

Inspection of The Commons Nursery & Pre-School Ltd

The Annexe Building, Howlands Baptist Church, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire
AL7 4RS

Inspection date: 27 November 2024

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

Children remain deeply engrossed in activities throughout their time at the setting. Staff are skilled at planning exciting learning opportunities that meet the varied interests of children who attend. Once the vibrant breakfast club has finished and children have left for school, staff transform the environment to support the needs of the nursery and pre-school children.

Staff encourage children to develop good language skills. High-quality discussions are heard between staff and children throughout the session, with staff role-modelling new and descriptive language. For example, when making bird feeders, staff encourage children to explore the 'sticky' lard and the 'grainy' seeds they use. Staff make excellent use of group sessions to encourage children to practise their language skills. Children are encouraged to discuss their thoughts as a group, listen to the opinions of others and join in with their ideas.

A highly effective and flexible key-person system ensures all children feel safe and secure in the setting. Leaders consider the natural bonds that children form with adults and foster these close relationships well. This is particularly evident when supporting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The well-qualified staff develop close relationships with children and families to gain a deep understanding of children's individual needs. They use this knowledge to plan appropriate learning opportunities that support children to make good progress.

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

- Relationships between staff and parents are strong. Leaders facilitate effective methods of communication. This allows staff and families to share vital information about children's routines. Parents attend regular consultation sessions and gather ideas about how to further promote children's learning. For example, staff create activity bags for children to share with parents at home. Parents are complimentary about staff and the support they provide for the whole family. They acknowledge the positive impact this has on children's well-being.
- Children behave well in the nursery and pre-school. Staff make good use of regular group sessions to support children's understanding of appropriate behaviour. During circle time, children and staff explore the rules. With the help of the setting mascot, 'Funny Bunny,' they discuss the impact that not following the rules may have on themselves and others. Children develop a good understanding of the need to take turns in activities. With support from staff, children use timers to monitor their use of popular resources.
- Leaders complete regular appraisals and supervisions with all staff. This helps to

identify areas for development and monitor well-being. Staff embrace opportunities to extend their knowledge by completing a variety of additional training opportunities. This enables staff to offer teaching that targets the specific needs of children who attend. However, methods of coaching are not yet sufficiently robust. This does not support all members of staff to identify areas to improve their interactions with children and raise the quality of practice to an exceptional standard.

- Children of all ages form close relationships and are kind and considerate towards one another. For example, older children support their younger friends at breakfast time. They sit together at tables, where they encourage them to follow safe and healthy routines. As a group, they chat confidently and discuss the different toppings they have chosen for their toast. When leaving for school, children wave to and cuddle their friends, wishing them a good day ahead.
- Leaders evaluate practice well and make changes that address children's needs and support their interests. Leaders discuss how some children have recently developed an interest in water play. Staff have created an area where children can explore water safely. They provide a huge variety of accessories to support children's development across all areas of learning. For example, children develop their language skills by exploring various sea creatures and identify mathematical concepts such as volume and shape.
- Staff provide a wide range of activities and resources that meet the varied ages of children who attend. For example, children who attend the breakfast club are encouraged to be independent by preparing their own breakfast. They take responsibility for their possessions and follow the rules well when walking to the nearby school. However, staff do not always adapt their teaching appropriately when supporting children within the nursery and pre-school provision. On occasion, this results in children becoming disengaged and does not fully promote their learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance current methods of coaching and mentoring to support staff to identify ways to improve their practice
- ensure all activities are adapted appropriately to provide suitable challenge and meet the needs of all children who attend, specifically those within the nursery and pre-school provision.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2690841
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10363687
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	30
Number of children on roll	60
Name of registered person	The Commons Nursery & Pre-School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2690838
Telephone number	07766407317
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Commons Nursery & Pre-School Ltd registered in 2022. The nursery and pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery and pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Nursery and pre-school sessions are from 8.45am to 3.45pm. An optional breakfast club runs from 7.40am to 8.40am, and an after-school club runs from 3.10pm to 6pm. The nursery and pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- The inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to several during the inspection and reviewing feedback letters.
- The inspector and leaders held discussions, and the inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and leaders completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of several 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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