

Inspection of Ditton Church Pre School

79 New Road, Ditton, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6AE

Inspection date: 3 May 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the pre-school. They are happy and excited to see their friends and staff. Children are familiar with the daily routines. For example, on arrival, they quickly hang up their coats and find a seat for circle time. Children form strong bonds with staff. The effective key-person system helps children to feel confident, safe and secure.

Children are exceptionally respectful of staff and the environment, which is shown when they wash up their own plates and cups at lunchtime. They listen carefully to adults and respond well when asked to do something. Children show great kindness to their friends and help each other, unprompted, when they need support. For example, older children help younger children to find their coat pegs and a chair at circle time.

All children freely access the garden area throughout the day. They benefit from daily fresh air and exercise, which helps them to learn how to keep themselves healthy. For example, children of all ages successfully build on their physical skills as they confidently ride trikes and scooters. Furthermore, the well-organised and stimulating outdoor area provides many opportunities for children to successfully build on their imaginative skills. For instance, children spend long periods of time cleaning the dinosaur's teeth and serving 'ice cream' in the beach hut.

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

- Children are supported well with transitions, such as the move to school and when starting the setting. For example, settling-in processes are flexible to meet the individual needs of children. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, parents do not come into the building when dropping off and collecting children. However, staff use other methods, such as communication books, to ensure that parents are kept up to date with their child's learning and development.
- Staff provide a stimulating and inclusive learning environment that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can access. They plan a range of exciting activities that cover many areas of learning. For example, children develop their coordination skills and deepen their understanding of nature as they busily work with natural materials. However, occasionally, group activities do not meet the needs of all children. This means that some children do not learn as much as they can from these teaching opportunities.
- Mathematics is fully embedded in the curriculum and children enjoy the exciting activities available to improve their early mathematical skills. For example, they are eager to find hidden numbers in the indoor and outdoor environment. This helps to develop their counting and number-recognition skills.

- Staff are exemplary role models for children. They are extremely kind and respectful when interacting with children, parents and their colleagues. As a result, children are exceptionally polite and well mannered, saying 'please' and 'thank you' unprompted. Older children willingly help their friends when they need assistance. For example, older children help younger children to open their lunch boxes. Additionally, children celebrate each other's achievements, such as cheering for each other when they successfully release objects from ice cubes.
- Staff implement effective ways to teach children how to manage their feelings, such as through discussions. Children are encouraged to talk about and explain their emotions. For example, staff ask 'how do you feel if someone takes your toys?'. This helps children to learn about how their behaviour affects others.
- The management team has identified gaps in children's learning and development that are possibly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They have implemented successful strategies, such as staff training, to help children catch up. Staff complete training that is focussed on the needs of the children attending. For example, staff are attending forest-school training to enhance the outdoor learning experiences for children even further. Additionally, they have reviewed the environment to include plenty of spaces for children to chat, sing and listen to stories. This effectively helps to enhance children's speech and language skills.
- Partnerships with parents and outside agencies are strong. Staff build good relationships with other settings children attend, such as childminders, to provide continuity in care and learning. Parents speak highly of the dedication and professionalism of staff. They comment on how eager and excited their children are on arrival at the pre-school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff confidently identify the signs of abuse and neglect. They fully understand the safeguarding policy and explain the processes to follow if they have concerns about children's safety. This includes what to do in the event of an allegation against a colleague being raised. Staff complete training to ensure their safeguarding and child protection knowledge is up to date. They complete daily checks of the indoor and outdoor environments to help identify and minimise any hazards. This helps to keep children and staff safe from accidents. Robust recruitment and vetting processes are in place to ensure the suitability of adults working with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and improve the organisation of group activities to ensure all children are supported to learn as much as they can.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127147
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10128682
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	Ditton Church Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904663
Telephone number	07845921621
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2016

Information about this early years setting

Ditton Church Pre-School registered in 2001. It operates from Ditton Church Centre in Ditton, on the outskirts of Maidstone, Kent. The pre-school operates Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 3.30pm, and Wednesday and Friday from 9am to midday, during term time. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 11 members of staff, of whom eight hold recognised early years qualifications. One member of staff has qualified teacher status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michaela Borland

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents throughout the visit and took their views into account.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation of staff practice during an activity.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children during activities and assessed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector sampled a range of documents, including recruitment and vetting checks to ensure adults are suitable to work with children.

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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