

Ickleford Pre-School

Village Hall, Arlesey Road, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3TG



Inspection date

28 February 2017

Previous inspection date

4 March 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff in each room are well supported by the manager and the deputy manager so that they competently implement effective teaching methods. Children participate in activities that are informed by their interests and support them in developing skills and knowledge in readiness for school.
- The manager monitors children's progress well, quickly noting and addressing any weaker areas in their learning. Staff now offer children further activities that support them in using their mathematical knowledge to count, sort and compare items.
- Staff work sensitively with children and help them to manage their behaviour. Children understand the effects their actions have on others, so they treat one another with kindness and respect.
- The manager supports staff in attending training and putting their new knowledge into practice. For example, staff now extend children's creativity and communication skills through simple storytelling activities.
- Staff build good partnerships with parents and support them in extending their children's learning at home. Parents report that they appreciate the good communication methods so that they understand their children's progress.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always offer as many outdoor learning opportunities, in order to fully extend the development of children who prefer to learn in this environment.
- Staff do not always make the best possible use of the group times they plan for older children, in order to fully extend their engagement and learning at these times.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the use of outdoors to offer children who prefer to learn outside further play and learning opportunities
- build on the procedures for group times for older children to ensure that these consistently offer them interesting opportunities that support their learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector talked with staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection. She completed a joint observation with the manager, who is also the nominated person.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager/nominated person. She looked at relevant documentation, discussed the pre-school's self-evaluation and saw evidence of the suitability of staff and committee members.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Kelly Eyre

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The manager makes good use of her qualification to inform her work and offer staff effective supervision. Practical self-evaluation procedures support staff in continuously reviewing their practice and making relevant improvements. The manager maintains a thorough knowledge of children's needs and makes good use of additional funding to promote children's development. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff keep up to date with local procedures and national guidance. They understand the process for reporting any concerns about children's welfare. Staff work well with other childcare settings, in order to promote children's well-being and development. For example, they use written and verbal communication methods to exchange assessment information.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff observe children as they play and make good decisions about when to intervene to extend this. For example, younger children laugh and giggle as they explore empty boxes. When a staff member joins them, they link the tower they have built to a favourite story, extending their creativity as they add their own ideas to this. Staff plan indoor resources well and use these as a way of supporting children's learning. As children play with pretend pancakes, they build on their mathematical skills as they talk about the different sizes of these. Children extend their early writing skills as they stop at an interesting table of resources and use these to make their own miniature books. Staff interact well with children and use open-ended questions as a way of encouraging them to think further. For example, children eagerly describe their paintings and look at the shapes they have made by pushing toy tractors through a tray of soil.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff work closely with parents and any other professionals involved in children's lives so that they understand their needs. Children respond to the positive, caring approach shown by staff. They quickly build secure bonds with their key person and other staff. Children develop their physical skills as they participate in activities, such as crawling through tunnels or balancing on beams. Staff have extended their approaches to building children's understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, they make good use of snack and lunchtimes to talk with children about healthy food options. Children enjoy opportunities to talk with staff about their work and to celebrate their achievements. These support them in understanding their own learning and build their confidence, enabling them to develop positive emotional approaches to daily challenges and learning.

Outcomes for children are good

All children are making good progress. Staff support children well, helping them to develop the skills that underpin their learning and prepare them for school. Children enjoy organising their play and choosing resources, happily playing together or independently. With support from staff, younger children refer to simple visual timetables that help them to understand the routine and the activities on offer. These thoughtful procedures particularly aid children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, as they develop important social and independence skills that support their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	146749
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1063622
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	Ickleford Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523487
Date of previous inspection	4 March 2013
Telephone number	0773317 8879

Ickleford Pre-School was registered in 1987. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and four at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are on Monday to Thursday from 9.05am to 12.05pm, with afternoon sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. There is a lunch club on Monday to Thursday from 12.05pm to 1pm. On Fridays, the session is from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. They provide care for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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