

# Inspection of Union Corner Pre-School

Union Corner Hall, Hawks Road, Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 1ND

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Inspection date: 14 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision requires improvement**

Children come into the pre-school happily. They settle well and benefit from a safe and welcoming play environment. Children develop positive relationships with the warm, caring staff team, going to them for cuddles if they are tired or upset. Children choose from a wide range of resources and take part in experiences that they enjoy. They are especially eager to play outdoors and have great fun digging in the sand, using the large chalk board and racing up and down on bicycles. Indoors, children get messy with shaving foam and enjoy making patterns with their hands. However, the activities staff plan do not consistently build on what children already know and can do, to help them make the best possible progress.

Nonetheless, staff act quickly when they identify concerns about children's development. They seek advice and guidance from outside professionals where necessary to ensure all children receive appropriate support. They make effective use of any additional funding to meet children's needs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities join in happily with activities and staff think carefully about what will interest and engage them.

Children develop good communication skills. They learn to share equipment and often play happily together, cooperating with their friends. On occasion, however, boundaries are not clear. Staff are not always consistent in how they help children to manage their feelings and behaviour. At times, this results in a noisy environment where calm play is disrupted.

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

- The new manager and the pre-school committee have started to identify what they need to improve. They have begun to make changes to ensure all requirements are met. This includes updating procedures for managing accidents and any medication children need. They show a strong commitment to continuing to raise the quality of the provision. They recognise that a number of past issues were not notified to Ofsted within legally required timescales and now fully understand their responsibilities in this area.
- The manager shows a caring attitude towards staff, who can approach her if they wish to raise any issues. She recognises that staff have not had regular supervision meetings since before the start of the pandemic. As a result, staff have not had enough support to help them improve their skills and practice and to identify any individual training needs. This includes the support they need to develop a shared approach to managing children's behaviour. At the time of inspection, the manager and the pre-school committee were putting plans in place to address this.
- Staff know children well and monitor their progress appropriately. They

implement additional support plans promptly where children need them and work closely with other agencies. Staff consider children's interests and offer choices about what they would like to do. However, although staff identify the next steps for all children's learning, they do not always take enough account of these when planning activities. As a result, at times, they do not make the best use of activities to build on children's individual knowledge and skills.

- Children are confident and begin to develop their independence skills, such as putting on their coat to go outside. Staff support their language and communication skills well. They engage with children as they play, joining in with games in the role play shop and encouraging conversations. Children learn new words when staff describe the 'sour' taste of lemons and use them in later discussions with their friends. Children show an interest in books and listen attentively to stories. Most children behave well during group times, putting up their hand to ask a question and patiently waiting for their turn. They gain useful skills for their future learning and starting school.
- There are strong partnerships with parents. Although parents no longer come into the pre-school due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff keep them well informed. They share information about their child's care needs and activities at the door each day. Parents also receive progress updates through an online learning journal. They comment that staff are particularly supportive when other professionals are involved and have helped them access the right assessments and support for their child.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They undertake regular safeguarding training. Staff understand how to recognise possible child protection concerns. They know the procedures to follow to share their concerns and protect children's welfare. The manager and pre-school committee understand the importance of robust recruitment processes to ensure all staff are suitable. Staff complete daily checks of the environment to make sure children can play safely. They always supervise children closely, for instance by ensuring enough staff are in the outside area and in the building.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

**To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:**

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
|  | <b>Due date</b> |
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|  |            |
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| implement an effective system for the supervision of staff to ensure they receive appropriate support, coaching and professional development opportunities, to help raise the quality of teaching further. | 15/04/2022 |
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**To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:**

- support staff to focus more precisely on what they want children to learn from activities, to ensure they consistently build on children's existing knowledge and skills
- build on behaviour management strategies and develop a shared, consistent approach, to contribute to a positive learning environment.

## Setting details

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|--|---|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | 109533  |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | East Sussex   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10217713  |
| <b>Type of provision</b>                           | Childcare on non-domestic premises  |
| <b>Registers</b>                                   | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| <b>Day care type</b>                               | Full day care   |
| <b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b> | 2 to 4  |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 24  |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 32  |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | Union Corner Pre-School Committee   |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP517862  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 07980 424579  |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 7 December 2016   |

## Information about this early years setting

Union Corner Pre-School registered in 1982. It operates from a community hall in Hailsham, East Sussex. The setting opens five days a week during school term times only. Opening times are from 9am to 1pm on Tuesday and Friday, and 9am to 3pm on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The setting employs eight staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Rebecca James

## 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.
- This inspection was carried out as a result of a risk assessment, following information received about the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the early years curriculum.
- 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 spoke with the manager, staff, children and the nominated individual at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector a sample of relevant 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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