

Inspection of Courtyard Preschool

Courtyard Youth Centre, Launton Road, BICESTER, Oxfordshire OX26 6DJ

Inspection date: 18 May 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 enjoy their time at the pre-school. They are lovingly cared for by the friendly and nurturing staff, who know them well. Children spend lots of time outside getting plenty of fresh air and exercise. They laugh and shriek with excitement as they join in playing a game of 'What's the time Mr Wolf.' Children become immersed in the make-believe roles of being the 'scary' wolf and pretending to be 'frightened' as they run away. They work together and negotiate whose turn it is to call out the time. Children concentrate on accurately counting how many steps they take. They talk about how they feel and notice the effect the physical exercise has on their bodies.

Children benefit from a variety of experiences that are interesting and capture their attention. They are confident to join in with others, take part and have a go at new things. For instance, children collaborate with their friends to make a giant water run using guttering and tyres. They focus and concentrate on the task and listen to each other's ideas. They celebrate and cheer when they accomplish their goal of getting the water to run to the bottom of the ramp without leaking.

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

- Leaders have worked hard to enhance their curriculum and the teaching of mathematics. For instance, staff place a high focus ensuring children can count accurately, begin to recognise numerals and have a firm understanding of numbers one to five. They help children to enjoy mathematics in their everyday play and make good progress in this area.
- Staff encourage children to be expressive and creative. For example, they support children to make junk models and use brushes and sponges with water to make marks on the outside walls. Staff join in with children's make-believe games with enthusiasm. They pretend to cook pasta, write shopping lists and work at a car wash with the children. Children have lots of fun as they become immersed in their imaginative play.
- Leaders make sure staff clearly understand each child's individual needs and stage of development. They plan interesting and engaging activities for children. However, not all staff are clear what they specifically want children to learn or gain from them. Therefore, they do not always focus sharply on the precise learning intention.
- Children develop a love for books and reading. They spend time looking at books independently and with staff. Children use the pre-school's lending library to take books home to share with their parents and families. Staff support parents to continue children's learning at home.
- Staff engage in conversations with the children. They talk to children about what they are doing and ask them questions. Staff give children plenty of time to

answer and express their thoughts and ideas. However, on some occasions, staff do not build and extend on ideas during conversations to provide children with deeper knowledge. Therefore, staff do not always stretch children's learning to an even higher level.

- Staff encourage children to be independent. Children recognise place mats with their pictures and name as they sit down for lunch. They have a go at opening the fastening on their lunch boxes. If children struggle, staff sensitively support them to persevere and offer them help when needed.
- Staff provide children plenty of opportunities to practise their physical skills. For instance, children develop coordination and control as they throw and catch balls of different sizes. They use pincers to pick up small objects and scissors to cut along lines on paper. They make good progress in their physical development and are well prepared for their next stage in learning.
- Leaders ensure any additional funding is used appropriately to best support children's needs. For example, they use funding to enable children to attend additional sessions at the pre-school. This enables children to spend more time developing their social skills with others and benefit from the experiences the pre-school offers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with regular training to ensure they are aware of their role in safeguarding children. Staff understand the signs and symptoms of abuse. They know the procedures they must follow for recording and reporting concerns about a child or the conduct of an adult working with children. Staff carry out risk assessments to minimise hazards. They check that equipment is safe and suitable for use. Children learn about keeping safe in the sun. Staff talk to children about the need to drink water and wear sun cream and hats. They teach children how to make fans and talk about the importance of sitting in the shade to keep cool.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- encourage staff to strengthen their conversations and interactions with children to deepen children's knowledge and stretch their learning to a even higher level.
- enhance support for staff, so that they all clearly understand and focus sharply on what they want children to learn from the activities they provide.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY425284
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10228565
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	22
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	Boucher, Sarah Jayne
Registered person unique reference number	RP909749
Telephone number	07766913026
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2017

Information about this early years setting

Courtyard Preschool is situated in Bicester and registered in 2011. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. It opens in school term times, on weekdays from 9am to 3pm. The pre-school employs nine members of staff; seven of whom hold early years qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alice M Roberts

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 this into account in their evaluation of the provision.
- The manager and her deputy manager joined the inspector on a learning walk to discuss the intent for the pre-school curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this had on children's learning.
- Parents spoke to the inspector about the pre-school and the inspector took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. They looked at relevant documentation and checked evidence of the suitability of staff working 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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