

Inspection of Carmel Caterpillars Pre-School

Carmel Hall, Ufton Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JB

Inspection date: 9 March 2022

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

The provision is good

Children receive a warm welcome when they arrive at the pre-school. They arrive happy and eager to access the resources available. Children know to hang their coats and bags up on their pegs and wash their hands before settling down to the activities. At the start of the session, children sit together and say 'hello' in different languages to each other. Staff support them to remember the rules of the pre-school. They go through the expectations and children recite these confidently. For example, children know that they must wash hands before snack time and must only use the cold tap, and that they must walk in the pre-school.

Children approach each activity with a positive attitude. They demonstrate what they know and have learned. For instance, children recall a game they played previously. They shout 'stop' when they need to stop and 'go' when it is their turn to go. Outside, children have free access to a secure garden. They practise balancing along wooden planks and independently take turns. For example, children remind each other whose turn it is and wait patiently for their go. They are reminded to do this safely and seek out adults to hold their hands and help them balance when they need it. Children are developing good physical skills.

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

- The manager is passionate about the pre-school. She reviews things regularly to make sure they are meeting all children's needs. The manager provides staff with supervisions and regular staff meetings. They share any suggestions they may have about the curriculum and they have the opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have about workload. Staff say they feel well supported.
- Children's mathematical development is supported very well. Staff adapt activities to suit the different levels of ability of the children. For example, younger children are supported to match the numbers on a ball to the corresponding number cards. Older children are supported to add and subtract using pencils. They then write the numbers down, forming written equations.
- Children enjoy focused small-group activities. Staff support children to build relationships with each other and teach them how to take turns. However, children can lose concentration quickly and move on to the next activity before any focused learning has taken place. This has an impact on the extent to which children can make progress in their development.
- The key-person system is effective. Staff know all the children well and know what interests them. They carry out accurate assessments on the children throughout the year to monitor the progress they are making. Staff seek support to help close any identified gaps in children's learning. However, this is not always done promptly and therefore may have delayed additional support for children. Nonetheless, children are making progress in their development in

preparation for the next stage in their learning.

- Children behave well and understand the rules of the pre-school. They know when it is time to go inside for lunch. Children who struggle at transition times are supported well. For example, they are given time and support to adjust to changes in the routine and soon feel ready to join the other children for lunch.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents know who their child's key person is and know what their children are learning about. They feel supported and encouraged to help their children's learning at home. For example, staff share strategies to help children's language development with parents, to ensure they are being consistent.
- The manager and staff are clear about what children are learning. They are focusing on supporting children to build relationships with each other as well as building their confidence in group situations. They report that COVID-19 has had an impact on some children's social development. Children are encouraged to listen to each other's ideas and feelings. For example, they work together to fill up bird feeders. Children share ideas about what birds like, including worms, and each have their choice of adding what they think the birds might like.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated lead for safeguarding and staff know the procedure to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care. They know how to identify signs that a child may be at risk of harm, including if a child was being exposed to extreme views. Staff are aware of the local safeguarding partnership procedures and know where to find this information should they need it. They know what to do if they had concerns about an adult working with children and where to report this. Staff encourage children to manage their own risk and remind them of how to practise their physical skills, such as balancing and jumping, safely.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop the opportunities for children to improve their concentration and focus, to ensure they are fully engaged in their learning
- improve the systems in place for liaising with other professionals, and seeking additional support for children, in a timelier way.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127083
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10217765
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	30
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	Carmel Caterpillars Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522943
Telephone number	07946 547347
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Carmel Caterpillars Pre-School registered in 1974 and is based in Sittingbourne, Kent. The pre-school operates during term time only. It opens Tuesday to Friday from 9.15am to 2.45pm. The provider employs nine members of staff. The manager and seven other staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Pippa Clark

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 the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing at the pre-school.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of a small-group activity with the manager.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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