

Inspection of Apple Tree Day Nursery

Apple Tree Day Nursery, 593 London Road, PORTSMOUTH PO2 9SD

Inspection date: 12 September 2024

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 happily arrive, eager to start their day. Leaders ensure children receive consistent care practices. Staff have embedded well-organised and consistent routines that help children know what is happening next. For instance, key workers take responsibility for the parent handovers and walk with children to their rooms. This helps children to form secure attachments and settle quickly.

Children behave well. They demonstrate kind and considerate behaviours, such as inviting others into their play and taking turns. Staff regularly remind children of respectful behaviour, such as using 'please' and 'thank you'. Additionally, staff introduce them to new concepts, such as 'nurture related to nature'. For example, children watch caterpillars grow into butterflies and help release them safely into the wild. This also supports their understanding of life cycles and the world around them.

Leaders and staff are committed to creating an ambitious curriculum for all children. Children's inclusion and well-being are a prime focus. For instance, children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from opportunities to explore the sensory room, where they are encouraged to access learning in a calm and quiet environment. This can inspire children to be curious and develop their problem-solving skills. For example, children work on puzzles and manipulate resources to change colour. Additionally, children initiate conversation based on the sensory changes in the environment.

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

- Leaders ensure that staff have regular appraisals and mandatory training. Staff are encouraged to access online training that interests them related to their roles, such as 'storytelling training' and 'autism in girls'. This further helps to improve their knowledge and understanding of children with SEND and to provide opportunities for children to develop an interest in books.
- Leaders plan an ambitious curriculum based on the needs of all children. They have a clear focus of what they want children to know and be able to do. For example, to help prepare older children for going to school, they recently purchased school uniform from the schools that children will be attending, which inspires children to experiment with themes around school role play. However, the quality of some staff's teaching and interactions with children are variable and, therefore, children's learning is not always promoted at the highest level.
- Staff are good role models for children. They ensure that children follow rules and procedures, such as being kind and respectful. For instance, when children are excited during story time, staff regularly remind them of behavioural expectations, such as sitting on the mat, taking turns to share ideas and

listening to others. This helps children to know and understand what is expected of them and to value others.

- Staff encourage children to develop their independence skills. At mealtimes, older children collect their lunch boxes and drinks. At times, younger children are supported by staff to feed themselves. During free play, children confidently choose what they want to do. For instance, during outdoor play, they enjoy pushing vehicles and balls down the slide and discuss which went further and faster.
- Overall, children develop good communication and language skills, specifically during story time. Staff provide opportunities for children to interact. For example, children choose characters from a book to join them in adventures, and explore a range of scenarios using their imagination. However, at times, staff do not always provide children with sufficient time to respond during conversations, so they can share their ideas, knowledge and understanding of different concepts.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff ensure that parents have consistent opportunities to share what children already know and can do when starting, which helps staff to prepare children's next steps in learning. Staff ensure parents are fully informed about children's learning experiences daily and through safe online platforms. Additionally, staff ensure parents are up to date with the latest safeguarding information, such as online safety. This further helps parents support children's safety at home.
- Staff promote children's healthy lifestyles well. Children have access to designated areas of the garden, depending on age, to help ensure their safety. Young children develop core muscle strength while pulling themselves up on soft-play resources in preparation for early walking. Older children develop hand-eye coordination while throwing hoops onto cones and playing catch. Additionally, staff support children to gain an awareness of oral health and hand hygiene practices.

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:

- focus even more on supporting staff to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently high standard across the staff team
- develop staff's teaching strategies to further support children's communication and language skills, such as during conversations about new ideas and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2688379
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10354945
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	Apple Tree Day Nursery (Portsmouth) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2688377
Telephone number	02392652111
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Apple Tree Day Nursery registered in 2022 and is situated in Portsmouth, Hampshire. The nursery provides care for children from Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2 or 3. The nursery receives funding for the provision of early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Loretta Murphy
Nicole Atkinson

Inspection activities

- The provider showed the inspector around the premises and discussed how they ensure that they are safe and suitable.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The provider spoke to the inspector about children's learning and development.
- The inspector spoke to children during the inspection.
- The provider showed the inspector a sample of key documentation on request.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery 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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