Little Learners Day Nursery

Unique reference number (URN): 2742392

Address: 156 Whitehorse Road, CROYDON, CR0 2LA

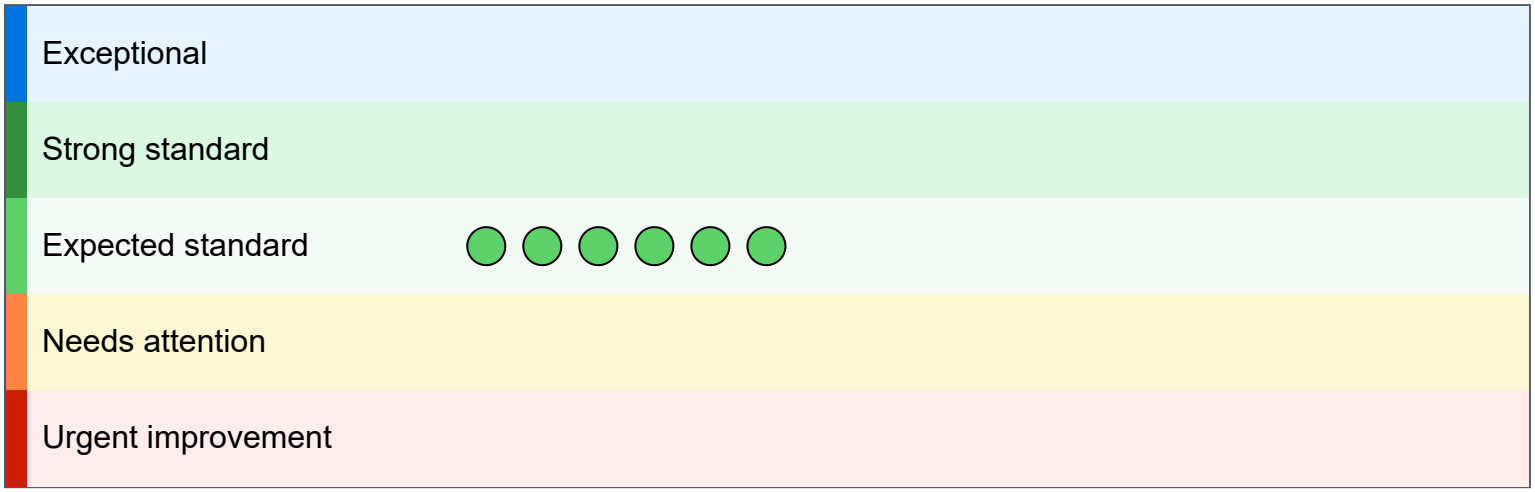
Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 20/07/2023

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Whitehorse Nursery Limited

Inspection report: 17 September 2026



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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Children of all ages are typically achieving age-appropriate knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. Children are well prepared for their next stage of learning, and staff are skilled at building on what children know. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are making progress from their starting points. For example, children with SEND have next steps around social interactions and building relationships, and they are beginning to approach their key person for cuddles and to engage in play ideas. Children are building on what they already know, and they are demonstrating progress in their learning. For example, children that are able to, learn and develop early mathematical skills, such as counting and sequencing, which then supports their individual next steps.

Parents comment that they have noticed a noticeable difference in the learning and development outcomes for their children, with older children demonstrating skills such as early literacy and mathematics, and younger children developing at an age- and stage-appropriate rate.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Children typically behave well and develop positive relationships with one another. However, due to inconsistencies with staff addressing negative behaviour, children are not always reminded of behavioural expectations that is age and stage appropriate by all staff. Leaders promote the importance of frequent attendance, and they share this expectation with parents. Parents further support this by commenting that they receive follow up calls for absences and the leaders have set a sense of care and thoughtfulness in regards to the children and their attendance.

Staff implement a secure daily routine which is fully embedded. For example, children of all ages understand that the timer is used to count down to tidy-up time, and they all begin to pack the resources away when the timer is finished. Staff are adaptable to their approach for dealing with behaviour and implementing the routine to children with barriers to learning or special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, they use alternative methods, such as now and next visual boards, which help explain routines with picture guidance. Staff deliver a range of exciting activities to the children using weekly topics and interests. As a result of this, children are engaged and eager to get involved with the activities, and they enjoy the learning experiences.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders and staff are attentive to the varying needs of the children, and they typically support the children's wellbeing and welfare effectively. However, there are some inconsistencies with approaches to understanding and validating children's emotions. For example, staff do not always try to understand the root of children's emotions, but they

instead offer comfort and distraction. Leaders acknowledge this as a training need and plan to support staff to understand children's emotional regulation.

