

Inspection of Ymca Merstham Extended Pre School

Merstham Community Hub, 2a-2b Portland Drive, Merstham RH1 3HY

Inspection date: 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
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

The pre-school successfully captures a community feel and spirit, which is very much a large part of the setting's ethos. Children settle quickly and build strong bonds with staff members. Staff are good role models and help children to learn how to behave and manage their own feelings and emotions. Children are excited learners, who explore and investigate in their play and learning. They display high levels of self-esteem and growing confidence in their own abilities. Staff plan activities that help children to build on their own interests and encourage them to make their own choices in their play. For example, children accompany staff into the resource cupboards if they request their favourite toys or games. Staff take great pride in knowing each child well and in helping them to reach their potential. Staff use good risk assessments that keep children safe and secure at all times. Children have access to the indoor and outdoor learning environments throughout the day. This helps to keep children motivated and interested in their learning. Children have increasing levels of concentration and perseverance in tasks. They spend a lot of time emptying and filling containers with sand and exploring different textures and sensations in their play.

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

- The manager and staff closely monitor and track the progress children make in their development. They complete observations which help them to plan for children's future learning and to quickly identify any gaps that may require additional support. The manager and staff have worked closely to limit the amount of paperwork required, which has resulted in children having lots of one-to-one time with their key person.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who receive additional funding make steady progress. The manager and staff regularly share information with other professionals to provide children with specific targeted support. This helps children to have a joined-up approach towards their learning and development.
- Overall, parents speak highly of the staff team, how their children enjoy their day at pre-school and how quickly they have settled into the routines. However, current systems in place are not always effective in involving all parents, to ensure they feel valued and fully informed of their children's development.
- Staff successfully support children's increasing communication and language development. They take time to talk to children and encourage them to share their own thoughts and opinions. Younger children are supported to expand on their vocabulary and learn new words. Staff recognise the importance of children having access to stories and books to build on their early literacy skills. Children enjoy time in the community library to take books home to share with their family.

- Children have lots of time to be physically active and have access to fresh air and exercise. They are learning about managing risks in their play as they run, climb and calculate distance as they jump on small stepping stones. However, occasionally, staff do not organise themselves effectively enough in the outdoors, to use opportunities to extend children's learning further.
- The manager plans well for the professional development of her staff team. Through regular supervision meetings, staff are involved in identifying areas where they wish to increase their knowledge. The manager is undergoing training that she is sharing with the staff team to further support children's mental and emotional well-being.
- Self-evaluation is used well to continuously identify areas for improvement and change. The manager and staff have ambitious plans to create a 'sensory garden', which would help children to have many more outdoor opportunities in their learning. Staff are also keen to further support children's understanding of healthy eating and being even more independent in their own self-care.
- Children enjoy exploring with colours and shapes, they build 'pyramids' with cups and show increasing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Children enjoy mark making and creating play dough shapes, which they decorate with glitter and use scissors to carefully cut into small pieces. This helps children to build on their small physical skills and abilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant towards protecting the children in their care. All staff are knowledgeable and have a good understanding of how to identify potential signs and symptoms of abuse. There are robust reporting procedures in place for staff to quickly report any concerns for a child's welfare. The manager ensures that all staff receive ongoing training and updates in all areas of safeguarding. Robust recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of all staff who work with children. All areas of the pre-school are fully risk assessed to keep children safe at all times.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen systems for partnerships with parents, to ensure they continue to feel informed and valued in all areas of their children's learning and development
- organise staff more effectively, to capture opportunities to extend the learning of all children, particularly in the outdoor environment.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY557339
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10175001
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	40
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	YMCA East Surrey
Registered person unique reference number	RP904717
Telephone number	07870904035
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Ymca Merstham Extended Pre School is located in the community hub in Merstham, Surrey. They are open term time only from Monday to Friday, 8.45am to 2.45pm. There are five members of staff who work directly with children, all of whom hold early years qualifications between level 6 and level 2. The provision provides early years education funding for two-, three- and four- year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Gwendolyn Andrews

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 manager and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum for the pre-school is organised.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager and held a leadership meeting with the manager and senior managers.
- The manager and the inspector discussed plans for evaluating the setting and the areas identified for improvement. The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including suitability checks, recruitment files and staff supervisions.
- The inspector observed the teaching and learning in both the indoor and the outdoors and the impact this has on the development of the children. The inspector spoke directly to parents and took their comments into consideration.

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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