

Inspection of Birch Hill Preschool

Birch Hill Recreation Ground, Ringmead, BRACKNELL, Berkshire RG12 7AQ

Inspection date: 9 November 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	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are warmly welcomed by staff as they arrive at the pre-school. Older children are eager to begin their play as soon as they arrive but take time to comfort their younger, newer friends to help them settle. Children are well behaved. They respond to gentle reminders from staff about using good manners and staff help children to share and take turns as they play.

Children show that they feel safe and secure. For example, they talk to staff and visitors with great enthusiasm about the carrots they have picked in the garden and invite them to join in songs. Children are gaining a real interest in the natural world as a result of the staff's good quality teaching skills. They gain confidence handling the pre-school's giant African land snail and hissing cockroach; they learn about hibernation and what different bugs eat.

Children are keen to play outside, where they enjoy a wide range of activities that support their physical development. They blow bubbles for their friends to chase and pop and confidently ride on balance bikes. Staff deploy themselves very well around the setting and join in children's play. They help children to learn about keeping healthy, as they talk to them about why they need to wash their hands and why fruit is good for their bodies.

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

- Staff know the children very well and plan a curriculum based on their knowledge of the children's needs, interests and backgrounds. The activities that staff provide are well thought out and interesting. For example, staff understand that to develop handwriting skills, children need to practise making marks from left to right and top to bottom. They plan a fun mark-making activity in green sand and children proudly say, 'I did it' when they draw lines and zigzags.
- The good range of engaging and exciting activities means that children remain engrossed in their play throughout the day. The mud kitchen outside is very popular and children work together to make mud pies and add natural materials, such as petals and leaves. They pump coloured water from bottles and check the recipe cards on the wall to find out what else they need for their mixture. When finished, the children happily shout out, 'who wants pie?'
- Children's personal development is well supported. They learn how to pour their drinks from a jug at a young age and are encouraged to help keep the setting tidy. Children are regularly seen helping each other to find resources and form close friendships with their peers. As each child leaves at the end of the session, the remaining children shout and wave goodbye.
- Parents are very positive about the pre-school and staff. They comment that they feel well informed about their child's day and the progress they are making.

Some parents join the committee and take on a more active role in the running of the setting. The committee and staff team work together effectively. However, committee members are not always given clear information about all aspects and responsibilities of the role they have taken on.

- Staff state that they feel well supported to fulfil their roles. They reflect on their practice with the manager during regular supervision meetings and identify training to help them develop their knowledge and skills further.
- The provider has robust recruitment procedures in place to help ensure staff are suitable to work with children. New staff receive a detailed induction to the setting. However, records evidencing the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed are not organised in a coherent and easily accessible way to make them available for inspection.
- Staff provide good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who receive funding. Children develop strong bonds with their key person. The relationships between adults and children are warm and nurturing.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff are aware of their responsibility to keep children safe. They make sure the premises are secure and they monitor children closely during arrival and collection times. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection, including the wider aspects of safeguarding. They know how to report any concerns within the pre-school and to relevant safeguarding agencies. The manager makes sure that Ofsted is notified of changes to the committee and that appropriate suitability checks are carried out for committee members. This helps to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- create more opportunities for committee members to develop a clear understanding of their roles and legal responsibilities
- review the organisation of records, particularly those relating to the recruitment and vetting of staff, to ensure they are more easily accessible and available.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY549862
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10144911
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Birch Hill Pre School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP901887
Telephone number	07547794849
Date of previous inspection	21 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

Birch Hill Preschool re-registered in 2017 after moving to new premises. It has been in operation for over 30 years and is located in the Birch Hill area of Bracknell, Berkshire. The pre-school is open from 8.30am to 3.45pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. There are nine members of staff who work with the children. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status and four hold early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Nicky Hill

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke with the staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Parents, grandparents and committee members shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.

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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