

Inspection of Elmstead Nursery Ltd

Elmcroft, Holly Way, Elmstead Market, COLCHESTER, Essex CO7 7YQ

Inspection date: 8 July 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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

Children flourish and thrive in an exceptional learning environment. They play safely, accessing a wealth of experiences and opportunities. Children are well behaved and have excellent manners. Children have strong relationships with their key persons and with their peers. They are exceedingly independent with self-care and at mealtimes. Children have secure routines and opportunities to master skills through consistent daily practise.

Children are highly motivated to learn. For the Queen's Jubilee, the children made flags and crowns, enjoyed singing the national anthem and it became a nursery favourite as children say 'We want to sing the Queen's song again.' The colourful displays are welcoming and share children's creations. 'Our sunflowers make us feel bright and cheerful' captions the independent paintings of flowers by children.

Children have high levels of conversational skills and a growing vocabulary bank. They engage in meaningful discussions with practitioners, who continually question, listen, and acknowledge the voice of the child. Children make visits to the local post box to post letters and enjoy nature walks in the community. They place shells up to their ears and listen intently. A practitioner asks 'What does it sound like?' Children say that it sounds like the sea and 'Like the waves'. Children laugh and giggle as they play outdoors, climbing on the tyres and making up their own games to challenge themselves.

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

- The nursery team are exceptionally passionate about their roles. They put high emphasis on children making progress and succeeding. The ambitious curriculum follows the interests and needs of the children. Children are making excellent progress. Those who need extra support have the best possible start to their learning journey. The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator and key persons are highly knowledgeable. Children are well prepared as they move on for the next stage of their education.
- Children explore the play dough while making boats. They use their knuckles to squash and squeeze, which develops their small-muscle skills. They use different shells to decorate the boats and make masts. The practitioner extends the learning by sharing a book about the seashore and they match the shells. Children are encouraged to question and problem solve. For example, when a boat breaks a child suggests 'Maybe a crab broke it.' They work to fix the problem and try out and test their ideas to mend the boat.
- Children excitedly explore the mud kitchen and use a whisk to make cement using water. A practitioner asks 'What can we do to make it thicker?' Children use a ladle to transfer more mud and pat it down. Children use their hands to

explore the soil and mud. They notice the water 'Being brown and dirty' as the mud is added. Children shout 'We are making cement'. They are keen to share their learning. For example, they say 'We put it on the bricks, and we spread it, put a brick on, it goes quite high, it makes a house.'

- Children become deeply absorbed in creating and writing their own story on a large sheet of paper. The storyline starts with going on holiday and the children think of their own ideas about what happens along the way. Children use the small-world figures to tell the story and mark make. The practitioner tells the narrative alongside. A child comments 'It's a disaster'. Children share the story at group time and recall the events of the adventure for all to enjoy.
- Children squeal with excitement as they all gather to watch the group experiment. 'This is so much fun' the children say as the practitioner pours the vinegar on and the 'lava' overflows. Practitioners embed counting, early addition and introduce mathematical language, such as more or less. Practitioners name shapes, inviting children to sit at the hexagon table and talk about objects that are small, medium, and large.
- The nursery manager is professional, and the well-being of her team is highly important. She is organised, adaptable and forward thinking. The professional development and training of the team is important and has a very positive impact on children's learning. Partnership working with parents is outstanding. Parents talk warmly about practitioners being caring and approachable. They feel the communication is excellent and they are well informed of their children's progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is of high priority and children are kept safe from potential harm. Practitioners have a secure knowledge of protecting children and the issues related to wider society, such as county lines and the 'Prevent' duty. They know how to recognise potential signs of abuse and children who are vulnerable. Children are supervised appropriately and kept safe at nursery by vigilant staff. The procedure for reporting concerns is embedded and staff know who to report to. The designated safeguarding lead is clear about her role and responsibilities. She knows the robust procedures in place to report concerns to the local authority if needed.

Setting details

Unique reference number	650062
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10127385
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	49
Name of registered person	Elmstead Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903363
Telephone number	01206 827583
Date of previous inspection	8 December 2015

Information about this early years setting

Elmstead Nursery Ltd registered in 2000. The nursery employs seven members of early years staff. Of these, two staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and one member of staff holds a qualification at level 2 and three members of staff are unqualified. The manager holds qualified teacher status and has a Masters degree in early years at level 7. The nursery also employs an administrator. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, during school term times. Opening times are from 9am until 3.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Helen Clutterham

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed their curriculum and what it is that they want their 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.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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