



Hillside Playcare Little Waltham

We are OUTSTANDING



Inspection of Hillside Playcare

United Reformed Church, The Street, Little Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3NT

Inspection date:

19 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish and thrive in this family orientated nursery. They form heart-warming bonds with staff who know them extremely well. Children form solid friendships with all children. They develop exceptional levels of empathy and take care to include everyone in play activities. Children show incredibly high levels of self-control, and are able to deal with disappointment well. They develop exceptionally high levels of independence. They help to lay the table, carry their plates, wipe their noses, push in chairs and put everyone's water bottles back in their place. Children patiently wait for their turn with a toy and communicate their intentions exceptionally well. For example, children carefully explain to each other that when the timer has ended, they would like to wear the princess dress.

Children have high levels of self-esteem and confidence for their ages. They are proud of their achievements and cannot wait to share them with staff. For example, children eagerly tell staff that they have tried potatoes for the first time. They understand the effect food has on their bodies. Children explain, 'potatoes will make me grow.' They learn about where their food comes from. Children help to harvest vegetables and prepare them for snack. They thoroughly enjoy smelling and exploring the vegetables, as well as cutting fresh herbs to add to their meals. Children are very well behaved and know exactly what is expected of them. They are kind and considerate of their friend's feelings and use exceptional manners. Children learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They consider the effects of wearing thick fancy-dress costumes when it is really hot.

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

- The provider, who is also the manager, has developed an exceptionally strong staff team who are dedicated to providing the best care and education for children. Children's interests and happiness are at the heart of everything they do. The manager is an excellent role model for all staff. She has passed on her expert knowledge, enabling staff to provide an ambitious curriculum which means all children make excellent progress.
- Staff skilfully facilitate children's play. They know exactly when to step in to build on what children already know and can do. Consequently, children display extremely high levels of problem-solving skills, and continually challenge themselves and develop vivid imaginations. For example, children are fascinated with who is the tallest. They carefully think about the ways in which they could find the answer. Carefully facilitated by staff, children excitedly measure each other on the floor using toy bricks. Children use words such as 'taller', 'shorter', 'smaller', and 'the same' to describe each other's height.
- The provider has high expectations of staff. Robust professional development plans are in place. Staff skills are valued and implemented to maximum impact.

Staff take advice from each other about how to further improve their already excellent practice. Staff are eager to complete courses to further their knowledge and skills and the provider is very supportive of this. Staff swiftly identify gaps in children's learning and source their own training so they can provide the best level of support.

- Partnerships with parents are exemplary. They are exceptionally well informed about the curriculum and what they can do to continue learning at home. Parents highly recommend the setting, with many planning for future children to attend. The provider arranges days where parents and other family members can attend the setting to meet each other and see the nursery in action.
- Communication and language is a vital part of the curriculum. Staff provide excellent commentary during children's play, modelling language and adding new words into their vocabulary at every opportunity. Children confidently use new words in their play that they have learnt. For example, children remember they need to be 'patient' when waiting for their turn with a particular toy. Staff help children build strong foundations for speaking and listening. Even the youngest children confidently listen, pay attention and take part in circle-time activities. Consequently, all children are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning, including the move to school.
- Staff are skilled at seizing opportunities to incorporate a wide range of learning into play. For example, a group of younger children are completely engaged as staff read them a book about their bodies. Children enthusiastically identify their legs and toes. Staff incorporate mathematics seamlessly into the activity. Children excitedly count how many toes they have. Staff skilfully extend this by introducing adding and subtraction. Children are mesmerised by staff's interactions and are eager to learn new things.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure understanding of child protection procedures. They can identify concerns and know the steps to take to keep children safe from harm. Staff know the action to take if they have concerns about the behaviour of other staff. They are clear about their responsibility to report concerns outside of the setting if the provider is not taking action. Staff have a strong knowledge of wider safeguarding issues, such as families being drawn into extremist views. Robust recruitment and ongoing suitability measures are in place to ensure that all staff are, and continue to be, suitable to work with children. Staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities. They carry out effective risk assessments to keep children safe. Staff keep the premises secure and have effective emergency procedures in place.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2516011
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10237901
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Talbot, Maxine Louise
Registered person unique reference number	RP906777
Telephone number	07792838328
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2022

Information about this early years setting

Hillside Playcare registered in 2019. It employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including the provider who holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens Monday, Tuesday and Friday, from 8.30am to 3.30pm, and from 8.30am to 1pm on Wednesdays. It operates under a separate registration, The Hillside Barn, at a nearby premises on Thursdays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Daniella Adams

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider, who is also the manager, and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- 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 observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- 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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