

Inspection of Sherington Pre School

Village Hall, Church Road, Sherington, NEWPORT PAGNELL, Buckinghamshire MK16 9PB

Inspection date: 7 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children genuinely enjoy an exceptionally language-rich environment in this friendly, family-orientated pre-school. Staff take great interest in the children and provide lots of attention to keep them very happy and safe. Children rapidly develop confidence to speak and listen in a range of situations. They learn the meaning of, and are able to use, an extensive vocabulary. For example, they ask staff whether they know anything about a velociraptor or a stegosaurus while playing with a selection of dinosaurs.

Children choose from a vast range of challenging and interesting activities, both indoors and outdoors. For example, they follow a numbered trail of 'dragon footprints' around the garden. They practise their counting skills as they mark off the next 'discovered footprint' on a tally chart.

Children enthusiastically help to tidy up and repeat the learned mantra, 'choose it, use it, put it away'. This shows that each child is familiar with the well-established routine and is learning to respect their equipment and the environment.

Children behave exceptionally well and staff have high aspirations and expectations for their learning. The staff constantly interact with children to develop positive approaches to learning and self-confidence. For example, children watch the Teddy Tennis session and decide that they would like to have a go.

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

- Staff sensitively guide children's creativity and imagination. They show children how to fold paper back and forth to make a zigzag dragon body. Children make sculptures of their choice from play dough, stones, twigs and other natural items. A child makes a snowman and this stimulates a discussion about the world around us and memories of winter snowfall and seasonal change.
- Mathematical learning is seamlessly integrated into play. Children use mathematical language of 'one more', 'one less', as they collect the 'harvest' of breakfast cereal 'hay bales' with toy farm vehicles. Children experiment with magnetic construction shapes and one child exclaims, 'I've made a hexagon jail'. They go on to talk to staff about their experiences of camping and staying in a yurt.
- Staff use a flexible planning system to guide and enhance children's learning. As the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic restrictions ease, staff identify that children show a marked interest in visiting coffee shops with their parents. So staff set up a role play cafe next to the mud kitchen. Children mix coloured potion 'coffee', counting out how many squirts are required to make a 'cappuccino'. They read menu cards and practise writing skills as they take

orders from the 'customers'.

- Staff support children's play and identify 'teachable moments' as they ask questions, explain, model and extend language. For example, children become immersed in conversation with staff about what sort of animal may have nibbled the end of a pine cone.
- Staff ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. Children benefit from a lively and purposefully paced story and rhyme session at the end of the morning. Staff provide children with something to hold to help them to focus and concentrate. Children wave brightly coloured chiffon scarves in time to the rhythm as they practise large arm movements to nursery rhymes. They giggle and hide behind their scarves to play peekaboo. They identify the colour of their scarves as they return them to the bag in readiness for the next eagerly anticipated activity.
- Staff skilfully promote children's love of books. Non-fiction books are always available at various activities. Children keenly settle down, listen carefully and sit entranced as staff introduce a story by inviting them to meet puppets that are 'scared' and 'do not like noise'. Children join in with the refrain, 'I want my mummy' as they shut their eyes and wish for the mummy owl to return to the nest.
- Staff develop very strong partnerships with parents. Parents report that staff keep them updated with explanations about the learning intentions for certain activities. Parents comment that children who began pre-school after the national lockdowns were so well supported to settle and feel comfortable. They also highlight the excellent support given to children who are eligible for early years pupil premium and those for whom English is an additional language.
- Children are active and try new sports. Staff provide resources such as crates, wooden blocks and balance beams so that children develop increasing control over the large movements that they can make with their arms, legs and bodies. Staff challenge them to work out how to fix pieces together to achieve the desired result. In this way, children work cooperatively together and solve problems.
- Staff enthusiastically complete online training but the pandemic has caused substantial delays in securing professional training for unqualified staff. The manager is keen for them to bring new skills back to the team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are confident and knowledgeable about their individual responsibilities to keep children safe and protected from harm. They complete regular training updates and know what to do if they are worried about a child. Staff are aware of wider safeguarding issues, such as extremism and the dangers presented by county lines. Some daily practices, such as snack-time routines, have been temporarily adapted to protect children, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Strong teamwork ensures that children play and learn in a safe environment and that all staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- secure professional training for unqualified staff to bring new skills back to the team.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY560041
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10194233
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Sherington Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP560040
Telephone number	01908 611398
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Sherington Pre School re-registered in 2018. It is run by a committee and operates from the village hall premises. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The pre-school opens on Monday and Tuesday, from 9.15am until 1pm, and on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, from 9.15am until 2.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Susan Marriott

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager explained the pre-school curriculum during a learning walk with the inspector. The inspector observed the children engaged in activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on their learning.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity together and discussed the quality of teaching and learning afterwards.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection. She looked at a range of documentation and spoke to the manager about how she evaluates the effectiveness of the provision. She also checked evidence of staff suitability.
- A number of parents provided feedback about the nursery through discussions with the inspector, written testimonials and email.

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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