

Inspection of Whitehouse Playgroup Preschool

Benvenue Avenue, Eastwood, Southend on Sea, Essex SS9 5SJ

Inspection date: 26 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy, motivated learners and enthusiastically explore the stimulating activities indoors and outdoors. Staff know the children's likes and interests well and use this information to plan and create valuable experiences that capture their imagination. For example, children enjoy making bridges with construction blocks to 'rescue' various things, after finding out how the fire service rescues people.

Children are encouraged to select their own resources and take responsibility for clearing them away. They are reminded to use their 'listening ears' and 'looking eyes' as staff give them a five-minute warning before they all tidy up. Relationships are good and children feel confident to try out new things. For example, they make pretend cakes with dough, enjoying the sensory experience. Children's self-esteem is high as they are awarded 'special gems' for doing things well. They take pride in gaining this prize for their team.

Children demonstrate that they feel safe and content in the warm, friendly atmosphere of the pre-school. Children's behaviour is good and staff encourage them to resolve any conflicts that arise. Staff are good role models and are skilful in supporting all children's learning.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The staff have created a stimulating, happy environment in which children are actively involved in making choices and decisions about their learning. Children engage in a wide range of activities that develop their skills and knowledge across the seven areas of learning. For example, they have fun playing in the post office, and using the car wash and the mud kitchen.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff interact effectively with the children. They use lots of open-ended questions to encourage children to think and solve problems, while also giving them time to respond. For example, in sensory play, staff ask 'What do you think would happen if too much oil is added to the mixture?'
- Key persons know their children well and what they need to learn next. Good links are made with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to support individual children's learning and development. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress. However, they are not fully encouraged to contribute information about their children's learning at home, or supported in how to help their children develop skills, such as dressing themselves.
- Staff are friendly and caring. They strive to meet the needs of all children. They encourage independence as children self-register on arrival and make choices about their snack.
- There is a strong emphasis on supporting children's early language and

communication skills with regular reference to new vocabulary, including mathematical vocabulary, rhymes and stories. Children enjoy cuddling up to staff and sharing books together, delighting in the pictures and words.

- There is a good relationship between the pre-school and the school, with regular opportunities for exchange visits and use of the school's adventure playground. This has a positive effect on children being ready for school and results in good transition experiences. Children show independence and confidence as they move to the next stage of their education.
- Children's curiosity about their local community is fostered well by visits from the fire service, a therapy dog, and a gardener to help plant herbs and winter plants. Children also take harvest gifts to a local home for older people. Good use is made of charitable organisations and funding opportunities to enhance the provision for the children.
- Staff support children's learning about healthy lifestyles. They discuss the importance of oral hygiene and practise cleaning teeth on large denture models. Children help prepare and select a range of healthy snacks such as yogurt, apples and milk.
- The manager regularly evaluates the effectiveness of the provision and supports staff through supervision. Less focus is given to developing good practice further through reflective, critical observations of staff's teaching skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a thorough knowledge of their responsibility to safeguard children. They clearly demonstrate their understanding of what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Staff are confident in the procedures to be followed. They access regular training to update their knowledge and understand the steps to take for whistle-blowing. Children are supervised vigilantly as the deployment of staff is well managed. Staff enable children to manage risks for themselves, such as carefully climbing the tyre mountain in the outdoor area.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend opportunities for staff to continue to develop their teaching skills and learn from each other through honest and critical reflection
- explore more ways to encourage all parents to contribute information about their children's achievements and provide further ideas to help support learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	119537
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10072332
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Whitehouse Playgroup
Registered person unique reference number	RP519115
Telephone number	01702 511863
Date of previous inspection	9 March 2016

Information about this early years setting

Whitehouse Playgroup Preschool registered in 1998. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, six staff hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and two staff hold a qualification at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Liz Norton

Inspection activities

- The inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across the inside and outside areas of the pre-school to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and an early years teacher from the adjacent school at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with parents to gain their views on the pre-school.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the pre-school's documents. This included evidence of staff's suitability and training.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the pre-school manager to discuss self-evaluation.

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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