

Inspection of Puddletown Pre-School

Puddletown First School, Dorchester Road, Dorchester DT2 8FZ

Inspection date: 19 October 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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happily and ready to learn. They are eager to explore, whether they are playing with water and pasta, or finding out how many stones weigh the same as a pumpkin. Children make choices about their play and select resources independently to develop and explore their own ideas. They share well and take turns with no disagreements. Children are very well behaved.

Staff have high expectations of the children and are committed to helping them develop many skills to support their future learning. Children follow instructions to splat, pinch, squeeze and pass play dough from hand to hand. This helps to develop their hand and finger muscles in preparation for future writing.

The manager recognises that many new experiences and opportunities have been limited for children because of the restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. She plans to extend opportunities for children to integrate into the wider community more. This will help children to build on their essential knowledge of the diverse area in which they live and help them to feel part of this community.

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

- Staff have a good knowledge of children's interests and individual needs. They have a good understanding of the curriculum. Staff link consistently what they want children to learn to the activities they provide, which supports children to make good progress. For example, children join in a 'play dough disco' activity to develop their fine motor skills.
- Staff model language well and introduce new words to extend children's vocabulary. However, there are times when staff members are not consistent when building on and extending children's language skills. For instance, staff do not find out children's ideas during activities, to help to extend their communication and language development.
- There is good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The manager and special educational needs coordinator quickly identify and support children. They work closely with a wide range of other professionals to develop individual learning plans. Funding provided to these children is used carefully to provide individual support or specialised resources. This helps to support children to reach their full potential.
- Forest school sessions provide all children with opportunities to learn about the world around us. They explore their natural environment and learn to take calculated risks under the close supervision of staff. For example, children talk about what they know about birds as they embark on a walk and take big steps up onto a bridge.
- Children spend plenty of time outdoors in the fresh air. This helps them to

develop their larger muscles and coordination. Staff encourage children to be independent during mealtimes. Children enjoy a wide range of freshly prepared healthy snacks. They choose water or milk to support their good oral hygiene.

- The manager and staff build successful partnerships with the host school. The manager organises visits for children and teachers to support transitions and to transfer information. This helps children move smoothly on to their next stage of learning.
- Staff have good partnerships with parents. Parents comment positively about the pre-school and how their children are progressing. For instance, they describe the staff as 'amazing' and say that they have a 'child centred approach'. Staff communicate with parents through a variety of ways. They provide discussions daily and through parents' evenings, and use an online system to exchange information, including how parents can support children's learning at home.
- The manager works closely with staff. They have regular meetings to reflect on their practice and the learning experiences they provide for children. This helps the manager to ensure staff feel listened to, valued and appreciated. Staff comment that they feel well supported in their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a good knowledge of child protection and wider safeguarding issues. They understand the procedures to follow if concerned about a child's welfare or if an allegation is made. Staff monitor children's attendance and any accidents they have, at home and in the pre-school. The manager ensures staff remain suitable to work with children. All staff are qualified to provide paediatric first aid and they always respond to accidents quickly. They complete risk assessments to help identify any potential hazards, ensuring the pre-school is always safe and secure for the children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the monitoring and support for staff to maximise their interactions with children, to promote children's communication and language skills more effectively.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY473896
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10232995
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	24
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Puddletown Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP910792
Telephone number	01305 849533
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2017

Information about this early years setting

Puddletown Pre-School re-registered in 2013 at the current premises. It operates independently from a classroom within Puddletown First School in Puddletown, near Dorchester, Dorset. The pre-school offers funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years. They are open Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 3pm, during term time only. There are seven members of staff. Of these, two members of staff have qualified teacher status, one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 5, one holds a level 4 qualification and three members of staff hold level 3 qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Cornish

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 inspector and the manager completed a learning walk across all areas of the pre-school, to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation of a teaching activity was carried out by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- A meeting was held between the inspector and the manager. The inspector looked at a sample of relevant records and documentation. This included evidence of staff suitability and training.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents 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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