

Inspection date	7 March 2019
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding	Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children	Outstanding	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Staff know the children's interests, stage of development and personalities exceptionally well. In addition to their own plans, staff share precise next steps in learning with those leading specialised activities, such as forest school and physical education sessions. This helps to ensure that the sharp focus on children's individual learning is reflected throughout.
- The headteacher has very high expectations of staff. Continual professional development is highly effective. For example, careful succession planning helps to enable staff to take greater amounts of responsibility. Detailed induction procedures help ensure the highly experienced and well-qualified staff confidently carry out their roles to the highest standard.
- Children thrive in the nursery. Staff take them on short walks to help them learn about the community and environment around them. Children confidently select equipment that interests them in the well-equipped classrooms, helping to trigger their enthusiasm to learn and discover.
- Children rapidly build on what they can already do and know. Staff plan suitably challenging activities, which they expand over a number of days. Children spontaneously return to these activities in their own time, helping them to develop an even deeper understanding while experimenting and investigating.
- Parents are welcomed into the nursery. Staff organise special events for parents and carers to share craft activities and mathematical, physical and problem-solving challenges with their children. This helps strengthen the already strong relationships staff have with parents and provides more informal opportunities to help promote learning at home and in nursery.
- Leaders recognise the importance of offering a balance of adult-led and self-chosen activities. They plan to review daily routines to help maximise children's continued learning throughout the day.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- explore even more exciting ways to help children make the most of their uninterrupted learning experiences throughout the day.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in three classrooms (Acorns, Catkins and Saplings) and one outside area. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector checked the evidence of the suitability of staff. She viewed a range of documents, including children's progress records, communication books and planning documents.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, nursery manager and senior safeguarding lead for the nursery.
- The inspector read comments and emails from parents. She took their views, and those of parents spoken to on the day, into consideration.

Inspector

Katrina Rodden

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The headteacher follows robust procedures to help ensure that staff are suitable. Leaders in safeguarding set quizzes for staff, helping to refresh their knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe. Self-evaluation is highly effective. Staff are encouraged to reflect on the quality of their practice and contribute to room, team and school improvement plans. The headteacher values feedback from parents, children and other professionals. Providers monitor and moderate the quality of provision, further contributing to the excellent and consistently high standards. Senior staff effectively monitor the progress that groups of children make. This helps them identify any emerging trends, such as lower starting points. Plans are rapidly put in place to help ensure that any gaps in learning are swiftly closed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff give very young children opportunities to explore how things work and feel. For example, children spend prolonged periods of time exploring the texture of soil. They watch what happens when they sprinkle the soil and look at the marks they leave when they compress it in a tray. Staff describe what the children do and see, helping them consolidate their thoughts and expand their emerging vocabulary. Staff encourage children to make choices for themselves, assisting their independence and thinking skills. Staff have plans to review how they can enhance children's experiences even more throughout the day, helping to ensure children have the best possible care and education.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children seek support from staff when they feel unsteady while walking along a balancing beam. They persist in their attempts until they have independently completed the task. This is one way children strengthen their physical development and build their confidence. The key-person system is highly effective. When children first start in the nursery, parents complete short booklets containing detailed information about their child. This helps staff provide the most suitable and interesting activities right from the start. Well-documented information helps staff ensure that children's dietary needs are followed. For instance, named place mats clearly indicate what children are unable to eat. Children behave exceptionally well. Staff talk to them in an engaging and gentle way, helping to contribute to the calm environment. Initial settling-in routines and transitions between classes are sensitively planned, helping children feel secure and valued.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children rapidly become motivated, independent learners. They play along side and with their peers, learning to share resources and respect others. From an early age, children learn to count and sort objects. They show a love for books and begin to understand that text has meaning. Their early writing skills quickly evolve. Children confidently speak and listen to others in small groups. All children, including those who speak English as an additional language, make exceptional progress. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning at pre-school, and ultimately school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY542689
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10090056
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	1 - 3
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Cognita Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527525
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01234 261864

The provision for children under the age of three within Polam School registered in 2017. The school is owned by Cognita Schools Limited. Eight members of childcare staff are employed in this part of the nursery. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8.30am until 4pm. The nursery also offers a breakfast club between 7.30am and 8.30am. The wraparound provision in the evening runs from 4pm until 6pm. The school holiday provision opens from 8am until 6pm.

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