

Inspection of Dunster Pre School

St. Georges Street, Dunster, MINEHEAD, Somerset TA24 6RX

Inspection date: 22 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	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

It is clear that children are happy and settled in the nurturing environment. They develop strong bonds with the staff team. Staff provide sensitive and timely support which enables children to foster friendships with their peers. Children show a developing understanding of what can make relationships work. For example, they offer a turn on a bike to encourage a peer to stay outdoors and play with them for longer.

Children follow the daily routines well. They confidently wash their hands prior to entry and excitedly gather on the carpet when staff announce story time. They independently choose where to play and purposefully select resources from the wide range available.

Staff set clear expectations for every child, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They skilfully work alongside children to provide carefully matched support to enable all children to access activities and develop new skills. Children thrive in this child-led environment. They develop positive attitudes to learning and make good progress from their starting points.

Priority is given to learning about the local environment through a broad range of high-quality visits and outdoor experiences. Children learn about nature as they grow fruit and vegetables on the setting's allotment. They explore sculptures made by local people, as part of a project to work towards being plastic free, and they take part in regular forest school activities.

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

- Staff carefully assess children's learning. They use this information to plan a stimulating curriculum. They prioritise funding to purchase resources that will support every child, including those with SEND. Staff successfully draw all this together to ensure that all children are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.
- Staff focus on creating a language-rich environment that stimulates children's interests and engages them in developing communication skills. Daily stories and singing sessions provide a basis for imaginative discussion. Carefully chosen resources enable children to act out their own stories, based on those shared at group time. Children enthusiastically join in with songs. They listen carefully to staff and accurately follow instructions.
- Children behave very well. They share toys with others unprompted and wait patiently for their turn when working in pairs to make 'gloop'. Staff prioritise teaching children the language and skills they need to resolve their own conflicts peacefully. With support, children can tell others when they are sad and explain

what will make them happy.

- Staff are supported effectively through supervision meetings. The manager has a very clear view on the pressures staff face, particularly over the last two years, and has taken positive actions to support staff and reduce paperwork. The team clearly value one another.
- Staff access a range of training courses which they effectively use to improve many aspects of the curriculum. They have introduced specially designed programmes to support children's physical development and to boost children's language and communication skills. They work together to evaluate the quality of what they offer. However, the current monitoring of teaching is not focused enough to support staff to elevate teaching to an outstanding level. On some occasions, staff step in too quickly and don't allow children to work things out for themselves, such as why the paint mix has become too thick or how to change the consistency of gloop.
- Staff work with a range of external professionals to successfully support children's learning. They work closely with parents who greatly value the 'friendly, nurturing environment' that staff create. They share information with parents through online systems and some discussions. However, current systems are not always fully effective in supporting all parents to gain a full picture of children's developmental progress or feel supported with ideas and opportunities to continue and extend learning at home.
- Staff provide forest school sessions that promote children's well-being, resilience and confidence. Staff maximise the experiences to also help children learn about risks in the environment. Children learn rules and practices to keep themselves and others safe. They show high levels of precision as they use tools such as vegetable peelers and knives safely. Children flourish in the extensive experiences on offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff attend a variety of training courses to help them keep their child protection knowledge up to date. They have a secure understanding of how to safeguard children, including the actions they must take in the event of a concern about a child in their care. Staff think carefully about the safety of the environments they create, including the use of products which may trigger allergies. They prioritise the use of activities to support children to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, children learn how to use scissors correctly through clear explanations, demonstrations and supportive prompts from staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen evaluation and peer observations to ensure they are more sharply focused on supporting staff to recognise and maximise opportunities to extend children's learning across the curriculum
- further extend communications with parents to ensure they all receive a clear overview of children's progress and provide more opportunities to continue identified learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143032
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10126085
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	20
Number of children on roll	28
Name of registered person	Dunster Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP909892
Telephone number	01643 822233
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2015

Information about this early years setting

Dunster Pre School registered in 1982. It operates from the grounds of Dunster First School in Dunster, Somerset. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Opening times are 8.55am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday. There are six members of staff who work regularly with the children; of these, five have relevant qualifications at level 3. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jo Beighton

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 provide.
- 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 to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- 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 carried out a joint observation of a group 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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