

Inspection of Spring Lodge Pre-school & Out of School Clubs

Witham Community Association, Spring Lodge, Powers Hall End, WITHAM, Essex
CM8 2HE

Inspection date: 15 June 2021

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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and eager to enter the setting. They say goodbye to parents and carers with ease. Children demonstrate high levels of confidence and have good relationships with staff. Children benefit from time outside. They enjoy exploring the natural properties of the sand. They enthusiastically add water to make the sand stickier. They fill pots, smooth the surface and turn them out to make sandcastles. Children use the climbing equipment with enthusiasm and skill. They show that they have good coordination and can easily move across the structure to the slide.

Children are sensible. They listen to staff and follow instruction well. This helps to keep them safe. For example, children return indoors when the bell rings at the gate. This ensures that children do not go through the gate unnoticed when staff are speaking to parents. Staff have high expectations for all children. They encourage children to tackle challenges and to develop a can-do attitude. Children are prepared for school. They develop their independence, learning to follow good handwashing procedures and looking after their belongings.

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

- Staff have improved the quality of their interactions with children since the last inspection. They talk to children during activities, asking questions to help children think and share their ideas. The manager and staff team have plans in place to ensure that they sustain improvements.
- The manager explains how the staff plan for children's learning. She describes the knowledge and skills that children need to learn in preparation for school. The team is ambitious for the children and is keen for them to develop a strong foundation of skills. However, staff do not always ensure that the equipment and resources are ready for the children to use. For example, puzzles do not always have all of the pieces and broken pencils prevent children from successfully making marks.
- Staff help children to gain good personal and social skills. They have focused specifically on kindness. From this work, staff and parents say that they can see the improvement in children who are getting on better with others.
- Children benefit from the chance to talk with staff. Many children have a wide vocabulary and staff help them to develop this further. Children enjoy showing what they know. They use role-play activities to pretend to be nurses caring for expectant mothers. Children show that they know a lot about hospital procedures.
- Children enjoy looking at books. Staff use books well to support children's learning on a one-to-one basis. They also read stories to larger groups of children. Staff are skilled readers. They hold children's attention well and involve

them effectively throughout the story. Children follow stories and answer questions about what is happening in the book.

- Staff know the children well. They listen to what children have to say and are happy to hear their ideas and suggestions. Staff recognise children's interests and use some focused activities to progress children's learning. However, occasionally, staff's interactions are not always used effectively to promote the planned learning intention of the activity.
- Parents value the support that they receive from staff. They see the results of their children attending pre-school sessions. Parents say that their children have better communication skills and now hold conversations.
- Staff work closely with other professionals to support families and to ensure that children get any additional help they need to make good progress.
- The manager has put in place an effective supervision programme. She meets with each member of staff regularly to talk about their work and their well-being. This has a positive impact on morale and improving practice. Staff show their interest in training to gain qualifications and to improve skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers have taken suitable action to help staff improve their safeguarding knowledge. All staff have completed appropriate training. Managers continue to check that staff's knowledge is up to date. As a result, staff confidently explain possible signs that children may be at risk of harm. Staff know the steps to take to protect children. They understand the role of the designated safeguarding lead and what to do if there are concerns about the behaviour of adults towards children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to effectively promote specific learning intentions during planned activities
- review the learning environment to ensure that resources are complete and ready for children to use.

Setting details

Unique reference number	402132
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10131861
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 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	Witham Community Association Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905585
Telephone number	01376511042
Date of previous inspection	11 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

Spring Lodge Pre-School and Out of School Clubs registered in 1990 and operates from Spring Lodge Community Centre, Witham. The setting is open from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday during term time and from 8.30am to 5.30pm during school holidays. There are six childcare staff. Of these, five have an appropriate childcare qualification at level 3. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alison Reeves

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager. Together, they assessed the quality of education and the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector about their learning and play. Staff spoke to the inspector about their teaching, their role as key person and safeguarding practice.
- Parents spoke to the inspector about children's learning at the setting and the communication and support they receive from staff.
- The inspector checked documents relating to staff's suitability and qualifications, including paediatric first aid and safeguarding.

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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