

# Apple Tree Day Nursery & Preschool

Unique reference number (URN): 2801712

Address: 201 New Church Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 4ED

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 07/08/2024

Registers: EYR, CCR

Registered person: Childcare 360 Limited

## Inspection report: 26 February 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.

## Strong standard ●

### Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Strong standard ●

Staff establish clear routines and consistent boundaries that effectively support children to understand what is expected of them and ensure that they successfully transition between activities. This support considers the emotional needs and age and stage of development of all children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff set targets to encourage children's best behaviour, and children are praised for being thoughtful and kind. Children behave extremely well and are very motivated in their learning. They are busy in their learning, acting out stories with their friends or playing alongside adults who challenge them in their thinking. The setting is very calm, and children and babies are relaxed and content. Children are well supported by staff who are compassionate, kind and excellent role models. Staff teach children how to notice and name their emotions, and they understand that some children need more emotional support. Staff respond to children's cues, such as moving them away from a busy place or giving them a cuddle with their key person when they need it.

Leaders consistently monitor attendance and swiftly follow up any concerns. All parents and carers are encouraged to bring their children regularly and on time. This is supported through close professional relationships between families and staff. Consequently, children benefit from a maximum amount of learning, which positively impacts on their future outcomes.

### Children's welfare and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit very well from the sensitive, caring and trusting relationship that they have with their key staff. The curriculum and the daily routines allow for staff and children to spend time together. Children's emotional wellbeing is consistently and thoroughly supported.

Staff are sensitive to children's developing independence during toileting. Privacy is always thoughtfully considered, and staff are always available for support when required. Children are provided with a range of healthy and nutritious meals, which they thoroughly enjoy. Information is given to parents and carers on healthy eating, which supports children and families well when they bring in food from home. Leaders share information on lunch-box ideas to help parents make well-informed decisions. Leaders and staff follow clear procedures and work in collaboration with parents to ensure that children with allergies and medical needs are kept safe.

Children and babies delight in teeth-brushing time, where staff teach them to take care of their teeth and why this is important. Staff rigorously monitor children as they sleep and face children as they eat. Children know that they must sit still when eating, and staff teach children how to keep themselves safe by walking calmly when inside.

## Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders and staff consistently prioritise inclusivity and all children's emotional security. They form warm and secure bonds with all children and get to know them and their individual needs quickly, forming trusting relationships with their families. The 2-way communication is extremely effective and ensures that parents and carers have a detailed understanding of the support available and in place, and how they can help at home. Ongoing conversations and progress reviews between parents and key staff outline children's achievements and any issues or emerging concerns. This approach ensures that children's individual needs are identified and assessed quickly and swiftly supported.

Leaders and staff have very high expectations for and of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They make sure that any children with SEND receive a targeted approach and appropriate monitoring as their needs change. Staff rigorously monitor children's progress and successfully work with families and external agencies to address and reduce any barriers to learning. Leaders use additional funding to help support children's ongoing development. For example, they provide one-to-one support and specialist resources. Well-embedded strategies and considered adaptations to teaching, such as using sensory resources and visual cues, help all children to fully participate and achieve well in their learning.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

Expected standard 

Children generally make steady progress in their communication and language development. Babies make sounds as they join in with nursery rhymes. Older children discuss their experiences and gain confidence in expressing themselves, sharing their thoughts and opinions. These skills support children in readiness for the next stage of their education, such as for school and for future life.

Children confidently move through the nursery towards the next stage in their development. Children develop secure emotional wellbeing and build resilience and social skills through play. They develop problem-solving skills and independence through everyday routines, such as putting on coats and serving themselves at mealtimes. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make secure progress in their learning and achieve well.

### Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders plan a typically broad and balanced curriculum that supports children's development, and assessments establish children's existing knowledge. Overall, staff tailor teaching to suit children's needs, interests and abilities. Children who face barriers to their learning benefit from learning in smaller groups, which supports their development and learning well. Staff ensure that children's emotional needs are met during daily routines and activities.

