

Inspection of Dean Close Little Trees Christchurch

Airthrie School, 27-29 Christchurch Road, Cheltenham GL50 2NY

Inspection date: 21 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The nursery uses the open-plan indoor play spaces well. Staff make good use of being able to mix age groups to adapt the curriculum and teaching to meet children's needs. During shared play times, older children model learning and skills for younger children. Staff comment that older and younger siblings also enjoy these times to play together.

Outdoors, staff take advantage of being on the school site. Children can use the exciting play equipment in the school space as well as their own outdoor area. Older children build on their physical skills. They work out how to move through the mini indoor assault course. They climb on board the wooden pirate ship, using their imaginations as they search out 'hidden treasure'. Children cooperate with friends as they play football on the mini pitch. They develop confidence and resilience as they continue trying.

Younger children listen and learn outdoors too. They explore the sound of percussion instruments with staff. Staff encourage children to bang, shake and rattle the instruments. They praise children when they manage to make sounds. Staff encourage children to listen to the environmental sounds outdoors. They talk about the different bird songs, the noise of planes in the sky or the sounds of the older children. Staff make links to favourite nursery rhymes, encouraging children to play their instruments and sing along.

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

- The manager and staff know children well. Each child has a key person who speaks regularly with parents. They find out what interests children at home. They use this information to plan activities to stimulate children's curiosity and support further learning. For example, staff have brought in more activities based around children's recent interest in farm animals. Children create with pretend farm buildings, make fields using cereals and add a pond circled with pebbles. They talk about the different animals and recognise the sounds they make. They listen to stories and explore factual books about animals and farms.
- Staff support children's communication and language well. They ask questions, pose challenges and use children's home languages to help all children join in. Staff have created a dual-language book with colours for children. They also provide a tray with coloured rice for children to explore. Children identify the different colours and tell staff. Children use English and their home languages. Staff working with the younger children are learning signs to support communication. All children talk and build on their vocabulary well.
- Children's behaviour is good. They share with others and take turns in conversation. They concentrate well as they play. Staff offer reminders to be

careful, for example when children try to shut the playhouse door while others are wanting to get inside. However, children are sometimes confused about what they should do. For example, at mealtimes staff tell children it is nearly time to eat. Children rush to wash their hands and miss staff telling them that they need to put toys away first.

- Staff provide accessible toys and resources. Children can choose what they want to do. They gain confidence in expressing their wants and needs. Older children join in with small-group times to talk about how they are feeling. Staff give them plenty of time to talk and say what they want to say. Children show respect for others. They listen to each other and wait for their turn to speak. Children are learning that their views are important and that others will listen to them.
- Children show they feel safe and secure. They engage well in activities, playing alongside or with others. They 'cook dinner' using the pretend kitchen units. They find the pots, pans and play food they want and put the food in the oven to cook. Other children pour water into and out of different containers. For the most part, staff engage the children well. On occasion, staff are busy with a small group and miss when other children might need support or help.
- Staff encourage children's mathematical learning. Children create their 'pirate ship' with the wooden blocks. Staff ask them to describe the shapes and count the blocks. At snack time, children count how many cups and plates they need. Staff offer reminders about healthy food choices. They encourage children to pour their own drinks and use knives and forks to eat. Children develop their self-help skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know what to do in the event of concerns about the well-being of children. They keep their training up to date, so they are aware of current legislation. The manager makes sure that staff are suitable to work with children. She monitors all staff to make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. Staff help children to manage their own safety. For example, they help younger children work out safe ways to climb the steps to the slide and slide down.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- improve the organisation of changes in the routine to make sure support for children helps them know what to do next
- make sure that staff notice and include children better in activities in ways that help them learn and develop further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2651879
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10231520
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 3
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	52
Name of registered person	Dean Close Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP534969
Telephone number	01242512837
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Dean Close Little Trees Christchurch registered in 2021 and operates from the site of Airthrie School. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round. The setting employs seven staff who work directly with the children. Of these, one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 7, two hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 6 and one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 3. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anita McKelvey

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 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 talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the older children.

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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