

Inspection of Sandcastle Nursery & Preschool Ltd

19 Stourcliffe Avenue, BOURNEMOUTH BH6 3PU

Inspection date: 9 September 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

Children benefit from a well-planned curriculum that captures their interests and builds their knowledge in a clear sequence. Staff introduce new concepts in ways that spark children's curiosity and extend their understanding of the world around them. They provide purposeful experiences that help children to recall what they know and connect this securely to new learning. As a result, children stay engaged, think deeply and make strong progress across all areas of development. Children demonstrate secure attachments with staff. This gives them the confidence to explore and take part in new experiences.

Children make strong progress in their physical development. Staff plan the outdoor environment to offer varied opportunities for children to strengthen their gross motor skills. Younger children explore different spaces and levels, while older children practise climbing and develop confidence in their abilities. Staff stay close by to guide those children who feel less confident, encouraging them to succeed for themselves. Children take pride in their achievements, and staff celebrate these moments with genuine enthusiasm.

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

- Staff are excellent communicators and strong role models for language. They use clear and purposeful communication with each other and with children. Through well-planned activities, staff introduce new vocabulary in engaging ways. They revisit familiar stories and songs to strengthen children's learning. Babies show great excitement during these times as they join in with actions and repeat key words. This approach builds children's confidence in spoken language from an early age. Older children choose where they would like to share a story with staff, who respect and act on these choices. As a result, children learn that their voices and opinions matter.
- Staff feel well supported by leaders and managers. They speak with confidence about the professional guidance they receive, such as through formal supervision sessions and in day-to-day conversations. Leaders foster a reflective culture. Staff regularly review the quality of provision and seek ways to enhance children's experiences. For example, when older and younger groups of children come together, staff use the space effectively so that children learn from one another. Younger children observe and copy their older peers, while older children develop responsibility as they model routines and skills.
- Staff act as excellent role models and demonstrate respectful relationships in all their interactions. They set clear expectations that help children understand how to behave. For example, during play, staff use polite language, encourage turn taking and gently remind children to listen to each other. As a result, children behave well, show consideration for others and demonstrate kindness in their

interactions.

- Children make strong progress in their self-care skills. For example, they wash their own hands in preparation for mealtimes and develop independence as they feed themselves. Staff offer encouragement and step in sensitively when children need support. Children show resilience as they practise new skills, such as cutting food.
- Staff build strong partnerships with families from the start. They gather detailed knowledge about each child's development, needs and routines. Staff provide clear information about children's individual progress and group learning. They act carefully on important details, such as children's allergies or dietary requirements. The settling-in process is flexible, ensuring that children feel secure. Staff provide consistent support that helps families to feel informed and confident in the care their children receive.
- Staff provide a broad range of activities that capture children's interests while weaving in themes and topics that extend their knowledge. For example, older children explore clay to create hedgehogs, building on their previous experiences with play dough. This activity strengthens their hand muscles that support early writing skills. Staff skilfully introduce ambitious vocabulary, such as 'nocturnal' and 'hibernation'. They provide meaningful discussions to deepen children's understanding. However, some activities for older children do not extend children's learning or provide opportunities for critical thinking. This limits the progress children make at these times.

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:

- support staff to take account of what they want children to learn during activities more precisely so that their interactions consistently extend children's knowledge and skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY440853
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10399727
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	107
Name of registered person	Sandcastle Nursery & Preschool Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP910252
Telephone number	01202 424632
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2019

Information about this early years setting

Sandcastle Nursery & Preschool Ltd registered in 2012 and is located in Bournemouth. The setting is open each weekday, throughout the year, from 7.30am to 6pm. It provides government-funded childcare. There are 19 staff members employed to work with children. Of these, one member of staff has an early years qualification at level 5, 15 staff hold qualifications at level 3 and two staff hold qualifications at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Chris Langdon-Casey

Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff and the children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.
- The inspector and the manager carried out joint observations of planned activities.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector held a leadership and management meeting with leaders.

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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