

Little Herons Nursery

Unique reference number (URN): 2815836

Address: North Curry CofE Primary School, Greenway, Taunton, Somerset, TA3 6NQ

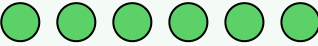
Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 20/11/2024

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Richard Huish Trust

Inspection report: 2 July 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

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 benefit from interactions that support their learning and development. Staff focus on the prime areas of learning, particularly for younger children. They use observations and assessment information, including the progress check at age 2, to identify children's next steps and provide appropriate support.

Children are well prepared for school. They benefit from carefully planned transitions that help them move on to the next stage of their learning with confidence. Children who experience disadvantage or face barriers to learning make appropriate progress from their starting points.

Children develop increasing independence as they move through the setting. They select resources for themselves and manage tasks independently. For example, children pour their own drinks at snack time, put on their shoes before going outdoors and apply their own sun cream. Children learn to understand their emotions, express their ideas and approach new experiences with confidence.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Children behave well. Leaders have set clear expectations for behaviour and attitudes. They create a nurturing environment that helps children learn how to manage their feelings and behaviour. Children learn to consider the feelings of others and generally respond positively to staff's guidance. Children benefit from positive relationships with staff. The key-person system helps children form secure attachments. For example, when children wake from their sleep, staff respond sensitively by offering comfort and reassurance. This helps children settle back into nursery routines.

Children enjoy playing with their friends and show positive attitudes to learning. For example, a group of children independently create a fairy house from sticks in the garden. They proudly invite a member of staff to look at their work and share their achievement.

Children are generally included in activities and routines. Staff use strategies to support individual children's needs. However, staff do not always give clear instructions during some group activities and at times, interrupt children when they are listening to stories to undertake care routines. This impacts on the attention of younger and quieter children who sometimes do not understand what they are expected to do and do not join in.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who face additional barriers to learning receive support that reflects their individual needs. Leaders and staff monitor attendance closely and work with parents and carers to promote regular attendance. They adapt their approach where needed to support children and families.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Children benefit from a safe and welcoming environment. Leaders and staff recognise the importance of physical activity and outdoor learning. For example, they have raised funds to develop a forest school area. Children use this space to develop their gross and fine motor skills and learn how to assess and manage risks during their play. As a result, children develop confidence, coordination and physical skills.

Children separate well from their parents when they arrive. Staff know children and their routines well. Babies' sleeping, weaning and feeding routines reflect their individual needs and routines from home. Staff follow safer sleeping guidance. For example, they monitor room temperatures, provide suitable bedding and check sleeping children regularly. This helps babies feel safe, secure and settled.

Children benefit from positive mealtime experiences. Staff sit with children and use mealtimes as an opportunity to encourage conversation and promote healthy eating. Staff share information with parents about healthy eating. For example, staff encourage parents to provide water rather than sugary drinks and only refill children's bottles with water during the day. In addition, staff demonstrate a clear understanding of allergy management and first-aid procedures. This helps to promote children's health and keep them safe.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Babies and toddlers benefit from calm, reassuring and sensitive care. For example, in the outdoor space, staff support babies to use spoons to dig in the sand. They narrate the babies' actions, saying, 'I'm digging'. This helps babies hear and begin to understand new words. As a result, babies build their early communication skills and feel confident to explore their environment.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of curriculum implementation across the nursery. They monitor practice regularly and identify areas for further development. Although staff generally understand the curriculum intentions, they do not always adapt their interactions and teaching in the moment to respond to children's individual learning and development needs. As a result, opportunities to extend children's learning are sometimes missed. Leaders recognise this and are taking steps to further develop staff practice so that children benefit from more responsive teaching.

Some children participate in circle time. However, staff do not always give clear instructions or explain activities well. This reduces some children's understanding of what they are expected to do. As a result, younger and quieter children do not always join in or take an active part. Staff also interrupt activities, at times. For example, staff take children away from story time for nappy changes. This interrupts their engagement and means some children do not fully benefit from the learning opportunity.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The provider typically identifies children's needs quickly, including any gaps in children's development. Appropriate steps are generally taken to ensure that children receive the

support they need at the earliest opportunity. This helps to ensure that any barriers to their learning are reduced.