Staff understand the cohort of children very well and have created an environment where children feel safe, confident and are comfortable to approach their key person for comfort and to share ideas. Staff teach children the importance of healthy choices, such as encouraging them to drink water frequently and discussing healthy meals. Children are polite and social at mealtimes, they self-serve their meal and patiently wait for their peers to be ready before they begin to eat. Staff typically encourage the children to have positive hygiene practices through activities, such as handwashing and using tissues, but this is not always effective. For example, older children seek independence in handwashing, but they are not supervised adequately and handwashing is not effective. Staff encourage children to be physically expressive outdoors, and they ensure the garden has a range of stimulating planned activities that help to enhance the children's physical development.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have used previous inspection feedback to enhance and improve the setting's curriculum and ensure it is understood by all staff. Due to the support from the local authority early years team and the positive attitude of the leaders, the curriculum has been further embedded. This has an overall positive impact on the children. Staff demonstrate an understanding of the aims of the curriculum, as well as how to use planning and next steps to implement suitable learning opportunities and experiences. The curriculum is designed so that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have access to an ambitious and high-quality learning environment. Staff have developed their understanding of adaptations through effective training and ongoing support, and they recognise where adaptations are required. For example, staff recognise that children with sensory barriers require alternative learning opportunities that still focus on each area of learning, in a suitable and comfortable way. Across all ages, there is a focus on physical development and a love for books. Children engage in story time independently and through planned group times, and they use their imaginations and communication skills to create new storylines and share ideas.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders and staff, including those with special educational needs coordinator training, are swift at identifying potential barriers to learning and development. Through assessment, observation, targeted plans and effective adaptations, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have appropriate support in place. Leaders ensure that all staff are up to date on any additional needs that children may have, and they implement actions that ensure suitable adaptations are made. For example, where barriers to speech and language are recognised, staff are swift at implementing methods, such as using simpler phrases and using visual aids as guidance to help reduce these barriers. Leaders and staff work with external professionals, such as the local authority special educational needs team, and they ensure that accurate and relevant information is shared in a timely manner to support referrals and individualised support plans. As a result of this, children with SEND or barriers to learning receive the required help effectively, which has an overall positive impact on their learning and development.

Leaders provide ongoing support to families, and they recognise individual family circumstances and their needs, including disadvantaged families. For example, leaders support parents and carers with training packages, such as potty training and supporting language development. This helps to ensure that parents and families of all backgrounds receive ongoing support and are able to be involved in the learning and development of their children. Leaders also work in effective partnership with other agencies, such as children's social care teams, to ensure that children attending the setting are receiving the best possible outcomes for their care, learning and wellbeing.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders demonstrate a secure and accurate understanding of the setting, including areas of strength and areas for improvement. Leaders have reflected well and have sought support from early years specialists to ensure they are implementing effective action plans to improve the standard of provision since the last inspection. For example, staff have completed essential training around key themes, such as safeguarding, supporting children's learning and understanding the curriculum. As a result of this, there is a noticeable positive difference in the delivery of the curriculum and children's achievement. Through external agency guidance, leaders remain aware of changes to requirements. For example, leaders have sought advice from the local authority with changes to the safe eating requirements. They have ensured all staff are re-trained in line with the new guidance.

Leaders ensure staff are suitable at the point of recruitment by following their robust safer recruitment procedures, and they ensure staff remain suitable through a range of formal and informal methods. Leaders regularly review staff training needs and are swift at identifying any areas of concern. For example, following recent breaches in staff's understanding to whistleblow in a timely manner, all staff have received additional training and ongoing coaching to ensure policies and procedures are fully embedded. Leaders have an accurate understanding of manageable workloads and they prioritise staff's wellbeing. For example, staff that are due to complete courses and apprenticeships feel supported and are given adequate time to ensure any coursework and paper-based activities are completed in a timely manner.

Leaders have a secure understanding of the cohort of families and they implement a range of strategies and events to ensure all families feel supported and a part of their child's learning and development. For example, leaders host 'fun days', parent meetings and specialist targeted training for families to attend. Leaders are experienced with working with external agencies to best meet the needs of the children and their families. Leaders reach out for support from the local authority where required, and, as a result of this, leaders' action plans remain accurate, relevant and achievable.

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

Children are happy, engaged and calm. They enjoy spending time together and play alongside one another indoors and outdoors. Children are curious and they engage in a range of activities with excitement, eagerness and a positive attitude to learning. For example, children excitedly engage in a rocket launching activity in the garden, and indoors, they eagerly go on a maths themed treasure hunt in pairs. Children are typically achieving in all areas of learning, and staff deliver a range of exciting and stimulating activities. Children are growing in their independence and staff prompt children to try things, such as putting their own coats on before seeking help from an adult.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are adequately supported by their key person and the wider staff team. Children approach the staff for comfort and to share ideas, with staff responding to their thoughts and challenging children's thoughts to extend their imagination and story-telling. All children, including those with SEND, are appropriately supported in their learning and effective adaptations are made where required. For example, staff all share the same accurate knowledge of next steps for children with SEND and they ensure they follow the same approach and implement methods which best support the needs and interests of the children.

Children build warm relationships with one another and they seek enjoyment from playing alongside their peers. Older children comment that they have their 'best friends', and they are proud to talk about their play experiences together. Younger children are encouraged by staff to play alongside one another and take part in turn-taking activities to develop their social skills.

Next steps

- Leaders and staff should continue to support the hygiene standards through everyday practice to effectively support children's welfare and wellbeing.
- Leaders should continue to offer effective training to staff to ensure they understand how to respond to children's emotions and support their emotional regulation.

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, special educational needs coordinators, parents, children and staff 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:
Louise Mackay

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2742392

Address:
156 Whitehorse Road
CROYDON
CR0 2LA

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 20/07/2023

Registered person: Whitehorse Nursery Limited

Register(s): EYR

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

Local authority: Croydon

Facts and figures used on inspection

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

This data is from 17 September 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

0 to 4

Total number of places

28

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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