

Inspection of The Beeches Playgroup

Milborne Port Primary School, North Street, Milborne Port, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 5EP

Inspection date: 7 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Despite inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, children are happy, safe and emotionally secure. All children enjoy their play and have strong bonds with the staff. The manager and staff are clear about their curriculum intent and what skills they want the children to achieve before going to school. However, they do not ensure that all children engage in meaningful activities or receive effective interactions, to help them all make good progress.

Children become independent, managing their self-care needs and clothes effectively. They explore the wide range of resources and engage in imaginative play together. Children are confident and learn from each other. For example, older children demonstrate to children with special educational needs how to hold and use scissors correctly. They then have a go and are delighted when they receive praise. Some children concentrate well as they play games. Staff support them effectively in taking turns and understanding the rules. Children behave well, are sociable and form strong friendships.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, parents no longer enter the premises, unless they are new to the setting. The manager meets parents at the gate, where they have opportunities to exchange information. However, the provider has not sought parents' feedback recently, so is unaware of the different perceptions parents have of the quality of the provision.

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

- The quality of education is inconsistent. For example, staff help some children to make predications and test their ideas, such as finding out that corks float but stones sink in water. However, some children do not engage in the planned activities and spend their time repeating the same thing over and over. Although they enjoy this, with limited support from staff their play lacks challenge and they gain very little in new knowledge or skills.
- The manager works directly with the small staff team and provides casual supervision and support for new staff. The staff have improved the information they gather on children's starting points and this means they get to know the children well and quickly plan for their next stages of development. However, staff do not all ensure that their key children are benefiting from participating in the educational opportunities. Some staff miss teaching opportunities and do not set challenges to find out how high children can achieve.
- Staff have been focusing on supporting children's language and communication skills, and some have had training to help this. They implement their knowledge well, for example, by narrating what children are doing, engaging them in discussions and modelling the use of new words. Staff give children plenty of

time to think and respond when asking them questions. Children are confident communicators and engage well in storybooks. Children with language delay quickly develop their speaking skills and catch up.

- Children gain a good awareness of healthy practices. For example, staff use games well to talk about healthy eating and children's oral care. Children have some time every day to be outside, where they can develop their large-muscle skills and enjoy different activities. For example, staff observe children's interest in balls and help them to learn to throw and catch. Children manipulate dough, demonstrating their small physical skills well and strengthening their hands ready for writing.
- Staff plan a daily whole-group circle time, where children participate well and learn to concentrate. Through repetition they recall what they must do and extend their knowledge and vocabulary. For example, children count with confidence and recognise the numbers one to five. They learn the days of the week and enthusiastically join in with songs.
- Partnerships with parents are varied. Some parents are more than happy and feel that their children have progressed amazingly since starting at the playgroup. Others comment that they do not feel that their children are achieving as much as they could. Parents receive a summary of their children's development several times a year. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of information they receive in between. Some parents do not know what activities their children are involved in or how to support them further at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has a good understanding of her responsibilities and knows the playgroup's procedures for safeguarding children. She knows who to report any concerns to if she believes a child is at risk of harm. Staff attend training and have a suitable awareness of what they need to be aware of to keep children safe. They comment that they would report all concerns to their designated safeguarding lead and seek further advice where needed. The manager and staff carry out effective risk assessments and ensure children can play inside and outside safely. They help children to develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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<p>focus staff training and development on ensuring they implement the curriculum intent by providing effective interaction for all children to benefit from meaningful learning and make good progress.</p>	<p>01/09/2022</p>
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- improve engagement with parents to gain their feedback and provide consistent information and support learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY412924
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10233770
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Herdsmen, Margaret Ann
Registered person unique reference number	RP511954
Telephone number	07929 626847
Date of previous inspection	8 September 2016

Information about this early years setting

The Beeches Playgroup registered in 2010. It operates from the grounds of Milborne Port Primary School, near Sherborne, Dorset. The playgroup opens Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions run on Monday to Thursday from 8.15am to 3pm, and on Friday from 8.15am to 12.30pm. The playgroup receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff including the manager. Of these, three members of staff hold an appropriate childcare qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elaine Douglas

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 provider.
- The manager led the inspector on a walk around the setting to discuss their curriculum and the safety of the premises.
- The inspector carried out two joint observations with the manager, on a planned activity and free play.
- The inspector observed the quality of education, spoke with staff, and assessed the effectiveness of safeguarding and care procedures.
- The inspector held a leadership and management discussion with the manager and sampled documentation.
- The inspector spoke with several parents and children at the inspection and took account of their views.

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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