

Inspection of YMCA Childcare Providence

Ymca, 2 Wellington Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2NU

Inspection date: 8 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The atmosphere within the setting is nurturing and inclusive and fosters a sense of belonging for every child. Children arrive ready to play and are warmly welcomed by staff. Staff consider children's interests when they prepare activities, which supports them to settle quickly and confidently, separating from their parents or carers with ease. Staff are quick to respond to children's emotional needs and offer plenty of reassuring cuddles.

The nursery is organised into three distinct rooms, baby, toddler and pre-school, each thoughtfully organised to meet the needs of their respective age groups. The environment is attractively presented and provides a stimulating and inviting space that encourages children to explore and engage.

Outdoor areas provide ample opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. They confidently use the space to practise throwing and kicking balls and enjoy riding bikes to support their gross motor development. Staff plan a varied selection of sensory experiences for children, with the sand area proving particularly popular. The indoor environment is equally purposeful. For example, babies use the furniture to pull themselves up and cruise, which helps to strengthen their legs as they explore their surroundings.

Staff consistently promote children's independence through well-established daily routines. For example, at mealtimes, children pour their own drinks and use utensils appropriately. These practices help children to develop good eating habits.

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

- Weekly plans are devised by the full staff team. Every staff member adds activities to support their key children's ongoing development. However, an area of weakness is the inconsistency in teaching; while some staff are highly skilled, others are still developing their practice. As a result, children's learning is not always consistently extended.
- Staff nurture children's behaviour with gentle reminders and positive support. Children are encouraged to take turns, and any challenges are met with calm, reassuring guidance. The nursery is fully inclusive and supports all children to make progress in their learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have individualised plans to support their development. Staff use these effectively to monitor children's ongoing progress.
- The staff encourage children to solve problems in real-life challenges. When a ball gets stuck in a tree, staff ask the children how they might retrieve it. Children discuss possible solutions, and a child fetches a long spade, which is used to knock the ball down. This supports children's initiative and teamwork.

Staff, however, do not consistently embed mathematical concepts in children's play or conversations. As a result, children don't often use mathematical language or thinking during activities.

- Children show awe and curiosity when they discover a ladybird, and they handle it with care. They eagerly dig in the soil to discover insects, demonstrating an interest in the natural world. Staff build on their interest and give them images of insects to look at and engage in conversations.
- Children enjoy when staff animatedly join their role play. One child holds her hand to her ear and pretends to be on the phone. She asks the staff to do the same so they can have a conversation. Staff plan resources to encourage children to use their imaginations. They like to play with the figurines and have fun launching them down a piece of guttering, pretending they can fly. Staff encourage children to mark make for a purpose. For example, they invite children to make a shopping list. Staff support language development by naming new objects to add to children's vocabulary and role model the pronunciation of words.
- Children enjoy story sessions and join in with familiar songs. Many children speak English as an additional language. Staff are proactive and support children and their families. They learn key words in their home languages and use multilingual staff to aid communication where possible. Strong relationships with families is evident, which ensures transitions are well managed and that information is shared effectively to meet each child's individual needs.
- Managers and staff are well supported by the management structure in place. Staff receive regular supervisions, which offer them both guidance and support. Training opportunities are widely available to the staff team, who take advantage to attend to broaden their knowledge

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:

- strengthen the consistency of teaching so that all children benefit from highly effective implementation of the curriculum
- develop the mathematics curriculum so that all children develop confidence in early maths.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY560836
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10407479
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	YMCA Trinity Group
Registered person unique reference number	RP560833
Telephone number	01473 295258
Date of previous inspection	9 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

YMCA Childcare Providence registered in 2018. The nursery employs 15 members of staff. Of these, 10 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. One member of staff holds early years professional status, three early year degrees and one a level 5 qualification. The nursery opens on Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery school offers funded early years education for children aged from nine months to four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Emily Holt

Inspection activities

- The provider and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed their curriculum and what it is that 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.
- The provider and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children during the inspection.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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