Essendene Lodge Nursery

Unique reference number (URN): 2859248

Address: Essendene Lodge School, Essendene Road, Caterham, CR3 5PB

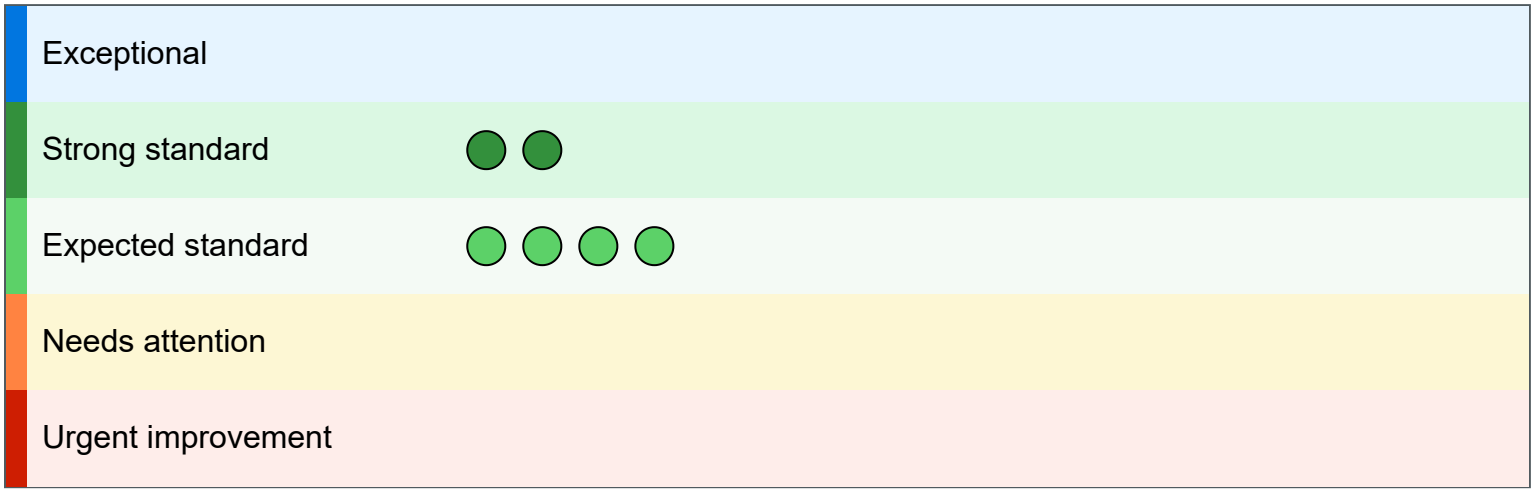
Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 16/09/2025

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Essendene Lodge School Limited

Inspection report: 17 September 2026



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.

Strong standard

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders and staff include all children, including those who face barriers to their learning and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work alongside parents and gather a wealth of information when children start. This helps staff to make swift adaptions in their practice to support children's next step of learning. For example, staff plan targeted teaching activities that they continually reflect on. This helps them get to know children's starting points when they first start and build on what they know and can do. Staff consistently review children's progress to ensure they are benefiting for the strategies in place.

Leaders plan precise training for staff to further their understanding of how to support children. For example, staff have completed training on how to develop children's communication and language skills, including the use of visual aids. This helps children make rapid progress for their starting points. Leaders have a secure understanding of how to refer to other professionals so that children receive the support they are entitled to, including any additional funding. This helps children to access their early years free entitlement. Children benefit highly from staff consistent inclusive approach.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders create an inclusive environment where children feel happy, valued and safe. They are highly reflective and continue to evaluate the nursery provision. This enables leaders to swiftly identify any areas they want to strengthen. For instance, they have recently opened a baby room at the nursery. However, leaders have not yet considered how to supports staff to improve transitions for children in the toddler room. Leaders have insured that all staff have completed training to support the care of babies, including safe sleeping requirements.

Leaders are visible and regularly observe staff's practice. This helps them provide targeted support and training that continually improves the learning and experiences for the children at this nursery. As such, staff report positively on the regular kind and professional support from leaders . They say that daily discussions and planned supervisions helps them to identify any areas of development within their practice. This helps staff continue to deepen their knowledge and teaching skills.

Partnership with parents is real strength of this nursery. Leaders take their time through their well-developed induction process to understand each child's individual needs, including there are care routines. Parents speak very positively about the daily communication throughout the day whilst their children are settling. Parents of children who may need some additional support say that leaders are open and honest. They appreciate the early support that their children receive to help them benefit from any support from other professionals.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Generally, children build on their next steps of learning, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in readiness for their eventual move to school. Babies are developing their early communication skills as they listen intently to their familiar person offering gestures and babbling. Older children recall some letters sounds such as 'g' and related this to objects such as 'glasses'. They talk with growing confidence and play well alongside their friends. Children scoop and use one handed tools as they explore well planned tuff trays. They run, jump and ride small bikes. This helps children practice and develop their physical abilities. Children count objects and compare how shapes are different. This helps children's early mathematics. Children learn about hygiene and know to wash their hands before mealtimes, typically routines, help children develop their independence.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Leaders have high expectations of children's behaviour. Staff are skilful in adult planned activities as they use strategies to help children engage in their learning experiences, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children generally listen well and respond positively to staff's guidance. Staff are kind in their interactions as children play. They model with children how to take turns and gently remind children to say please and thank you. This helps promote children's social skills and manners.

