



# QUALITY ASSURANCE INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection date:	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	Previous Inspection Date:	N/A
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The quality and standards of the Early Years provision:	Previous Inspection
	N/A

Evaluation areas;	Grade awarded
Safeguarding	Met
Inclusion	Expected standard
Curriculum and teaching	Expected standard
Achievement	Expected standard
Behaviours, attitudes and establishing routines	Expected standard
Children’s welfare and well-being	Expected standard
Leadership and governance	Expected standard

## What is it like to be a child at this setting

Children are happy, confident and settled at this ‘home from home’ setting. They form warm and trusting relationships with the staff, which support their sense of security and belonging. Children build meaningful friendships with their peers, and they learn to share, take turns and play cooperatively. The atmosphere is warm and welcoming and fosters a sense of belonging for all of the children that attend, helping them to quickly settle and engage in their learning and play.

Children benefit from a varied and well-planned curriculum designed around their next steps in development and their current interests. They enjoy the activities that are on offer. Staff are creative and plan activities that encourage exploration through play. They are tailored to suit children’s individual stages of development such as plenty of opportunities for sensory play. Older children show great skills in being independent, ensuring that they are more than ready for their next stage of learning, especially school.

### Safeguarding

#### Grade Met

All safeguarding standards are met. This means; the childminder demonstrates a strong knowledge of safeguarding procedures for the setting and knows how to keep children safe. There is a positive safeguarding culture across the setting.

<b>Inclusion</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<p>Leaders and staff work in partnerships with parents to get to know all children well from the very beginning of their journey with them. They complete baseline assessments and use this information, alongside observations during settling periods to record children's starting points. Between the ages of two and three years old, staff complete progress checks that include parental input. Regular observations and termly assessment are complete, enabling any gaps in development to be identified swiftly.</p> <p>Although there are not currently any children on role with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or barriers to their learning, leaders have excellent knowledge and understanding of the 'graduated approach' and their local offer. They talk confidently about the processes that they would follow if they ever felt that a child needed support from specialist and/or other professionals outside of the setting.</p>
<b>Curriculum and teaching</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<p>Leaders design a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects children's interests, developmental stages, and the needs of the cohort well. Staff use their knowledge of child development to deliver engaging teaching through a mixture of child lead play and adult directed experiences. Children eagerly explore everything that is on offer, quickly becoming engaged in their learning as they use brushes to reveal pictures that are hidden underneath porridge pats and lentils.</p> <p>Leaders and staff place a high priority on promoting children's communication and language skills and help children to foster a love of reading. Children enjoy singing and sharing stories. Children independently access their favourite story books and bring them to staff to share. Staff repeat words, ask questions and give children time to think and respond. They actively engage children in conversations during free play which further supports them to become confident communicators, increasing their communication and language skills and extending their vocabulary.</p>
<b>Achievement</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<p>Children benefit from a well sequenced curriculum which covers all of the areas of learning and development. This allows them to access a range of activities both inside and outside and practise their skills both independently and with support from staff. Children show curiosity and happily explore the activities that have been set up in the garden. They confidently engage with staff and invite them to join their play as they explore about the life cycle of frogs. Children demonstrate their skills as they use different tools to explore the 'frogs spawn' sensory tub and show concentration and focus. For example, after being given demonstrations, children persevere and master using scissors to cut snips in paper. They happily share their learning with staff and demonstrate they feel proud when they receive praise.</p>

**Behaviours, attitudes and establishing routines**

**Grade Expected standard**

Although established routines are in place, and children typically benefit from these, there are times, particularly during morning transitions that the routines become unclear and impact on children's engagement in purposeful learning. For example, staff ask children to tidy away the toys, ready for their adult led group session. The session comes to an end, but no clear direction is given to children by practitioners about what is happening next. Children become bored and are not engaging as adults support younger children with hand washing routines ready for snack time. This gives children mixed messages and does not help them to engage in purposeful learning as they begin to empty the toys back out again.

Overall, staff manage children's behaviour well. They talk to children about the rules and what is expected of them. They role model how to share and take turns, offering gentle reminders to the children. This helps children to typically know what is expected of them and to understand expectations. However, when children do become upset when they become tired and frustrated, staff do not explicitly teach the language of emotions to further support their ability to learn to self-regulate.

**Children's welfare and well-being**

**Grade Expected standard**

Staff promote a positive social experience during snack time. They sit with children, who help to prepare the healthy fruit, developing the physical skills as they use child safety knives with confidence. Staff hold meaningful discussions about what they are going to eat and why healthy choices are important for their growing bodies. Children learn about the importance of healthy food choices, follow positive hygiene routines at mealtimes.

Children typically enjoy extending their physical skills outside. Staff support children to learn about safety when using equipment as they practise increasing their balancing and coordination and climb on new play equipment in the garden. They run around the large garden, twirling and swirling as they move freely with ease. Nonetheless, very young children/babies do not always have the same opportunities to be physically active. Staff carry them and they are often placed in play equipment such as swings which limits their ability to practice and develop their gross motor skills independently.

**Leadership and governance**

**Grade Expected standard**

Leaders implement a robust induction programme for all new staff. Regular staff appraisal and supervisions take place throughout the year. Staff are voted for as 'star of the month' as recognition for their hard work and dedication. This contributes to a positive working environment where staff share that they are very happy in their roles at the setting.

There are robust checks completed for all staff through the agency to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children, but leaders and managers also complete safer recruitment



training. This effectively supports them to maintain high quality standards when recruiting new staff.

Leaders and managers fulfil their statutory duties. However, not all registered childminders complete the required training hours as set by the agency. All registered childminders must complete the required training hours to continue to meet the requirements of their registration.

### Prioritises for Improvement

<b>Safeguarding</b>
<b>Grade Met</b>
<b>Next step -</b>
<b>Inclusion</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<b>Next step -</b>
<b>Curriculum and teaching</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<b>Next step -</b>
<b>Achievement</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<b>Next step -</b>
<b>Behaviours, attitudes and establishing routines</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<b>Next step –</b> Leaders should think about organisation of routines to further improve children’s engagement in purposeful learning.
<b>Next step-</b> Leaders should ensure that practitioners explicitly teach children the language of emotions to further support their understanding.
<b>Children’s welfare and well-being</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<b>Next step –</b> Leaders should increase the opportunities for babies to be physically active both inside and outside.
<b>Leadership and governance</b>
<b>Grade Expected standard</b>
<b>Next step -</b> All Childcarers connected to the registration should complete all training hours as set by the agency to ensure that they continue to meet the requirements of their registration.



Name of setting	Pips Nursery
Registration Number	SCA170319
Type of Provision (CM at home/99% non-domestic premises/CODP/CWDP)	CODP
Registers (Early Years, Compulsory, Voluntary Childcare?)	All
Local Authority	Essex
Childminder Agency Inspector	Nicky Webb
Date of previous Inspection	N/A
Number of children on roll	27

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