

# Dean Close Little Trees Ashchurch, Tewkesbury

**Unique reference number (URN):** 2825235

**Address:** 7 Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury, GL20 8DS

**Type:** Childcare on non-domestic premises

**Registered with Ofsted:** 03/02/2025

**Registers:** EYR

**Registered person:** Dean Close Nurseries Limited

## Inspection report: 17 June 2026

|                    |                                                                                     |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exceptional        |                                                                                     |
| Strong standard    |                                                                                     |
| Expected standard  |                                                                                     |
| Needs attention    |  |
| Urgent improvement |                                                                                     |

### **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

### **How we evaluate safeguarding**

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- **Not met:** The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

## Needs attention

### Achievement

Needs attention 

Children do not consistently achieve as well as they could across all areas of learning. Variability in the quality of teaching and learning means that some children have fewer opportunities to build securely on their existing knowledge and skills. Consequently, some children do not make the progress they are capable of.

Children make some progress from their starting points. Children demonstrate recall of previous learning and apply what they know during play and activities. For example, they confidently talk about emotions and relate colours to different feelings. They develop communication skills, learn to manage their feelings and build positive relationships with their peers and staff.

Most children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make progress over time and develop some of the skills needed for their next stage of learning. However, inconsistencies in learning experiences mean that some children are not as well prepared for their next stage of learning as they could be.

### Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Needs attention 

Routines and transitions are not consistently organised effectively across the nursery. Children sometimes spend extended periods waiting while daily routines are completed, which reduces their involvement in learning and play. Staff do not consistently use these periods to engage children in meaningful interactions and experiences. As a result, some children become passive observers rather than active participants and do not consistently demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning.

Leaders have established clear expectations for behaviour and attendance. Staff work positively with parents to support children's behaviour and follow-up children's absences appropriately. Children generally understand expectations and respond positively to routines. They are developing independence through daily experiences, such as making choices in their play and following instructions from staff.

Children develop positive relationships with staff and their peers. They generally behave well, learn to take turns and are beginning to understand how their actions affect others. Staff support children to recognise and talk about their feelings and encourage them to participate in group experiences. However, variability in the organisation of routines and the quality of interactions means that children do not consistently benefit from experiences that sustain their engagement and participation. Consequently, children's attitudes to learning are not promoted consistently well across the nursery.

### Children's welfare and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Staff do not consistently provide the high-quality interactions children need to support their wellbeing. When children become tired, unsettled or disengaged, staff do not always

respond in ways that help them feel involved, reassured and supported. At times, practical tasks and routines take priority over children's involvement in experiences. As a result, some children spend extended periods disengaged and do not consistently benefit from responsive interactions that promote their emotional wellbeing and sense of involvement.

Leaders have established appropriate routines to support children's care needs and wellbeing. However, staff do not implement these consistently well enough to ensure that all children benefit from responsive interactions throughout the day. Staff generally meet children's personal care needs sensitively and follow established routines for sleep, hygiene and mealtimes. Parents speak positively about the care their children receive and report that staff know their children well. Children develop trusting relationships with staff and are generally confident to seek comfort and reassurance when needed.

Children are generally happy, settled and develop positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children are familiar with daily routines and demonstrate a sense of belonging within the nursery. However, variability in the quality of interactions means that children do not consistently benefit from the nurturing experiences that leaders intend.

## Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Staff do not consistently demonstrate a secure understanding of child development. They frequently refer to broad learning intentions, such as developing children's fine motor skills, but are less clear about how activities build on children's stage of development or what children need to learn next. For example, staff provide activities, such as painting and sensory play, but are less confident in explaining how these experiences are sequenced to build children's knowledge and skills over time. As a result, learning experiences are not always purposeful enough to support children's progress or deepen their understanding.

Leaders have established a curriculum that prioritises communication, language and school readiness. They have recently provided training to strengthen staff understanding of planning and curriculum delivery. While some experiences are purposeful and linked to familiar stories and themes that develop children's communication, language and emotional understanding, staff do not implement the curriculum consistently across the nursery. Staff do not always build on children's prior knowledge or adapt activities to reflect what children need to learn next. Consequently, the quality of teaching varies across the nursery and children do not consistently experience learning that builds securely over time.

Children access a suitable range of activities and experiences across the areas of learning, including sensory play, story-based activities, creative experiences and opportunities to develop physical skills indoors and outdoors. However, teaching is not adapted consistently well enough to maintain children's engagement or meet differing stages of development. In some outdoor areas, limited resources reduce opportunities for children to explore, investigate and extend their learning independently. Consequently, some children do not consistently benefit from ambitious learning experiences that build securely on what they already know and can do.

