

Inspection of Roman River Preschool

Fingringhoe Village Hall, Chapel Road, Fingringhoe, Colchester, Essex CO5 7BH

Inspection date:

5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are confident in the pre-school and move around independently as they self-select their own activities. Staff provide a range of resources that allow children to lead and develop their own play. For example, young children persevere to stack and balance large cardboard tubes in the indoor sandpit. They add funnels, containers and toy cars to expand their play. Children's next steps in learning are considered when staff plan activities. However, some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not sufficiently supported by their key person to consistently make the best possible progress.

Children of all ages interact together and generally behave well. However, on occasions, the lack of organisation in staff deployment means that children's behaviour sometimes deteriorates. Most children demonstrate they have developed effective relationships with staff. However, the key-person system is not robust enough to consistently support new children to form close attachments and settle as quickly as possible.

There are many opportunities for children to play and investigate freely in the garden. They particularly enjoy digging for hidden treasure in the large outdoor sandpit. A wooden hut is available outside, where children to practise their mark making, investigate natural resources and read books. Children visit the local park, which helps them to become familiar with the wider environment.

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

- All children are allocated a key person when they join the pre-school. However, some key persons are not making the best use of all possible ways to build relationships and help their new key children to become familiar with the pre-school and settle in the new environment. Equally, they are not always seeking to engage effectively with parents of new children to share information and build relationships.
- The pre-school completes individual development plans to support children with SEND. However, the manager does not ensure that all key persons have sufficient knowledge of these plans to support children to reach their next steps. As a result, some key persons are not always able to consistently provide a tailored curriculum and care practices that meet individual needs and help all children with SEND to achieve their full potential.
- At transitional times, staff do not always deploy themselves effectively to ensure children are appropriately supervised. For example, as two members of staff chat to parents at the door, one member of staff supports all children as they eat their lunch. Children squabble over food and some children's table manners decline due to limited adult support. Equally, on occasions, children run around

inside and behaviour deteriorates due to ineffective staff deployment within the hall.

- The manager conducts regular supervision sessions with staff. She supports staff's mental health and well-being. However, she has not used the supervision sessions effectively to ensure that all staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to competently fulfil their roles and responsibilities. This is with particular regards to how staff deploy themselves and the key-person responsibilities.
- Children enjoy story times. Staff read in an interesting manner and children listen attentively. Some staff use props to encourage children to be active in their learning. For example, children act out a well-known story, using wooden spoons decorated with images of each character. Children follow the story and join in with the repeated refrains. This helps to support their early reading skills and promotes new language.
- Parents speak positively about the pre-school. They say that staff are warm and welcoming. They comment that children really enjoy spending time in the 'lovely, natural outdoor area'. They value the ongoing online information they receive about children's experiences and development.
- The manager has made links with staff at local schools. When children move on to school, she provides information to help to support continuity in children's care and learning. Children are supported to practise dressing and undressing in school sports kits. Staff from the local schools visit the children at the pre-school. In addition, children have opportunities to visit the schools to familiarise themselves with the new environments. This helps to support their confidence and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff team demonstrate a secure understanding of the procedures to keep children safe from harm. They are aware of the possible signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm. The staff team know how to report any concerns they may have about a child in their care. The manager understands the procedures to deal appropriately with allegations or concerns about those working with children. The manager regularly speaks to staff at meetings to ensure that staff are confident to follow safeguarding policies and procedures.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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ensure that staff supervision sessions are effective in ensuring that all staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, with particular regard to staff deployment, to consistently meet children's individual care and learning needs	18/03/2020
review the key-person system to ensure that staff build close relationships with new children to help them to become familiar with the pre-school and quickly settle in their new environment.	18/03/2020

Setting details

Unique reference number	402265
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10072911
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 5
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Roman River Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP520633
Telephone number	01206729731
Date of previous inspection	20 January 2016

Information about this early years setting

Roman River Preschool has been operating since 1987. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold early years qualifications at level 3, and one holds an early years qualification at level 2. The manager holds early years teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Early drop-off sessions are from 8.30am until 9am. Morning sessions are from 9am until midday, and afternoon sessions are from 12.30pm until 3.30pm. The lunch club is available from midday until 12.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marisa White

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff's interactions with the children inside and outside.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector observed a joint observation and evaluated it together afterwards.
- The inspector checked a sample of documentation, including evidence of staff's suitability and training.

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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