Staff generally, embed routines to support children's learning opportunities. Babies care routines are carefully followed with the guidance of their parents. This helps them develop trusting bonds with their key person. As a result of the newly opened baby room, and recent staff changes, staff are not consistently clear of their roles to support children's engagement at transition times. This means that the environment becomes disorganised as children wait for to be guided as to what is expected of them and why.

Leaders monitor children's attendance and share their expectations with parents. This helps keep children safe and also supports children in readiness for their eventual move to school.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders and staff are passionate at developing relationships with all children and families that attend the nursery. Staff place high importance on the key-person approach. They know their children's likes and dislikes well and use this to support children's emotional wellbeing. For example, when children start at the nursery, they are greet by their key person, who ensure that they stay close by as children settle into their new environment. This helps children feels safe and secure.

Staff typically support children's to develop their independence such as washing their hands before mealtimes. However, children do not have regular opportunities to practice with other aspects of their self-care. For example, staff put children's shoes and coats on and do not

encourage them to have a go. This mean children do not have the opportunity to practice these self-care skills.

Leaders have recently reviewed the menu to ensure that it is healthy and nutritious. Staff sit with the children at mealtimes and have conversations about the benefits of the healthy foods on their bodies. Children benefit from planned opportunities to develop their physical skills through exercise and planned activities. This helps children develop healthy habits for the future. Children who require additional support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive individualised approaches to meet their individual needs.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders and staff have developed an ambitious curriculum that is focused on building children's knowledge and skills across all areas of learning, including children with potential barriers to their learning. They provide children with a balance of adult led activities that builds on children's interests and supports their supports their next steps of learning.

Staff use robust observations to assess children's progress to identify what they need to learn next. Staff adapt their teaching to meet children's individual needs. For example, at group times staff adapt resources to help promote children's engagement. This promotes an inclusive culture. However, sometimes, daily routines are not highly embedded to promote children's independence.

Staff focus on children's communication and language skills. Children eagerly join in with familiar stories and learn about the different emotions. Staff engage children in meaningful conversations and teach them new vocabulary through repetition and discussion. This supports children's understanding and vocabulary. Staff weave in opportunities to promote children's mathematical development. For instance, staff repeat early counting which is age and stage appropriate. This helps children to learn the concepts of early counting and shapes within their play. Staff ensure children benefit from daily exercise in the well planned outside environment. This helps children develop their muscles groups for later learning such as writing.

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

Children thrive in the care of the staff at this nurturing nursery. Babies and children are met by their familiar person at the start of the day this helps children leave their parents with

ease. Children demonstrate they feel safe and secure as they settle in for their nutritious breakfast and babies care routines are adapted to meet their individual needs.

Children develop their communication and language skills. They listen well to the staff as they take part in planned activities, including children who may face barriers to their learning. Children learn new vocabulary such as 'car wash'. They show an interest in stories and learn new vocabulary such as 'excited' as they look at the different pictures of emotions. This helps children develop an understanding of their own emotions as they offer ideas of what makes them feel excited. Babies babble as staff use mirrors and use simple words. They sing warmly to babies throughout their day. This helps children become confident communicators. Young children develop their counting, babies explore wooden shapes and listen to rhymes with numbers. This helps children develop their early mathematics.

Children have ample opportunity to develop their muscle groups for later learning. They dab paint brushes in foam as they make patterns. This helps develops the muscles in their hands for later writing. Older children run and Babies are encouraged as they sit to reach and grasp for items. This helps babies develop their core muscles and balance for later walking.

Children typically, develop their independence as they learn to wash their hands before mealtimes and feed themselves using cutlery. Babies snuggle in as they enjoy their morning bottles with the caring staff. They quickly settle for their morning sleep and are monitored by the staff. Generally, routines support children positive behaviour. They take turns playing with footballs and catch their friends and staff. Children benefit from punctuality attendance at the start of the day. Leaders share their expectations of children's attendance with parents, which they monitor. This helps keep children safe.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to coach and support staff to help them consistently develop children's independence.
- Leaders should strengthen the routines in the toddler room so that children continue the planned learning at these times.

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, staff, children and parents 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.

Inspector:
Kelly Lane

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2859248

Address:
Essendene Lodge School
Essendene Road
Caterham
CR3 5PB

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 16/09/2025

Registered person: Essendene Lodge School Limited

Register(s): EYR

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

Local authority: Surrey

Facts and figures used on inspection

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

This data is from 17 September 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

0 to 2

Total number of places

44

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