## Inclusion

Needs attention 

Staff do not consistently recognise how barriers to learning should influence teaching, interactions and learning experiences. While they can identify the needs of some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those receiving additional support, they are less confident in identifying and responding to emerging barriers to learning and wellbeing. As a result, some children do not consistently receive the support they need to participate fully in learning.

Leaders work with parents and external professionals to support children with SEND and other identified needs. They use support plans and targeted interventions, where concerns have been recognised. However, staff do not consistently translate this information into practice. Although they can describe children's needs and identify broad next steps, they are less confident in explaining how teaching, interactions and learning experiences should be adapted to reflect children's individual circumstances. Consequently, children do not consistently benefit from well-targeted support across the provision.

Children who require additional support are generally settled and included in nursery life. Staff build positive relationships with children and families and demonstrate a commitment to supporting children's wellbeing. Children benefit from support from external professionals where appropriate. However, variability in how support is understood and implemented means that children's experiences are not consistently matched to their needs, which limits how effectively barriers to learning are reduced.

## Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders have not yet secured consistently effective practice across the nursery. Weaknesses in staff knowledge, interactions and curriculum implementation remain evident in children's day-to-day experiences. This means the quality of children's experiences varies across the nursery. Although leaders have provided training, supervision and support to address identified weaknesses, these actions have not yet secured the improvements they intend.

Leaders have established monitoring arrangements, including supervision meetings, to identify priorities for improvement. They demonstrate an accurate understanding of the nursery's strengths and areas for development. However, improvement planning does not provide a sufficiently clear framework for evaluating the impact of actions on children's experiences and outcomes. Recent changes in leadership have contributed to a period of transition as leaders work to embed consistent expectations across the nursery.

Leaders have established systems to support staff wellbeing and professional development. Staff speak positively about leadership support, supervision arrangements and the guidance they receive from leaders. Leaders place a strong emphasis on working in partnership with families through regular communication, parent meetings, stay-and-play sessions and targeted family support. They work in partnership with parents and external professionals to support children with additional needs and promote continuity in children's care, learning and development. Parents value the approachable leadership team, the positive

relationships staff build with their children and the regular communication they receive about their children's care and learning.

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## **What it's like to be a child at this setting**

Children do not consistently benefit from learning experiences that build on what they need to learn next. Staff do not always adapt activities and interactions to meet children's individual needs. As a result, some children spend periods of time disengaged from play and learning and do not consistently develop their communication, curiosity and participation as well as they could. Nevertheless, children develop some knowledge and skills across the areas of learning and are beginning to build the confidence and independence they need for their next stage of learning. They enjoy joining in with stories, songs and sensory experiences and demonstrate confidence as they explore resources and become familiar with routines throughout the day.

Children generally feel welcomed and valued. They develop positive relationships with staff, who know them and their families well. Parents speak positively about the nursery and the support they receive. Children confidently access familiar routines and play alongside their peers. They are developing independence skills, such as making choices in their play, following expectations and engaging in familiar routines. However, strategies to support children who face barriers to learning are not consistently embedded in practice. This means some children do not consistently receive the support they need to participate fully in learning experiences.

Children are generally happy and settled within the nursery. They enjoy familiar routines and demonstrate a sense of belonging. Staff support children to develop friendships and encourage them to take part in group experiences. Children generally behave well and respond positively to familiar expectations. However, the quality of children's experiences varies across the nursery. Staff do not consistently use interactions to deepen learning, sustain engagement and promote children's participation. Consequently, children do not consistently benefit from the ambitious experiences leaders intend for them.

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## **Next steps**

To meet the requirements of the Early years foundation stage the provider must take the following actions by the assigned date:

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Completion Date |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| improve procedures to ensure that adaptations are consistently applied for all children who may have barriers to their learning                                                                                     | 29/07/2026      |
| deliver targeted coaching to staff to strengthen the quality of interactions and ensure children remain engaged, involved and supported throughout the day                                                          | 29/07/2026      |
| implement an ambitious and sequential curriculum that builds consistently on what children need to learn next, ensuring staff understand child development and how learning progresses across the areas of learning | 12/08/2026      |

## About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, staff, parents and children during the inspection.

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.

### Inspector:

Holly Smith

## About this setting

**Unique reference number (URN):** 2825235

### Address:

7 Ashchurch Road  
Tewkesbury  
GL20 8DS

**Type:** Childcare on non-domestic premises

**Registration date:** 03/02/2025

**Registered person:** Dean Close Nurseries Limited

**Register(s):** EYR

**Operating hours:** Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday : 07:30 - 18:00

**Local authority:** Gloucestershire

## Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 17 June 2026

### Children numbers

**Age range of children at the time of inspection**

**0 to 4**

**Total number of places**

**56**

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### Our grades explained

**Exceptional** 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

**Strong standard** 

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

**Expected standard** 

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

**Needs attention** 

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

**Urgent improvement** 

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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