All children have access to outside play and enjoy experiences that they may not have previously had. Children demonstrate engagement in their play and learning, and staff ensure that children are safe, secure and happy, which supports their learning. Children have opportunities to build on their physical skills. They are encouraged to be active indoors and outdoors. For example, babies enjoy the freedom to negotiate space as they crawl and toddle. They build strength in their fingers as they pick oats from a tray. Staff use every opportunity to help develop children's mathematical knowledge. They play alongside children with water and discuss concepts such as volume. Staff encourage children to count as they jump in and out of hoops in the garden. Staff use repetition, song and stories to support children's language development. Children enjoy looking at books together and acting out stories, such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Staff use these opportunities to discuss the concept of size, with language such as 'small', 'medium' and 'large'.

Leaders are still developing how they support less experienced and less confident staff to implement the curriculum. This can occasionally mean that teaching is inconsistent for different groups of children as staff are not always aware of how to extend children's learning.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Expected standard** 

Leaders are committed to providing highly inclusive education and care for children and families. Parents and carers feed back that they are grateful for the support with using funding and how this enables their children to attend more sessions. They comment on the caring attitude of staff and leaders, and say this contributed to them choosing the nursery for their children.

Leaders are reflective of the provision. They are aware that there are still some improvements to be made and that staff may benefit from additional training and coaching on how to extend children's learning and be more specific in planning for children's goals. Staff say that they feel valued and well supported in their roles and that their workload is well considered. They have access to some training and meet regularly with leaders to discuss their professional development and wellbeing.

Leaders work alongside external agencies to provide targeted support for children and families. They work hard with families and children who face barriers to their learning to help them achieve well and close gaps in their experiences and learning. Teachers from local schools are consulted in preparation for school readiness and support children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to ensure a successful and smooth transition to school.

## **Compulsory Childcare Register requirements**

This setting has met the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

### **How we check if a provider meets the requirements of the Compulsory Childcare Register**

When we check if settings meet the Compulsory Childcare Register requirements, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met
  - Not met
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### **What it's like to be a child at this setting**

Children thrive at this inclusive setting. Leaders and staff create an environment that is safe, welcoming and inviting, encouraging children to be happy and inquisitive learners. Staff recognise the importance of securing important emotional bonds with children. They know that this is the foundation for learning. Consequently, children, including those who face barriers to their learning, make appropriate progress from their starting points. Children are eager to start their day. They settle quickly and are confident to approach staff for support when needed.

Staff support babies to become independent during routines. Under close supervision, babies use cutlery to feed themselves. They choose what they would like to play with from a selection of age-and-stage-appropriate resources and toys. Staff are kind and caring, and as a result, children learn to be respectful to others. Staff encourage older children to be collaborative in their play. For example, staff encourage children to play group games together and to take turns. Children form friendships with other children. They develop assurance in social situations and have purposeful conversations with their friends and staff. These early experiences support their confidence in forming relationships with others. They are equipped with skills for life and are ready for their move on to school.

Leaders and staff fully consider children's learning and development needs, particularly for disadvantaged children and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They create a fully inclusive environment and make sure all children's needs are met.

Parents praise leaders and staff for offering a bespoke provision that fully allows their children to access a high standard of education and care.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should enhance the knowledge and skills of staff to help them implement the curriculum even more effectively.
  - Leaders should support staff to consistently extend children's learning and plan clear next steps for each child to build on what they already know and can do even further.
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## About this inspection

The inspector spoke with staff, children, 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.

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### Inspector:

Tina Lambert

## About this setting

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### Address:

201 New Church Road  
Hove  
East Sussex  
BN3 4ED

**Type:** Childcare on non-domestic premises

**Registration date:** 07/08/2024

**Registered person:** Childcare 360 Limited

**Register(s):** EYR, CCR

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

# Facts and figures used on inspection

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

 This data is from 26 February 2026

## Children numbers

### Age range of children at the time of inspection

0 to 4

### Total number of places

110

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## 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.

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