

Inspection of Serendipity Pre School

Willow Road Community Centre, Willow Road, Darlington, Co Durham DL3 6PZ

Inspection date: 20 April 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	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children have many opportunities to learn indoors and outdoors. They move freely between the areas as they wish. Children show an interest in the well-thought-out activities which staff provide for them. They have fun filling spray bottles with paint as they experiment with filling and mixing colours. Children skilfully screw the tops on and giggle with excitement when they successfully spray onto the canvas. They confidently develop their physical skills. Children use their large- and small-muscle skills to roll large logs, look for insects and carefully plant seeds.

Children behave well. They show good manners and respect for one another at mealtimes and during activities. For example, children show their friends where to sit and talk about the food they eat. They understand to wait in turn for the campfire lunch as they select their food to cook their dinner. Children understand the need for safety and discuss how to stay safe around the fire. They are delighted as they are then served their food. Children have a positive attitude to their learning. Older children show an interest in recognising the sound of the first letter in their name, in preparation for school.

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

- Staff place a strong emphasis on supporting and developing children's language. They repeat and pronounce words correctly. Staff introduce new vocabulary, such as 'petal' and 'sprinkle', as children explore real flowers. Staff provide a commentary as children play. Older children use a range of language to share their knowledge of how fruits and vegetables grow. For example, they describe the size of a very large avocado stone as 'ginormous'.
- Staff prioritise children's personal, social and emotional well-being. For example, children learn to put on and take off their coats and wellington boots to play outside. Children know routines well. Staff promote children's health well. Children learn about the importance of healthy eating and good oral hygiene. They are very independent in their self-care and remember to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating.
- Very good partnerships with parents enable staff to meet children's needs successfully. Parents talk positively about the excellent progress which their children make in this rich and stimulating environment. They comment that staff are totally committed to their work and that children have formed exceptional relationships with them. Staff keep parents well informed about their children's progress and their daily routines to ensure that there is consistency in children's care and learning.
- The quality of education is good overall, and, at times, some aspects are outstanding. Staff have high expectations for children. All children make good progress, including children who are in receipt of funded early education,

children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, staff provide resources in children's home language. However, at times, staff do not fully extend opportunities to progress children's learning to an even higher level by providing differentiation in activities for children who are most or less able.

- The manager is dedicated to the pre-school. She reviews practice regularly to make sure that staff are meeting all children's needs. The manager provides staff with supervision sessions and regular staff meetings. There are some opportunities for more-experienced staff to model and share good practice. However, these arrangements have not been strengthened to help all staff to build on their relationships and develop their working practices to an even higher level.
- Staff support children's move on to school effectively. They work well with the local school to provide consistency for children's learning. Children take part in local authority initiatives with schools to ensure that children have the communication skills they need to support further learning.
- Children enjoy opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. Staff provide mathematical resources for children to use, such as number puzzles and chalkboards to draw shapes. This supports children to develop their number and shape recognition skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are knowledgeable about child protection. They understand how to keep children safe and confidently identify the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm. Staff know the procedures they should follow if they have concerns about children or a member of staff. They receive regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. Risk assessments are in place and staff carry out regular checks across the pre-school to ensure that hazards are removed or minimised. Staff are trained in paediatric first aid and follow the correct procedures in response to accidents.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide extra challenge for children and build on what they already know and can do, in order to extend their learning to a higher level
- support staff to strengthen their knowledge and expertise to embed consistency in the quality of education across the pre-school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY447362
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	10201774
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	Serendipity Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP530020
Telephone number	01325 787800
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

Serendipity Pre School registered in 2012. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including two who hold early years professional status or qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Eileen Grimes

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector had a learning walk. They discussed the learning environment and how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A senior staff member observed and evaluated an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector held a meeting with the pre-school manager and nominated person. She looked at relevant documentation, including the pre-school's self-evaluation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector took account of parents' views through written feedback provided.

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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