

Strathmore Pre-School

Strathmore School, Old Hale Way, HITCHIN, Hertfordshire SG5 1XR



Inspection date	9 November 2018
Previous inspection date	8 July 2015

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of 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

The provision is outstanding

- Staff have a superb partnership with parents. They have daily communication with parents and carers, and professionally exchange information regarding children's care and development. This helps to ensure children's individual needs are extremely well met.
- The highly efficient manager has effective arrangements for the monitoring and supervision of staff. The staff team is extremely motivated and consistently strives to make improvements and further its own professional development.
- The inclusion of all children is at the heart of the pre-school's work. Staff work well with parents and the committee to meet every child's individual needs.
- Staff provide a rich, varied and imaginative environment. Children are happy, confident and build close relationships with staff and other children.
- Children display an excellent understanding of the setting's rules and boundaries. They demonstrate exemplary behaviour when responding to changes in routines and participating in group activities. Staff promote children's understanding of routine changes by singing familiar songs. Children respond well to this strategy and quickly get ready for the next part of the session.
- Children's safety is paramount and staff have exceptional knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- Staff plan an extremely wide range of highly stimulating and challenging learning experiences based around children's interests.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already superb teaching to allow children extra time to explore and extend their own learning when an activity captures their interest.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to the manager and staff about how they self-evaluate and identify areas for improvement.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents and grandparents, and took their opinions into account.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation and spoke to staff about their knowledge of safeguarding and the setting's procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff's training and suitability.

Inspector
A McMullen

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

The management team is excellent at reflecting on practice and actively seeks the views of staff, parents and children when implementing improvements. Staff are highly motivated and knowledgeable. They work extremely well together as a team. Staff are continually supported in their professional development by the manager and committee. They make excellent use of new training ideas to enhance further the already exemplary teaching. Safeguarding is effective. Staff have exceptional knowledge regarding signs and symptoms of abuse and their roles and responsibilities with regards to protecting children. Parents are remarkably pleased with the care their children receive and the progress they have made since starting at the pre-school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff create a highly stimulating and language-rich environment. The indoor and outdoor play areas provide exciting opportunities where children can explore, investigate and actively learn. Staff positively engage with children during their play and constantly adapt activities according to children's interests and individual needs. Children develop an excellent understanding of the natural world and thoroughly enjoy exploring nature areas in the garden. They care for living creatures, such as the setting's giant snails, investigating how and where they live. Staff work extremely well with parents when supporting children who speak English as an additional language. They are extremely focused on supporting all children's language development and use sign language during story and singing sessions. Staff recognise the importance of allowing children time to explore and extend their learning during freely chosen and planned activities. On occasions, however, staff become too focused on following hygiene routines, such as handwashing, and do not allow time for children to fully explore a chosen activity.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Parents and staff work exceptionally well together when supporting children through the settling-in period, helping to create a smooth transition from home to pre-school. Children have close bonds with their key person and show confidence when exploring their environment. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise on a daily basis when they play in the pre-school's exciting and interestingly resourced garden. They proficiently ride cars, bicycles and tricycles around set areas of the garden and explore climbing as they negotiate the pre-school's climbing equipment.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Children are extremely enthusiastic learners. They demonstrate excellent observational skills. For example, they notice that blue rice has been used to represent water. They confidently suggest that they could use water instead. When this is agreed, they find appropriate containers and competently transport water from the sink to the water tray. Children are highly confident communicators. They initiate conversations with each other and adults. All children, including those in receipt of additional funding and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make rapid and significant progress. Children are extremely well prepared for their next stage of learning and starting school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY407633
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10063620
Type of provision	Sessional day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Strathmore Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP529634
Date of previous inspection	8 July 2015
Telephone number	07593 742755

Strathmore Pre-School registered in 2010 and it located in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm, and from 9am to midday on Friday, during term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

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 www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120354.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: www.ofsted.gov.uk/user.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

