

Inspection of Little Footsteps of Dereham

15a Norwich Road, DEREHAM, Norfolk NR20 3AE

Inspection date: 11 June 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff ensure that children are warmly greeted on arrival at the nursery. They support children's sense of belonging and provide children with nurturing interactions. Babies and children demonstrate that they have formed reassuring attachments with staff. They show they feel safe and secure as they happily explore the activities on offer.

Songs and rhymes are an integral part of the daily routine and are used well to support children's communication and language development. Babies benefit from regular exposure to repetitive rhymes that help them to develop early listening and attention skills. They respond with smiles, gestures and vocalisations, showing clear enjoyment and engagement. Toddlers enthusiastically participate in familiar action songs, using props to help them to choose the next song to sing.

Children benefit from plentiful and purposeful opportunities to learn outdoors. Staff ensure the outdoor environment is well resourced and thoughtfully organised to support all areas of learning, particularly physical development, exploration and imaginative play. Children confidently engage in activities that promote their independence and curiosity. They dig in the sand and experiment with water, splashing with their hands and jumping in puddles. Children fill and empty containers in the large outdoor mud kitchen areas. With staff's support, children carefully balance along wooden blocks.

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

- Leaders are committed to providing high-quality care and education. They continually reflect on the provision and demonstrate a strong capacity for ongoing improvement. Leaders spend time in the rooms and regularly monitor staff practice. They prioritise staff well-being and provide targeted coaching, training and support. Staff morale is good, and there is a strong sense of teamwork across the nursery.
- The provider previously notified Ofsted about a significant event. This means that the provider has met their legal responsibility to notify Ofsted of such events. The inspector discussed this with leaders during the inspection, and appropriate action has been taken. There is clear and consistent understanding of risk assessments to ensure children's safety. Leaders and staff respond promptly to any emerging risks.
- Leaders create a welcoming and inclusive nursery. They demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work closely with other professionals to ensure they continue to meet children's specific needs. Targeted use of additional funding ensures children with SEND access tailored support to ensure that they make

good progress.

- Partnership with parents are strong. Staff make purposeful use of drop-off and collection times to exchange important information about the children. They actively involve parents in their children's development and learning needs to create consistency between home and nursery, which supports children's ongoing progress and well-being. Parents speak highly of the staff team, expressing appreciation for the support they receive. They say they feel well informed about their child's development and value the regular updates provided.
- Transitions into the nursery, between rooms and on to school are managed well. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that they can meet their child's individual needs. They provide children with opportunities to become familiar with their new environment and to build relationships with their key person. Staff liaise with school staff when children are preparing for their move on to school.
- Staff are attentive to children's care routines. They comfort babies when they are unsettled, offering plenty of cuddles and reassurance. Children enjoy a varied menu of freshly prepared meals. This is carefully planned to take account of children's individual dietary needs, preferences and any allergies they may have.
- Leaders articulate a clear and ambitious vision to promote children's early literacy and nurture a love of reading. Children across all age groups confidently choose books for themselves. Babies show delight as staff encourage them to lift flaps to reveal images, while older children enjoy recalling familiar characters when staff pose questions about the story. Staff in each room plan learning experiences linked to a carefully chosen 'book of the month', which children enthusiastically participate in. However, there are occasions when staff do not ensure that they promote conversations with the children so that they fully understand what is being taught.

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:

- continue to support staff to promote more frequent and meaningful discussions with children about their learning to check children's understanding and comprehension of what is being taught.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY440629
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10396769
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	0 to 10
Total number of places	94
Number of children on roll	150
Name of registered person	Little Footsteps of Dereham Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP531307
Telephone number	01362693937
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2023

Information about this early years setting

Little Footsteps of Dereham registered in 2011. It is situated in Dereham in Norfolk. The nursery employs 27 members of childcare staff. Of these, 24 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including three who hold early years professional status, early years teacher status or qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery offers government-funded places for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Karen Harris

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed how they organise their early years provision, including the aims and rationale for their curriculum.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector during discussion and written feedback, and the inspector took account of these views.
- The provider and the inspector jointly observed and evaluated a group activity.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this has on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The provider, manager and the inspector held a meeting together. 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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