

Inspection of West Downs Day Nursery

Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 5HT

Inspection date: 11 April 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children show very high levels of motivation as staff skilfully adapt activities to follow their interests. For instance, a love of trains is used to encourage toddlers to make tracks in paint, and babies pull themselves up to standing as they investigate baskets of intriguing resources. Pre-school children relish researching new topics because staff spark their imaginations with questions and exciting information. For example, staff stimulate children's minds with interesting facts about rainbows. Children listen intently as they make their own rainbows by dipping paper with coloured ink into water.

Children of all ages consistently develop their social and emotional skills. Babies learn to imitate adults by watching the warm and encouraging facial expressions of staff. Young children feed and care for their dolls as staff teach them how to consider the needs of others. Pre-school children learn how to respect the personal space of their peers. Older children who need additional support make significant progress because they are taught how to self-regulate their emotions. The teaching of emotional literacy is embedded throughout the nursery and prepares children very well for their transition to school.

Children show that they feel safe and secure. Abundant levels of care from highly nurturing staff help to create very supportive relationships. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They listen intently to what adults say. Toddlers share resources well, supporting each other to dig for treasure in the garden. Older children remind each other to follow the 'golden rules'. Welcoming and friendly staff help to make the setting a supportive and inclusive community.

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

- Leaders have devised an extremely well-sequenced curriculum that builds children's resilience and nurtures their positive mental health. Complementing this, staff in each room have set specific learning intents based on what children know and can do. For instance, staff promote the development of early speech in young toddlers. This lays the foundation for an effective transition to a room of older toddlers, where children are taught to use their growing vocabulary to talk about their feelings. As a result, children are well prepared for the next stage of their development.
- Staff provide outstanding support for children during important transitions. Settling-in sessions are arranged in close collaboration with parents and follow the individual pace of each child. In the babies' room, staff provide new families with an inspirational box of personal artefacts that relate to the likes and passions of each child's nominated key person. This helps parents prepare their children for change and has eased transitions for very young children.

- Staff teach children exceptionally well about the benefits of healthy eating. Children are encouraged to explore the taste, texture and smell of food from an early age. Children in pre-school are shown the raw ingredients of their meals and learn how foods benefit different parts of their bodies. This early understanding of nutrition has encouraged several children to try foods at nursery that they are reluctant to eat at home.
- There is very effective support for children who speak English as an additional language (EAL). For instance, cue cards help staff communicate everyday words in the child's first language, which staff then repeat in English. Staff also provide visual reinforcement of the words in Makaton sign. In addition, parents are encouraged to record themselves speaking key words in their home language for staff to play alongside English. This helps children with EAL feel at ease and supports rapid advances in their English language learning.
- Leaders collaborate well with staff to continually improve children's access to the provision. For instance, low-level doorbells have been installed in all rooms so that children at all stages of independence can better alert adults to when they need the toilet. Leaders also ensure teaching practice is of a consistently high quality through peer-on-peer observations. Feedback from these sessions is expertly evaluated and shared across the nursery to ensure staff are consistently delivering the highest standards of teaching and care.
- Leaders have created an inclusive culture with strong parent partnerships. Staff encourage children to share information about their home cultures and nationalities. Leaders organise a wide range of events that bring together children's families, for example Victory in Europe Day celebrations and summer fairs. Recently, staff organised a 'This is Us' week that linked to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender nationwide Pride events. This provided a context for children to talk about difference and to take pride in what makes them unique. Events like these help children to develop their self-esteem while learning about the diversity of modern British lives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Setting details

Unique reference number	110335
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10392138
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	97
Name of registered person	Childbase Partnership Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900830
Telephone number	01962 827393
Date of previous inspection	6 August 2019

Information about this early years setting

West Downs Day Nursery registered in 1998. It is part of the Childbase Partnership, an employee-owned company, which operates a large number of nurseries. West Downs Day Nursery is situated within the university grounds of West Downs student village in Winchester, Hampshire. The nursery is open from 7.30am until 6.30pm every day for 52 weeks of the year. The nursery receives funding for the provision of early education for children from the ages of nine months to four years. There are currently 34 staff, 19 of whom hold a relevant early years qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
David Watkins

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector discussed with leaders how they ensure the suitability of staff working in the nursery and looked at all relevant documentation.

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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