

Inspection of The Barn Nursery

Buckingham Farm, Stanbrook, Thaxted CM6 2NJ

Inspection date: 12 November 2024

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 have the very best start at this exceptional nursery. The skilled team of staff offers children the most wonderful experiences in this idyllic home-from-home setting, helping them to flourish and thrive. Children and families arrive with great enthusiasm and are warmly welcomed by attentive staff and the two nursery cats. Children separate confidently from their parents and quickly absorb themselves in the extensive and delightful learning experiences on offer.

Children demonstrate wonderfully secure attachments to their key person. From the very start of their journey, children are supported by staff who offer the love and nurture needed to develop strong emotional bonds. New children receive undivided attention from their key person as they settle into their environments. Children make special friendships and show kindness and consideration as they share their toys and push each other on the hammock swing. Staff act as positive role models and regularly discuss expectations with children. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary.

There is a strong commitment to providing all children with magical experiences. Leaders have developed a curriculum that places children at the centre and is filled with wonder and joyful play. Children engage in experiences that excite, challenge and ignite curiosity. They make 'magic potions' in the 'Wonder Wood' and roll tyres down a grassy hill. They laugh with infectious joy as they chase after them at speed.

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

- Children across the nursery are exposed to the richest language. At every possible opportunity staff engage in babble, chatter and meaningful conversations. The youngest children hear staff describe the 'fluttering' and 'twirling' leaves as they fall from trees. Older children learn new words, such as 'squabble' and 'spontaneous', as they explore different words in a story book. Consequently, children are becoming capable and confident communicators.
- Young children are eager explorers. Staff provide a wealth of opportunity for them to investigate and develop curiosity. They scoop and transport sand between bowls and explore sensory bottles. They are developing a strong sense of independence as they manage their personal needs and try hard to overcome challenges, such as when their wheeled toys topple over.
- Children's experiences support them to develop a deep understanding of the wider world. They take care of the nursery animals, which include a pig and a rabbit, and grow their own fruit and vegetables. They explore the local community, visiting the windmill and market. Parents are welcomed into the nursery to talk to children about their professions.

- Staff immerse children fully into the remarkable environments. In the 'Wonder Wood', children listen to the story of 'Goldilocks' before making 'porridge' in the mud kitchen. Children climb trees, build dens and learn to manage risks and challenges in the forest school sessions. Outside the setting, they learn about road safety during the many nature walks in the village.
- Staff deliver exceptional teaching. Children learn about the pyramids in Egypt and why we wear poppies on Remembrance Sunday. They show a ferocious appetite for knowledge, asking questions and developing a growth mindset. All children, including the youngest babies, show high levels of involvement in their play and learning. They have tremendously positive attitudes to learning.
- Caring and attentive staff support children to manage a range of emotions. Children learn about feelings and are positively encouraged to share these with adults. Family photos adorn the walls and help children to develop a strong sense of belonging.
- Children visit the local care home regularly. They also invite residents to the nursery for play sessions, as well as children with special educational needs and/or disabilities from the local primary school. Consequently, children are developing a positive sense of self and what makes them unique. Furthermore, they are growing a strong awareness of similarities and differences and how to embrace diversity.
- Parents are respected and valued as partners. They are fully involved in their child's learning and development and are kept fully informed about the progress children make. Parents describe the setting as 'warm, nurturing, and homely'. They express how delighted they are to have a place at the nursery.
- Leaders are inspiring. They have high standards for themselves as well as the wider team. Meticulous reflection and targeted tracking of children's progress means that the curriculum, teaching and environments are continuously reviewed and improvements are made. Regular, high-quality supervision with staff helps to identify areas for development. As a result, the quality of teaching is of exceptional quality.

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	EY540176
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10367703
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	1 to 11
Total number of places	68
Number of children on roll	101
Name of registered person	The Barn Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP540175
Telephone number	01371831262
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2019

Information about this early years setting

The Barn Nursery is located in Thaxted, Essex. It re-registered in 2016 and is privately owned. The nursery employs 24 members of childcare staff. Of whom, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, including one with qualified teacher status, and 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. It closes for one week between Christmas and New Year. Sessions are from 7.45am to 6.15pm. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged from nine months up to four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Clare Ford

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years foundation stage curriculum.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a circle time.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- 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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