting and meaningful new words into their play. Older children learn 'vision, compact' and 'tip' when exploring birds and mud. Younger children repeat words such as 'squish, sticky' and 'mix' when making play dough. Staff often sing with all children and include everyone by signing and using actions. Children develop a good grasp of using and understanding new words in their growing vocabulary.
- Children are highly motivated to join in with the learning experiences. They listen intently to staff's explanations and show they fully understand each activity. Children show good perseverance and always finish a task before moving on. They concentrate when threading a string for a bird feeder and experience wonder as they use tweezers to find toy worms in edible mud.

- Staff successfully promote children's awareness of feelings and emotions. At small-group times, staff support children to share how they are feeling. Throughout the day, staff talk thoughtfully to children about their behaviour and the impact it may have on their friends. Children are forming meaningful friendships with their peers and beginning to self-regulate.
- Staff explore the cultural backgrounds and home language for most children. They support children to learn about some different festivals throughout the year and make these meaningful to the children here now. However, this is not explored fully enough for all children. This does not support children fully to enhance their self-identity and understand the similarities and differences in the community.
- Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is robust and determined. Staff work hard to ensure that children make progress in their learning and development effectively. Staff work in full cooperation with other agencies to ensure that all children, including those with SEND, get the support they need to be ready for their next stage in learning.
- The manager and staff maintain close and highly supportive relationships with parents and carers. Staff go above and beyond to ensure that families can get the advice and support they need. Parents comment on how happy they are with the nursery and how well their children progress. Parents know what activities their children are taking part in, but staff do not keep them fully informed about what their next steps in learning are. This does not help children experience continuity in learning and support their progress across home and nursery.
- The manager has created an open, honest and supportive culture for her staff. They all communicate very well together as a team and all their different skills are utilised to best support the children. All staff report being extremely happy and say they love their job with the children. This creates a calm, loving and caring environment, where children's needs are fulfilled.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- increase opportunities to celebrate the cultural background of children who attend, to further enhance children's self-identity and awareness of similarities and differences
- enhance the already strong partnership with parents, so that all parents know

their child's individual next steps and can support their learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY491027
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10311965
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	42
Name of registered person	Dolly's Daycare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP911240
Telephone number	01233503198
Date of previous inspection	17 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Dolly's Daycare At Squirrel Lodge registered in 2015. It operates from a purpose-built provision in the grounds of Furley Park Primary Academy, in Ashford, Kent. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm, during term time only. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs seven members of staff, of whom five hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Harvey

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their 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 inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents shared their views about 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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