

Inspection of Magic Moments Pre-school

The Scout Hut, Park Drive, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6EN

Inspection date: 16 June 2021

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

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children are not consistently provided with a curriculum that challenges and extends their learning and development. The quality of interactions between the staff and children is variable. Staff sometimes overlook opportunities to extend children's interests and to build on what they already know and can do. Children independently select their choice of activity, such as painting. However, rigid routines occasionally interrupt children's involvement in the activities they are enjoying. For example, staff ring a bell and encourage all children to come together as a group. This restricts opportunities for children to continue to develop their play and ideas, and finish activities to their own satisfaction.

Nevertheless, children are happy and demonstrate that they enjoy their time at the pre-school. Children enjoy being physically active in the fresh air. They paddle in the water and are introduced to new words, such as 'splash', as they play. Children solve problems as they position crates and guttering pipes together to enable water and balls to flow and roll down the pipes. Children become involved in imaginative play at the mud kitchen. They are beginning to use language to talk about what they are doing. Children use utensils and develop their hand-to-eye coordination as they move the mud between containers.

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

- Staff do not consistently structure the curriculum to support and build on what children already know and can do. Children show curiosity and ask questions about their play. However, staff do not always use this opportunity to challenge children's thinking and add to their existing knowledge. Planning procedures have recently been revised to enhance the implementation of the curriculum. However, these changes have not yet been embedded in practice.
- Since the last inspection, staff have taken some steps to enhance the learning environment. This enables children to freely access resources. However, inflexible routines sometimes interrupt children's play and take away opportunities for them to develop and complete the activities they are enjoying.
- A welcoming and friendly atmosphere greets all children and their families. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure and are developing positive relationships with staff. They approach staff for help and support when needed and receive reassurance if they are upset. This supports children's emotional development effectively.
- Staff spend time talking to parents and getting to know children's care needs and stage of development before they start at the pre-school. This supports continuity in the children's care and learning experiences. Parents comment positively about the pre-school. In particular, they praise the consistent staff team and the relationships children build with the staff.

- Children are appropriately supported to manage their feelings and behaviour. They are encouraged to follow instructions, to be kind to one another and to share. Children receive praise for their efforts and achievements, which promotes their confidence.
- Staff provide appropriate support for children in receipt of early years pupil premium and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additional funding has been used to buy more resources and to enable some children to receive one-to-one support from a member of staff.
- Staff have adapted daily routines, in view of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, to ensure the good health of children attending. Alternative drop-off and collection arrangements are in place. Parents are currently not allowed inside the building. Children sanitise their hands on arrival and wash their hands at regular times during the day.
- Children receive healthy snack options. They are developing their self-care skills as they independently pour their drinks and select which fruit they would like to eat. Children show good table manners.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Management and staff have a suitable understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to report child protection concerns. This keeps children safe and promotes their well-being. Newly appointed members of staff follow an induction process. This supports them to understand their roles and responsibilities. A range of written policies and procedures are in place to support staff practice. However, management failed to notify Ofsted that a number of staff and some children tested positive for COVID-19 and that, as a result, the pre-school closed for a two-week period. However, they did inform Public Health England and the local authority to seek advice and support at this time.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
improve staff interactions with the children to ensure that all children receive meaningful and challenging learning experiences that build on what they already know and can do	16/07/2021

ensure that all staff understand and know how to implement the revised planning procedures.	16/07/2021
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- review the organisation of planned routines to enable children to develop and complete activities they are enjoying.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY239397
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10128087
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 at time of inspection	2 to 5
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Magic Moments Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP907721
Telephone number	07709618434
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Magic Moments Pre-school registered in 2003. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one member of staff who has early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Ann Austen

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with the children during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's progress and achievements.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the deputy manager and discussed the children's progress and achievements.
- The inspector looked at a sample of pre-school documents, including evidence of staff suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector and the deputy manager had a learning walk across all areas of the pre-school to understand how the early years curriculum is organised.
- The inspector held discussions with the deputy manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.

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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