

# Inspection of Canopy St. Albans

Canopy Nursery St. Albans, West Riding, Bricket Wood, St. Albans AL2 3QR

---

Inspection date: 23 January 2025

---

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is good

Children are happy and settled in the nursery. The staff team greet them with enthusiasm and show a genuine interest in the children. There is a strong emphasis on getting to know the children and families well. Children have a flexible settling-in period into the nursery and when they move to new rooms. Staff support children's transitions well. This approach means children are eager to go to their room to take part in the activities. Each room is a hive of activity. Children show curiosity and engagement as they explore the well-considered learning environment. Babies strengthen their leg muscles as they lower and squat, using the well-placed furniture. They balance at the table as they explore cereals with their hands. Younger children explore the differences and similarities between the mouse and the fox from their favourite book. Older children create their own fruit and vegetable portraits to help them express how they are feeling.

Children behave well. They show kindness to their friends, use their manners and are beginning to share. The staff team are good role models. They recognise children are still learning the rules. They use positive language to remind children about the behaviour they would like to see.

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

- The provider has designed a curriculum that helps children build on what they know and can do. This prepares children for their next stage of learning. In each room, the provider uses a book of the week to plan an exciting curriculum that excites children's curiosity and intrigue. For example, young children enjoy 'The Gruffalo'. Children play in the 'Gruffalo Cafe' writing orders and preparing the food. Older children recall the story about the runaway pea. They pour peas into cups as they play in the pretend kitchen area. Staff's teaching is good. Sometimes, the staff team do not always know what skills and knowledge that they want children to gain from activities and the impact of this on children's development.
- Staff provide children with valuable opportunities to develop their communication and language skills. They help older children develop their memory and participation by missing out words while reading the story. They wait for children to guess the missing words. Staff use familiar songs to calm settling babies, knowing it helps soothe them. Babies delight in playing peekaboo with staff as they hide behind scarves. Staff are always on hand to support play ideas. They engage in discussion and introduce unfamiliar words as children play. For example, staff describe the play dough as 'squidgy' and 'lumpy'.
- Staff support children to be independent. They encourage children to wash their hands and eat with cutlery during mealtimes. Younger children are eager to get themselves ready to go into the garden. They attempt to put on their waterproof

suits. Staff help children to problem solve when they notice their shoes are on the wrong feet.

- The provider collaborates with other professionals to help to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress from their starting points. Staff support children with SEND and children who speak English as an additional language well. They use visual prompt cards during the daily routine to help children know what will happen next. Furthermore, the provider uses additional funding to provide specific resources for individual children. This helps to ensure that a tailored approach to children's learning and development is effective.
- Children enjoy accessing the outside space. The provider plans for all areas of learning for those children who prefer to learn in the fresh air. However, the provider has not considered how suitable the activities are for the changeable weather or how children manage the activities alongside each other. For example, children struggle to stay at the activities because the rain disintegrates the paper and other children ride around the garden and across their paintings. This means those children who prefer to learn outside do not receive the same rich learning experience that is available inside.
- Parents' comments are positive. They say that communication is good as staff share information with them about their children's learning. They appreciate the ideas about how to continue their child's learning at home.

## 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:**

- help staff to focus precisely on the skills and knowledge that they want children to gain from activities, how this will build on prior learning and support children's good progress
- strengthen curriculum plans for the garden area, with a focus particularly for those children who prefer to learn outdoors.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2721688
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10382276
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	83
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	84
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Little Leapers Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2721690
<b>Telephone number</b>	07709837579
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Canopy Nursery St Albans registered in 2023. The nursery employs 23 members of staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate qualification at level 3 or above. The provider holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6.30pm, all year round, except for bank holidays and a week between Christmas and new year. The nursery provides funded early education places for all eligible children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Lisa Topham

## 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.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the leadership team about the management of the nursery.
- 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 inspector carried out joint observations with the manager.
- Parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2025