

Inspection of Watery Lane Pre-school

Watery Lane, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5NY

Inspection date: 1 July 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The manager has an ambitious curriculum for all children. She shares this effectively with staff and parents. Staff make meticulous observations. They talk with parents about what children like doing at home. Then they skilfully adapt the learning experiences as children's interests change.

The manager and staff know exactly what children can do and what they need to learn next. Activities and experiences build on children's skills and consolidate their learning excellently. For example, staff have created a log circle and firepit in the outdoor area to teach children safety rules around real fires for when they visit the off-site forest area. Children become very familiar with the rules and boundaries that they need to know to stay safe when out and about.

Staff help children and parents to cope with changes amazingly. For younger children and those who new to the pre-school, staff tailor settling-in sessions superbly. They offer extended settling-in sessions which fully consider the needs of children and parents. When children move on to school, staff share information about their development with the new teachers as well as parents. Children get the chance to visit their new school, join in with play times and meet with teachers. They look forward with excitement to the upcoming changes.

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

- The manager and staff noticed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental health and well-being. They completed training to be able to offer specific help. They work closely with children to reduce feelings of anxiety and improve their social skills. When children have emotional outbursts, staff react calmly and swiftly. In some cases, this means providing children with space and time to calm down. For others, it is talking about the feeling and deciding on how to handle it. Children feel secure in expressing their feelings. They are developing strong and resilient characters.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are excellent. Staff rapidly identify when children may need additional support. They work closely with parents and other agencies to put in place interventions to help children. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make excellent progress.
- Younger children love experimenting. Staff offer encouragement as children play. They praise children as they manage to put on their aprons for messy play. Staff readily adapt activities following children's ideas, such as when children decide they want to make hand and footprints with the shaving foam. Children put black paper on the floor. They jump and stamp on it and pat their hands and feet on it to create patterns. Staff talk with children about what they are doing.

They ask questions which skilfully extend children's learning and communication. Children talk about patterns, count fingers and compare feet sizes. They know how to take turns in conversation. Children remain engaged and motivated for considerable lengths of time.

- Staff continually talk with the children. Staff use signs, home languages and visual cues to help children join in conversations. Children learn new words, listen well and show amazing respect for others' opinions.
- The manager and staff organise excellent outings. They seek to enhance children's understanding of the wider world. As well as weekly visits to the forest area, children get to ride on trains to the beach to explore nature and the sea. They go on walks in the local area, buy supplies from the shops and use the school playground and swimming pool. Children make connections. For example, when making a den and using torches, children suggest going to the shops to buy more torches so that everyone can have one.
- Staff provide older children with opportunities to build their confidence. For example, they use a solar-powered shower in a water tray to encourage those who are not so keen on getting into water to explore safely. Children are fascinated by how they can put their foot over the shower to stop the water flowing. They forget any worries, as they exclaim excitedly at what they are making happen. Staff offer excellent support. They set challenges, narrate what is going on and praise children. Children continue trying and make excellent progress as they build on their skills and learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff prioritise children's safety. They review risk assessments, accident records and complete mandatory training, such as paediatric first aid and child protection, to ensure that they keep children safe. They know the possible signs and symptoms that may mean a child is at risk of harm. Staff know what to do in the event of concerns or allegations about members of staff, including external agencies they can contact for help or advice. Staff involve children superbly. They discuss with children how they can look after themselves. Children talk about needing sun cream and hats to protect them from the hot sun. They say they will drink plenty of water to keep hydrated and cool their bodies down.

Setting details

Unique reference number	143030
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10126084
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	54
Name of registered person	Watery Lane Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522301
Telephone number	01643 703651
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2016

Information about this early years setting

Watery Lane Pre-school has been operating since 1990 and is based Minehead. The pre-school employs 13 members of staff. One member of staff holds a relevant childcare qualification at level 5, 10 members of staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 3, and one member of staff holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 2. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8am to 5pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Anita McKelvey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 pre-school.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at the pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during outdoor play.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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