

Inspection of Just Imagine Day Nursery - Maldon

Highlands Drive, Maldon, Essex CM9 6HY

Inspection date: 16 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

Staff provide a warm, welcoming and inviting space. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. They settle quickly and form strong, caring bonds with staff. Staff create an extremely enabling environment that supports children to develop their independence, creativity and confidence. Children engage in positive social interactions with each other, sharing, taking turns and showing care and concern for each other's feelings. Staff immerse themselves in children's play. They bring learning to life for children. This means children show high levels of engagement, and listening and attention skills. Staff are positive role models. They treat the children with respect and kindness. Staff recognise how children might be feeling and help them to understand their emotions. They help children regulate and build on their self-esteem and sense of self. Children develop a deep sense of belonging and develop sound relationships with their peers. They confidently say goodbye to each other when leaving an activity.

Overall, staff promote children's communication and language well. They routinely add new words into their vocabulary, such as 'prescribe' and 'prevent'. Staff model how to use these words in context and children quickly learn the meanings and use them in their play. Children are confident communicators. They confidently describe the purpose of a sand timer and explain that 'sharing is caring'. Children's independence is fostered well, they help to tidy up, serve themselves dinner and put on their own coats. Staff bring learning to life. Children explore the cardboard boxes, twigs and straw as they follow and recall the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'.

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

- Leaders create and implement an ambitious curriculum that supports children's independence, confidence and love of learning. Leaders carefully consider what children need to learn and why. The curriculum builds on children's interests and prior knowledge, ensuring they make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Leaders are passionate and dedicated to their roles. They place staff well-being as a high priority. Leaders are thoughtful and considerate, ensuring staff feel valued, listened to and supported. Staff describe leaders as kind, approachable and dedicated to their happiness at work. Regular opportunities for professional development, alongside a culture of care and respect, mean staff are motivated and committed to giving their best for children.
- Staff get to know children well and understand their needs, interests and personalities. They carefully tailor learning to children's individual needs and monitor this to ensure they are making good progress. For example, staff create a doctor's role play scenario with the children to support them with experiences outside of nursery.

- Pre-school staff are highly skilled at adapting their practice in the moment to extend learning. They observe children closely and respond with well-chosen questions and challenges. For example, during a weighing activity, staff encourage children to estimate, predict and test their ideas. Children learn new vocabulary, such as 'float' and 'weigh'. They show high levels of concentration and persistence. However, staff working with younger children are less confident in responding to children's emerging thinking, curiosity and interests. For example, during story time when children ask questions about the book, staff continue reading and do not respond to children's ideas in the moment. This means that opportunities to extend children's learning are missed. Therefore, children do not have every opportunity to excel in their learning and development.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff support parents effectively to contribute to children's learning at nursery and at home. Parents comment how well informed they are about their children's nursery days and progress, and how reassured this makes them feel.
- Leaders carefully evaluate the individual needs of children and make highly effective use of additional funding. They thoughtfully invest in extra resources that enrich children's learning experiences and provide practical support, such as school uniforms, to ensure children are well prepared and confident as they transition to school.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Any delays are identified promptly, and timely, targeted support is put in place to help children make good progress. Strong partnerships with parents and external professionals ensure that each child's individual needs are consistently met.

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 in the toddler room to consistently extend children's learning, thinking and interests so that all children make the best possible progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2530287
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10406483
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 11
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	80
Name of registered person	Just Imagine Nurseries - All Saints Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2530286
Telephone number	01621 850660
Date of previous inspection	26 July 2022

Information about this early years setting

Just Imagine Day Nursery – Maldon registered in 2019 and is run by Just Imagine Nurseries - All Saints Ltd. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Opening times are from 7am until 6.30pm. The setting offers government funded places for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Daniella Adams

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 observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector, in person and through written testimonials.
- 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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