Leaders work with parents, carers and other professionals to support and understand children's individual needs and regularly review progress made. Staff use this information to make adaptations for children to ensure they are included in the nursery and that they are making progress. Staff describe the steps in place to support children who are disadvantaged or who face additional barriers to their learning. For example, the effective use of visual aids and emotional regulation techniques. This helps children to understand what is happening next and helps them to learn manage their emotions.

Leaders and staff know children and their families well. They secure additional funding, which is appropriately allocated, for example, to support children's transition to school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leadership and governance arrangements are effective. Leaders provide staff with appropriate support, challenge and professional development opportunities. Staff feel valued and supported in their roles. They benefit from well-being support and opportunities to work with colleagues across the trust. Regular one-to-one meetings help staff reflect on their practice and identify areas for development.

Partnerships with parents are positive. Leaders establish effective communication systems to support children's learning and development. Staff share information through daily handovers and the online communication app. This helps parents remain informed about their children's experiences and progress. Staff also work with families to provide support that meets their wider needs. Special educational needs and/or disabilities support, health and safety arrangements, and safer recruitment procedures meet requirements. Leaders ensure that staff have access to training, guidance and specialist support. Leaders also understand the needs of the local community and adapt provision to support children and their families.

Leaders know children and families well and play an active role in the nursery. The trust has invested in the early years provision and increased leadership capacity. Leaders identify and prioritise improvement,, including plans to improve the monitoring of curriculum implementation by staff and the quality of teaching.

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

Children form secure and trusting relationships with staff. As a result, they feel safe, settled and confident. Their individual needs are understood and met through warm and nurturing care. Children invite staff into their play and involve them in conversations. Warm and nurturing care is provided for babies. Their individual needs and routines are well understood and responded to consistently. As a result, babies feel safe and emotionally secure.

Children access a range of outdoor experiences that support their learning and development. Staff follow children's interests and use interactions to extend their language, thinking and mathematical skills. For example, children fill watering cans and buckets at an outdoor tap. They take turns turning the tap on and off and filling their containers with water. Staff support children's mathematical understanding by asking questions, such as 'Is that nearly full?' and making comments including, 'That looks heavy' and 'Wow, that's a big bucket.' As a result, children develop their language, mathematical knowledge and understanding through meaningful play experiences.

Children's progress is monitored with any gaps in learning identified early. Staff work with parents and other professionals to secure support for children when needed. Advice is used to plan targeted strategies that meet children's individual needs. As a result, children make progress from their starting points, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face barriers to learning.

Staff typically provide opportunities to extend children's vocabulary and sentence structure. This helps children develop their communication and language skills. For example, at snack time, staff talk with children about the food they are eating. Staff also promote early social skills and manners by modelling and encouraging the use of 'please' and 'thank you'. Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to support children's learning and development. They regularly share information about children's progress and provide guidance on how learning can be reinforced at home. As a result, children benefit from a shared approach to their learning and development at home and in the nursery.

Next steps

- Leaders should improve care routines, particularly during story and group times, so that children can participate, concentrate and focus when they are listening.
- Leaders should strengthen teaching so that staff know how to implement and adapt curriculum planning effectively to meet children's individual learning needs.

About this inspection

The inspector/inspectors spoke with directors, leaders, practitioners and parents and carers 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.

A quality assurance visit by an additional inspector was carried out at this inspection.

Inspector:

Donna Frost

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2815836

Address:

North Curry CofE Primary School
Greenway
Taunton
Somerset
TA3 6NQ

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 20/11/2024

Registered person: Richard Huish Trust

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday : 08:00 - 18:00

Local authority: Somerset

Facts and figures used on inspection

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

 This data is from 2 July 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

Total number of places

30

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright