

Inspection of Witchford Rackham Pre-School

83 Main Street, Witchford, ELY, Cambridgeshire CB6 2HQ

Inspection date: 13 September 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

Children are happy and settled at the pre-school. The staff welcome the children as they arrive in the morning, and children eagerly select from and engage in a wide range of activities on offer. Children have a positive attitude to learning and show high levels of enjoyment and curiosity. There is an effective key-person system in place, which means children develop strong relationships with staff and feel safe in their environment. Staff know the families and children well and this enables them to provide a smooth and effective transition into the pre-school for new starters.

Staff provide a curriculum that is tailored to the children's interests and individual needs. They place an emphasis on developing children's communication and language skills, which is embedded throughout the pre-school. There are high expectations for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children behave exceptionally well. Staff encourage the older children to help and teach the younger ones. For example, supervised by an adult very close by, they divide chalk out with younger children to help them learn about sharing. Older children comment, 'It's so difficult', demonstrating empathy and understanding to younger children about learning new skills.

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

- Staff place great focus on children's communication and language development, which is embedded throughout the pre-school. Makaton sign language is used continuously throughout the pre-school and children show their understanding and communication skills through their responses. For example, during group time the children sing nursery rhymes together and use Makaton to sign the words as they sing. This helps children to learn new words and consolidate words they already know.
- Staff have high expectations for all children. They behave very well and listen carefully to children, following their instructions and routines. For example, before lunch the children work together to tidy away and make space to sit as a group. All children respond positively to staff and each other. They show a good understanding of right and wrong.
- Communication between staff and parents is very good. Staff provides resources for the children to use at home, such as chatter bags to support and extend children's language development. Staff share updates about their child's progress with parents via an online learning journal, as well as regular newsletters and emails.
- Managers identify areas of improvement and use available funding carefully and consciously. For example, recent funding has enabled all staff to access communication and language training, so that they are able to provide a language programme to enhance the communication and language skills of all

children.

- Staff plan well-thought-out activities that build on what children already know. For example, staff use soft toys to demonstrate different emotions, and the children copy the facial expressions. Staff then introduce new vocabulary, such as 'happy', 'excited', 'angry' and 'scared'. They begin to demonstrate what different things may trigger these emotions to help children think about and explore their feelings.
- Staff encourage children to be independent throughout the day. Older children take themselves to the toilet and wash their own hands. All children competently find their own belongings, including their drinks bottle at snack time. Children select their own healthy snack and clear their plates away when they are finished.
- Managers support staff through regular supervision and ongoing professional development opportunities. For example, all staff have access to a range of training courses. However, managers have not sought further ways to tailor staff's training to their specific needs; this would help them develop a deeper knowledge of teaching and learning.
- Children with SEND have their needs well met and they make very good progress. Staff work continuously with parents and other professionals to review children's next steps, which helps them to decide what to teach children. Additional funding, such as early years pupil premium, is used well to support children and reduce any differences in their learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding, enabling them to identify children who may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation. There is a clear safeguarding culture in the pre-school and staff put the safety of the children as their priority, which helps to reduce the risk of harm. All staff have a good knowledge of the safeguarding procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child. They have a clear understanding of the whistle-blowing policy and their duty to report any concerns they may have about a colleague.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- build on the already good practice and seek further ways to help all staff develop first-rate teaching skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	221733
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10233581
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Witchford Rackham Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP901814
Telephone number	01353 666 782
Date of previous inspection	13 October 2016

Information about this early years setting

Witchford Rackham Pre-School opened in 1980 and is run by a committee. It is located in the village of Witchford in Cambridgeshire. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. It opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am, and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. A lunch club operates between 11.45am and 12.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Vikki Reynolds

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 setting.
- 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 talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Parents and carers shared their views of the parents with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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