

# Inspection of Ashby Castle Pre-Preparatory School

Trentham Close, North Street, ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH, Leicestershire LE65 1HU

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Inspection date:

4 August 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

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

This setting provides all children with the excellent skills and knowledge they need for their future learning. Transition arrangements for children going to school are a real strength. Staff take every opportunity to weave significant words into activities and conversations with children, such as teacher, uniform and independence. Children animatedly discuss their new school buildings, teachers and classrooms. They show highly secure foundations of school readiness and, as result, they are exceptionally well prepared for school.

All children thrive in this wonderful, richly resourced setting. Staff make the best possible use of the stimulating indoor and outdoor areas to develop children's curiosity and ignite their enthusiasm. Children are eager to handle the vast range of animals in the garden. They eloquently explain and carefully demonstrate how to safely and correctly hold tortoises. The highly skilled staff use their vast knowledge and quality interactions to develop the children's language. As a result, children are articulate when talking to peers, adults and visitors. For example, children excitedly discuss the pet millipedes using complex words, such as segments and antenna. Staff ensure that the correct vocabulary is used, such as myriapod, which children repeat to demonstrate their impressive understanding of classification.

Children's self-esteem and confidence is brimming. Staff continually praise, encourage and support children to manage their own risks and celebrate their achievements. Children strive to receive the 'eggchiever' award, so that they can take home a fresh hen's egg and make something delicious to share with their families. They proudly discuss how they use the egg to make breadcrumbs for the chicken nuggets they have at home for their dinner with their family.

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

- Leaders and managers are extremely passionate and have a clear vision for how the curriculum is implemented in practice. This is embedded securely and staff across the setting understand and share the high aspirations. This ensures that all children reach their full potential.
- Children benefit from the highly ambitious and rich curriculum on offer. Thoughtfully sequenced and highly personalised activities ensure that children move on to the next steps in their learning quickly. For example, children in one room competently match objects with initial sound cards repeating 'c, c, camel'. This is skilfully extended in another room when children sound out to write down items, such as strawberries for a shopping list. They independently repeat the sounds in the word and use highly effective visual clues to help with letter formation.
- Staff are exceptional role models and have extremely high expectations for

children. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary. Children know the rules and routines of the setting and they use their excellent manners at all times. At lunchtimes, children sit with patience and anticipation as they wait for their healthy meals. They take turns to carefully pour their own drinks and use a knife and fork with a high level of competence.

- All children have a deep respect for others. They listen to what their friends have to say and cooperate exceedingly well. For example, in a group activity, children are very kind and sensitive to their friends. As they gently stroke their friends back and offer reassurance they say, 'Don't worry, it will be your turn in a minute.'
- Children have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They responsibly look around to ensure that they are in a clear space before hitting a shuttlecock. When handling animals, children know to wash their hands afterwards. They competently report that it is to stop germs spreading and to keep them healthy.
- There is a highly effective key-person system in place. Staff have excellent relationships with all children, they know each and every child in the setting extremely well. All staff meticulously track and assess the children and effectively share targets with one another. As a result, each staff member knows exactly how to support all children's ongoing development.
- Children with additional needs make excellent progress. This is because staff quickly identify what these children need and provide first-rate targeted support. The special educational needs coordinator works exceptionally well with parents, outside agencies and schools. This ensures that transition to school is seamless and children's needs are securely met.
- Staff development is a real strength within the setting. Leaders and managers are acutely aware of the individual skills staff have. They work as a team to identify and provide extensive, high-quality training to support professional development. As a result, staff continually reflect upon, improve and share their excellent practice.
- The highly reflective leaders and managers work tirelessly to support well-being and motivate the staff. As a result, morale is extremely high and staff report that they feel valued and proud to work here.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture within the setting. The arrangements in place to ensure that all staff have regular and effective safeguarding training is secure. All staff clearly understand the signs of abuse and the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child or adult. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the 'Prevent' duty and are aware of how to recognise signs that may indicate that children are at risk of extremist views. Staff are vigilant in keeping children safe. Procedures for employing staff are rigorous. Thorough checks take place and staff are monitored meticulously.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY436067
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10138576
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	3 to 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	44
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Hodgson, Gail Dawn
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP511507
<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 415541
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 January 2016

## Information about this early years setting

Ashby Castle Pre-Preparatory School registered in 2011. It is situated in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire. The pre-preparatory school employs 12 members of childcare staff, 10 of who hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including five with qualified teacher status. The pre-preparatory school opens from Monday to Friday, 50 weeks a year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The pre-preparatory school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Cristina Addison

## 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 inspector completed a learning walk of all rooms within the setting as well as the garden and discussed the early years curriculum with the manager.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation and evaluated this.
- The inspector looked at parent's written comments and took their views into account.
- Observations, both indoors and outdoors, were carried out to give the inspector an overview of the quality of education being provided.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- At appropriate times during the inspection, the inspector spoke to staff and children and took account of their views.
- Leaders and managers had a discussion with the inspector. Relevant documentation was reviewed during the meeting.

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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