

Inspection of Dandelion Education Ltd

Brick Kiln Wood, Woodgate Way, Aylsham, Norfolk NR11 6FJ

Inspection date: 22 March 2022

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive and make rapid progress at this unique outdoor nursery. They are warmly welcomed at the gate by friendly and caring staff who take time to chat to parents. Children eagerly come through the gate and hang up their 'name cookie'. They explore the spacious, natural environment and show high levels of confidence and independence. Younger children use musical instruments and dressing-up props and older children fill up wheelbarrows with logs and leaves. Children are highly active around the site and make full use of the carefully thought-out opportunities to dig, climb, slide, swing, run and balance. This results in high levels of physical proficiency across all ages.

Children's behaviour is exemplary, and they move around the site with care and consideration for others. They check it is safe to use the swing by shouting 'swing zone' if other children approach. Children wait patiently for their turn to slide down the treehouse slide and climb onto a fallen tree trunk. They share books with each other in the treehouse and older children help younger ones choose hats to dress up in. Children are polite, kind, and respectful to one another. For example, they work together to carry guttering for their water play. Older children share ideas of how best to fill up a container with water. Younger children share teapots and explain how to use scissors to cut flower stems to make 'tea'.

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

- Children demonstrate excellent social skills and confidently express their thoughts, opinions, and choices. Staff encourage children to 'wiggle their finger and make a choice'. Younger children tell staff their preferences for songs and confidently give explanations for the words 'clockwise' and 'carbohydrates'. Philosophy sessions allow older children to explain whether they would rather, 'Have a monkey to tickle or a bear to read to'. Younger children show politeness when saying please and thank you and older children wait their turn to speak during group discussions. During their play, children give advice to one another and talk about 'making choices' and sharing.
- Staff's teaching consistently builds on children's communication and language at every opportunity. Staff use challenging vocabulary and take the time to explain and demonstrate the meaning of new words. For example, during cooking, they describe 'microscopic' germs and explain how mammals produce milk. In a group activity, children listen carefully to clues and share their thoughts about what is in the 'mystery box'.
- Staff use highly effective teaching strategies in group activities. They make reading time interesting by incorporating counting, singing and music. This means that even the youngest children listen to stories with a high level of interest and engagement. Older children are enthusiastic to write letters of the

alphabet after playing phonics games. Staff change the pitch of their voice to grab children's attention and use music to teach children about repeating patterns.

- Staff are wonderful role models, and treat all children with respect, care and kindness. Children show they have firm attachments, and approach staff if they need help. Staff consistently encourage positive behaviour and tell children to 'keep trying' and 'show what you can do'. They help younger children to balance and stretch during yoga. Staff encourage older children to put on their 'thinking cap' when designing at the tool table. Children are eager to take their work home and they ask to record their designs using electronic tablets.
- Staff morale and job satisfaction is very high. Staff speak of 'being in the right place'. Managers work closely with staff to provide ongoing and timely evaluation, coaching and support. Staff benefit from regular opportunities to team teach and learn new skills. This builds on their professional knowledge and teaching skills. All staff comment on how they feel part of a team and that they are 'listened to and respected'.
- Staff minimise hazards at the site extremely well. They undertake thorough daily site checks and issues are dealt with in a timely manner. Staff include older children in daily risk assessment activities. Children identify hazards, such as fallen and loose branches, and they explain the dangers of high winds. They confidently explain how to evacuate and call 999.
- Parents are extremely positive about the nursery. They state they, 'can't praise staff enough' and children have 'blossomed' and 'come on in leaps and bounds'. Parents comment that they feel lucky their child is taught by 'attentive and highly-qualified staff'. They comment that communication is thorough and that they feel very well informed. The nursery provides detailed monthly planning grids, which provide useful guidance for parents on how they can support their children. This helps build strong partnerships with families and other settings that children attend.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to identify, and report concerns regarding the welfare of children or the behaviour of an adult. They carry out thorough checks of all learning spaces and act upon any issues in a timely manner. Staff evaluate risk assessments regularly, which ensures the learning environment remains suitable and safe. They use morning briefings effectively to ensure all staff are aware of concerns, allergies or medical issues concerning children. Managers have robust systems in place for staff recruitment. They ensure that staff are suitably trained and there are a range of induction procedures in place for newly appointed staff.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2530989
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10207348
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	2 to 5
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Dandelion Education Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP534232
Telephone number	07796498441
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Dandelion Education Ltd is situated in Aylsham and registered in 2019. It employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 7, one at level 6 and two at level 3. One member of staff is completing a level 3 apprenticeship. Dandelion Education is open five days a week from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions run from 8am until 4.30pm. A holiday club operates during every holiday apart from Christmas and runs from 8am until 3pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Helen Oakden

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The operations manager led the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The operations manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.

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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