

Merton Preschool

C/O Merton Infant School, Romsey Close, Popley, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 9HB



Inspection date

6 October 2016

Previous inspection date

16 September 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Leaders and managers monitor the delivery of the education programmes, planning, and assessment extremely effectively. Children's needs are quickly identified and well met through highly effective partnership working and timely interventions.
- Children's safety and security are diligently maintained. Staff use an extensive range of up-to-date policies and procedures to ensure they keep children safe both at the pre-school and on outings.
- Children develop very firm attachments with their key person. They soon become emotionally secure and confident to explore new exciting play areas and activities.
- Staff are quick to provide every child with play and conversations that develop their interests and challenge their thinking. Children make outstanding progress in their learning and development from their starting points.
- Excellent partnership working with parents has a strong impact on children's learning and well-being. Parents express great confidence in the skills of the staff team. They say they value meetings where they discuss their children's achievements, progress and next steps in learning.
- Staff are extremely effective in preparing children for their moves to local schools. They minimise the impact of disadvantages on children's overall development and readiness for school.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- extend the excellent play opportunities already in place for children to explore the world around them.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed care routines and teaching, and the impact of these on children's learning and development.
- The inspector sampled records and procedures relating to safeguarding, risk assessment, health and safety, and discussed a range of other procedures relating to children's safety and welfare with the provider.
- The inspector looked at children's records, the provider's monitoring and evaluation of education programmes, and how she exchanges information with parents.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and reviewed written communication from parents.
- The inspector spoke with the manager and her deputy about the impact of their training, experience and practice on improving outcomes for children.

Inspector

Helen Robinshaw

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The quality of management and teaching is high and the leadership committee has a clear focus on raising outcomes for local children. Both the manager and her deputy hold degrees in early years education. They are very successful in using their recent studies, and exceptionally high aspirations for children, to provide outstanding levels of care and learning. Highly experienced, skilled and well-supervised staff share a clear vision and make a significant difference to the lives of young children, including the most vulnerable and the most able. Safeguarding is effective. The manager and her team place a high priority on working with families to ensure children are protected, safe, and healthy.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Children benefit from consistently high-quality teaching. For example, even the youngest, newest children choose to listen and concentrate as puppets and props are used to tell long stories, such as the story of the three bears. Skilled staff sensitively observe and develop children's interests. They model new words and ideas to extend children's play across all areas of their learning. Children concentrate, fully immersed in their play and eager to communicate their ideas. Staff continue to plan and provide children with wonderful, rich and purposeful learning environments in their new building. They spark children's interest and enthusiasm for discovery, investigation and learning, for instance, as they pour and control water flow outdoors.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Parents say they find initial home visits give them time to begin to get to know and trust staff, and help their children to settle quickly in the pre-school. Staff conduct thorough self-evaluation and identify clear priorities for improvement. They have excellent plans to develop the new outdoor play areas even further for children who love to learn and discover outdoors. Staff also recognise the benefits of taking children on further outings to discover their local community. For example, children walk to local parks and experience using public transport as they go into town to see Christmas lights and plays.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children behave extremely well. They are thoroughly engaged in play that captures their imaginations. Children develop a keen interest in thinking about how to improve their constructions, designs and experiments. For example, children work as a team to rebuild marble runs that are faster and more elaborate. Children learn to cooperate, negotiate and respect each other's ideas. They make outstanding levels of progress in their personal, social, physical and language skills during their time at the pre-school. Children develop the foundation skills that prepare them well for the next stage in their learning, including school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	511077
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	1061609
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Merton Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP908418
Date of previous inspection	16 September 2013
Telephone number	01256 353100

Merton Preschool registered in 1999 and is situated within the grounds of Merton Infants School in Basingstoke, Hampshire. It is run by an elected committee of present and past parents and members of the host school staff. The pre-school opens during school term times from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are seven staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 to level 6. The pre-school also employs a part-time administrator.

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