

Inspection of The Strawberry Patch Nursery & Preschool

Becketts Farm, Hempstead, HOLT, Norfolk NR25 6LB

Inspection date:

24 September 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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Staff's passion and enthusiasm for early education is evident throughout the nursery. They are highly responsive to children and develop close, trusting relationships with them. Children are happy, safe and secure in this outstanding setting. From an early age, staff consistently nurture children's independence. They skilfully encourage them to manage tasks, such as washing and drying their own hands. Children enthusiastically show staff their clean hands and exclaim, 'I did it!' Staff respond with purposeful praise, which builds children's confidence and self-esteem. Staff are exceptional role models. As a result, children show exceptionally high levels of kindness, consideration and respect for others. For instance, at snack time, they instinctively offer cups and fruit to their friends, demonstrating remarkable empathy and thoughtfulness.

Staff expertly extend children's knowledge as they play. For example, children discover a grasshopper while exploring leaves and conkers in an activity tray. Staff share their excitement and explain the importance of returning the insect to its natural habitat. This enables children to develop a strong understanding of how to care for living things. They observe the grasshopper closely and discuss its features. Staff seize the opportunity to introduce new words, such as 'camouflage'. As a result, children develop an extensive vocabulary and a deep fascination with the natural world.

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

- Parents speak highly of the setting. They comment that 'staff go above and beyond'. They say, 'It always feels like a true partnership' and that their children have 'flourished since attending' the nursery. Parents are thoroughly supported and informed about what their children are learning and how they can help to support them further at home.
- Leaders and staff create a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff know what they want children to learn at each stage to help them excel in their education. Consequently, children immerse themselves in engaging and purposeful learning. Staff instinctively adapt their strong teaching practice to support all children's needs and varying abilities. As a result, children make excellent progress from their starting points.
- The support available for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is incredibly strong. Leaders carefully monitor children's development and quickly address any gaps. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that children receive the targeted support that they need.
- Children enthusiastically engage in scientific experiments to help deepen their understanding of rhythm and sound. Staff skilfully support them to explore how changing the volume of water in glass bottles alters the pitch when children tap

them. They investigate and test their own ideas out to support their developing knowledge of musical concepts and scientific enquiry.

- Outdoor play experiences provide awe and wonder for children. Staff take children on regular nature walks so they can observe the change in seasons, identify wildlife and discuss the animals in the surrounding fields. Staff ensure that children receive plenty of fresh air and exercise throughout the day. They practise throwing, catching and kicking balls to develop their hand-eye coordination. As a result, children develop exceptionally strong physical skills.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They serve themselves at mealtimes, share and take turns. Staff supervise children carefully while eating and engage them in meaningful conversations. For example, they talk about the vegetables and herbs growing in the nursery garden and make links with the food on their plate. Staff discuss the sweetcorn children are eating and skilfully explain how it grows on the cob. This deepens children's knowledge and enhances their understanding of where food comes from.
- Children in this setting radiate confidence. Their voice is heard by staff, and they actively contribute to their own learning. They freely share photos with visitors as they fondly remember meaningful experiences.
- The leadership team fully understands the importance of keeping up to date with legislation and guidance. It constantly reflects and evaluates practice to identify ways to improve the provision further. For example, leaders are currently reviewing and updating menu options, introducing new handwashing routines and enhancing sleeping arrangements for children in the baby room. This demonstrates their ongoing commitment to continually enhancing and developing the quality of care they provide.

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	EY245165
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10398725
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 5
Total number of places	98
Number of children on roll	89
Name of registered person	The Strawberry Patch Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP908953
Telephone number	01263 711229
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

The Strawberry Patch Nursery & Preschool registered in 2003. The nursery employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year, closing for two weeks at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.45am until 6.15pm. The nursery provides funded early education places for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Marie Walker

Inspection activities

- The manager completed a learning walk with the inspector and discussed their early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a planned activity.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this is having on the children's learning.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.
- The children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- 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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