

Inspection of Ashbourne Day Nurseries at Leavesden

Leavesden Green Junior Middle & Infant School, High Road, Leavesden, WATFORD
WD25 7QZ

Inspection date:

27 May 2025

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children eagerly arrive and are warmly greeted by nurturing staff. Staff take time to get to know the children and gather a wealth of information before they start. Children are happy and confident. They understand the expectations and rules in the nursery and behave well. While the curriculum is based around children's interests and building blocks for learning, there are weaknesses in the quality of education. The planning of activities is not carefully sequenced to build on what children already know and can do. This means the intended learning is not supported, which limits children's progress.

Children are interested in opportunities provided and are keen to have a go. Children are initially enthusiastic and engaged, but many lose interest and move on after a short periods of time. Staff do not know how to adapt activities to ensure they capture children's continued interest. For example, the children notice a tractor out on the field and ask a wealth of questions about what it his doing. Children are however, quickly moved on as staff do not know how to build on this interest to support learning.

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

- Staff know the children well and can identify their current learning and next steps. However, the curriculum is not fully embedded to support staff in implementing it effectively. For example, staff do not present the information to children in a way that offers the appropriate level of challenge or focus enough on what they want children to learn from activities.
- Staff engage children in conversations and speak to them with respect. Children are confident and ask questions. For example, they show curiosity with visitors about the coloured blocks and invite them to play. Daily routines support children's communication and listening skills. They understand to follow instructions as they come in from the garden and ensure they have the right clothing. Sometimes, staff do not consistently ask children questions that encourage them to think and build on what they already know and can do.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. Emerging concerns are not always acted on swiftly to ensure children get the help they need and reduce any differences in their learning. Having said that, children with SEND are settled in the nursery and have strong bonds with the staff team. Additional funding is not always used effectively to support children to make the best possible progress in their learning.
- Children benefit from many opportunities to develop their physical skills. Outside, children enjoy making large marks with chalk. They move their arms and shoulders and create big circles and lines, talking about what they have drawn. These large movements help develop their muscles and core strength.

The youngest children enjoy a large space inside. Activities are set up at a range of heights so children can play in different positions. Steps and a slide inside allow them practice to practice and gain confidence when using stairs.

- Staff speak positively about their role. They say their own welfare is considered leaders and they feel valued and supported. The management team does not however, use staff supervision and performance monitoring systems effectively. For example, weaknesses in practice are identified but the training opportunities are not tailored to build on staff's knowledge or practice.
- Parents are complimentary about the new management team and the systems they have brought in. They comment on the how leaders manage concerns and how they are open to ideas and suggestions. Parents talk of how happy their children are to attend the nursery and the wide range of activities the children have access too.
- A new leadership team is in place and some improvements made have already had a positive impact on outcomes for children. The leadership team have worked on the sharing of information. The leadership team recognise the weaknesses in practice and plans are being created on ways in which improvements can be made.

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 meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
develop the curriculum to ensure that it clearly identifies what it is that children need to learn, how this reflects their individual needs and offers appropriate challenge, to help them make at least good progress	01/09/2025
improve the arrangements to provide support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to meet their individual needs.	30/07/2025

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

- help staff to strengthen their questioning skills to give children more time to think and respond to questions, enabling them to share their thoughts and ideas
- develop systems to evaluate the impact of training on staff's teaching practice on children's learning
- make more effective use of additional funding to support children who are disadvantaged.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2720154
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10392217
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 4
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	67
Name of registered person	Ashbourne Day Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901058
Telephone number	01923 681092
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Ashbourne Day Nurseries at Leavesden registered in 2023. It is one of several nurseries owned by Ashbourne Day Nurseries Limited. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides government funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Smith

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took 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.
- Parents shared their views with the inspector.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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