

Inspection of Mill Hill Pre-School

Mill Hill East Church, Salcombe Gardens, Mill Hill, London NW7 2NT

Inspection date:

23 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The small, well-established staff team provide children with stability and security. They treat children with warmth and care. Staff respond flexibly to the needs of new children and families while supporting them to settle. Consequently, children soon develop the confidence to leave their parents and carers. They run into the setting, smiling on arrival, as they are greeted individually by staff.

Children have a lot of autonomy in this setting. They can choose what to play with from the many and varied activities on offer. However, the lack of support from staff in engaging all children in play and routines means some children do not take part in these activities. For example, when staff ask children to tidy up after themselves before lunch, they do not consistently reinforce this if children choose not to. Some resources, including books, go untouched. This limits what children learn and prevents them from finding new interests and trying different experiences. Staff keep some children engaged in stories, rhymes, water and role play. However, other children spend much of their time disengaged and without any meaningful interaction with adults and other children.

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

- Mill Hill Pre-School Committee does not carry out its role as the registered provider effectively. It has not evaluated the quality of provision well enough to ensure that the quality of education continually improves. Leaders acknowledge that, since the last inspection, they have been complacent in understanding and implementing changes to the early years foundation stage.
- Leaders have not identified what it is they want children to learn while they are at this setting. There is no sequenced plan in place for children's development across the seven areas of learning. This is reflected in the variable quality of education staff provide for children.
- Staff work with parents to refer children to specialist speech and language services, when necessary. They show patience with children who need time to get their words out. However, staff do not prioritise all children's communication development. Quieter children's attempts to make conversation with them often go unnoticed. The quality and quantity of vocabulary that staff incorporate routinely is not in line with what leaders intend.
- Staff plan a range of activities, some of which are based on children's interests. However, they do not consider what children already know and can do to inform their planning. For example, staff provided a sticking activity based on the book 'Dear Zoo'. This was in response to some children making a zoo out of bricks the previous week. Older children reported not having heard this story before and chose not to take part.
- Children have opportunities to practise and hone their physical skills. They enjoy

using the stepping stones, beams and crash mats in the obstacle course. When staff join in with this play, they encourage children to count their steps. They model how to hold their arms out to steady themselves and introduce some words such as 'balancing'.

- Children learn some self-help skills, such as how to use the toilet independently and to wash their hands before lunch. They bring fruit to share at snack times and use knives to cut up their strawberries and bananas. However, staff do not take into account children's different starting points, or consider what it is they want children to learn from such activities and routines. This means some children do not learn how to use the knife the correct way to be able to cut. Neither do they develop good hygiene practices before sharing their fruit with others.
- Staff encourage children's positive behaviour, such as by using 'kind hands' and 'good sharing'. However, this is not effective because staff do not support children's personal, social and emotional development consistently. For example, staff do not always listen to children who have been hurt. They do not routinely help children to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. As a result, some children do not develop positive relationships with other children as intended.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are aware of the risks to children in the local community. They ensure staff have knowledge and understanding of how to identify concerns about children's welfare. Staff are confident in following the setting's policy and procedures to protect children from harm. They carry out daily risk assessments and remove any hazards to children to ensure their safety. Leaders check that staff remain suitable to carry out their roles through regular supervision, team meetings and peer observations.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
put in place a sequenced and ambitious curriculum through carefully planned activities and routines based on what children already know and can do	28/10/2022

improve staff's understanding of how to prioritise all children's communication and language through the quality and quantity of interactions, stories, rhymes and songs.	28/10/2022
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- monitor and evaluate the quality of provision to ensure staff provide children with good quality care and education so that children make the best possible progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	147584
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10137745
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	20
Number of children on roll	16
Name of registered person	Mill Hill Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP517453
Telephone number	0208 959 9669
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2016

Information about this early years setting

Mill Hill Pre-School registered in 1965. The setting is located in Mill Hill, in the London Borough of Barnet. It is open each weekday from 9am to 3.30pm, during term time only. There are four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The provider receives funding to offer free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sam Sleeman-Boss

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The manager discussed the impact of the pandemic with the inspector, who has taken this into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity outdoors.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager talked to the inspector about the leadership and management of the setting and showed 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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