

Inspection of Sandcastles Nursery and Beach School

425 Marine Road East, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 6AA

Inspection date: 24 January 2025

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 loving and caring environment. They form close bonds with their key workers and enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff provide children with an array of opportunities that are tailored to suit their individual needs and interests. All children develop strong foundations for learning and a sense of pride in their community. Children learn from their positive interactions with the staff, who have high ambitions for children's achievements. Staff supervise children well and are attentive to their individual needs.

Children develop high levels of self-esteem and demonstrate pride in carrying out tasks for themselves. For example, children eagerly put their belongings away on entry to the nursery. They are immediately excited to see their friends and enthusiastically explore the learning environment. Leaders ensure that children have an allocated key member of staff who provides consistent support. Before children start at the nursery, staff speak with parents to find out about their children's individual needs and interests. Staff then use this information to plan and support introduction visits. During skilfully organised settling-in sessions, staff offer constant support for children as they learn about the routine. Even the newest children demonstrate feelings of security with staff members and settle quickly.

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

- Leaders have devised a curriculum that provides children with the knowledge and skills that they need to get ready for school and beyond. Staff consider children's interests alongside their next steps in learning when they plan activities. Staff regularly ask parents about their children's experiences at home so that they can build on this in the nursery. This means that children's learning is relevant and appropriate for their stage of development.
- Leaders have a great focus on providing varied experiences for children and teaching them about the wider world. Leaders have expert knowledge, and they work passionately alongside staff to provide a 'beach school' curriculum on a weekly basis. Children learn about textures of real-life objects, such as seaweed, pebbles and sand. They know how to keep themselves safe when they are at the coast, as well as understanding why and how to protect the environment.
- Children's early language development is well supported. Staff repeat words back to children, modelling the correct language and introducing new words. For instance, during gardening club, they talk about 'seeds', 'spores' and 'gills'. This helps to increase children's vocabulary and understanding. However, some interactions between staff and children involve questioning techniques that do not invite children to elaborate on their ideas.
- Parents confirm that their children are making progress and attribute this to their time spent at the nursery. They explain how communications with the nursery

have helped support parents to extend learning at home. Their children have settled quickly, and they praise the process of information gathering when enrolling new starters.

- The support that staff give children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the nursery. Staff skilfully use information and observations to identify gaps in learning as early as possible and use effective plans to support children. Staff know children well and constantly review the provision to ensure that all children have equal access and are included. This helps to ensure that all children make progress from their starting points and their needs are met effectively.
- Leaders are highly reflective and extremely passionate about providing the best care for children. They regularly review and evaluate how well children's needs are being met. Leaders place high priority on staff well-being. Staff receive regular supervision sessions and training opportunities. Staff report how they feel very well supported and valued in their roles.
- Children are developing a love of books and reading. They select books independently and spend time studying the pages before turning them over. Books are carefully chosen for areas of learning that have similar content, which helps to extend learning for children. Staff make story times a fun and enjoyable experience.
- Staff promote fundamental British values by teaching children the importance of sharing, good manners, kindness and respect. Staff enrich children's experiences and learning through visits to care homes and other community projects. Staff offer extra-curricular activities, such as cookery and gardening clubs. Children learn how to incorporate prior learning. For example, during gardening club, children recall past knowledge on plants and instructions to help them grow.

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:

- extend children's language and thinking skills by using more effective techniques while they play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY476948
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10367353
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	70
Name of registered person	Sandcastles Childrens Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP533619
Telephone number	01524 831932
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019

Information about this early years setting

Sandcastles Private Day Nursery and Beach School registered in 2014 and is located in Morcambe, Lancashire. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and the manager holds early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 5.45pm. The nursery offers the government funded places for childcare.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Shaun Wilson

Inspection activities

- The children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at the nursery.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of group activities.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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