

Inspection of Merlin Playscheme

Highweek Community Primary School, Coronation Road, Newton Abbot, Devon
TQ12 1TX

Inspection date: 25 October 2022

**The quality and
standards of early
years provision**

**This
inspection**

Met

Previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

This provision meets requirements

Children are eager to come to this exciting playscheme and see their friends. They are greeted by adults who know them well and plan activities based on their interests. Children are active throughout the session. There is a range of inviting play activities that they want to explore. Children's views and ideas are listened to as they extend their play and select new activities. For example, children ask about having basketballs outside, and these are made available.

Children talk about how they really enjoy attending this playscheme and how they can play alongside the older children. They express how they feel safe and know who to speak to if they have a concern. Children love to read books together and learn about the world. They are eager to share what they are doing. Younger children talk excitedly about the pumpkins and squashes that they will make into soup. They use mathematical language to describe their size and how they look. Children learn about healthy choices and keeping themselves safe from germs. Children's behaviour is good, they play well together, share and cooperate. Younger children learn from their older friends who enjoy supporting them. Respect and responsibility are the key rules and children understand these well. They discuss as a group how to ensure everyone feels included and take responsibility for their actions.

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

- Younger children have access to a wide range of play activities indoors, they share these with the older children who nurture and support them well. Children's language skills are promoted through animated discussions and shared opportunities to look at and talk about books. Children talk about their experiences with amazing expression, for example explaining, how they are going to dress when they go out to do trick-or-treat with their parents. They explain in detail their costume and how they will move.
- Children engage in creative play throughout the sessions, they talk about what they are doing and plan what they would like to do next. They also have opportunities and spaces to relax and watch their peers when needed. They persevere in activities, problem solving how to overcome difficulties; when the wall they are building keeps falling over they learn new ways to make the wall stronger.
- Children help with responsibilities such as washing, preparing fruit and getting ready for lunch. Staff encourage all children to complete tasks and support each other. Children are encouraged and reminded to look after their own personal needs. Staff ensure that tissues and fresh drinking water are available. They talk about why it is important to reduce germs, and older children reinforce this with the younger children.

- The manager has developed good relationships with the schools the children attend, to ensure the continuity of care. The manager also works closely with supporting agencies, attending meetings and ensuring everyone is working together alongside the staff in the best interests of the children.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported; they are able to make their own choices and are able to access play with limited support. They are extremely happy at this setting. Everyone is treated equally by the caring and nurturing staff.
- Staff support children to think about others and their well-being. There are clear rules for play, and staff reinforce these. Children and staff work together to create rules around respecting each other and the environment. They also ensure children take responsibility for their actions. Children are confident and have good self-esteem. They are proud of what they do and celebrate their achievements.
- Parents and carers talk about how their children are excited about attending this playscheme. They are happy and settle quickly, meet new friends and have their needs met. The manager and her staff know the children extremely well and support them fully to engage and have a fun time. Children greet their friends on arrival before leading them off to play.
- Children have access to the vast outside areas. They play, climb and balance on the equipment. However, there is not always access to smaller play equipment outside to further develop their coordination and collaborative play experiences.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has a good understanding of her responsibilities in keeping children safe. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a child's wellbeing and where to access support. Children talk about how they feel safe when attending the playscheme. There are robust systems in place for staff recruitment and induction. Staff consider all risks in the setting, outside and on outings. Children are encouraged to find out about how to stay safe and healthy. They have opportunities to explore risk in a safe way in the outside environment where they climb and balance.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure children have access to a wider range of high-quality, outside play experiences, to further develop physical skills, coordination and turn taking in cooperative play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	161476
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10233561
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Out-of-school day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	4 to 10
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	123
Name of registered person	Merlin Playscheme Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519925
Telephone number	0796 8891535
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

Merlin Playscheme registered in 2001 and is run by a committee. It operates from Highweek Primary School, close to the town centre of Newton Abbot. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor-play area. The playscheme is open from 8.15am to 6pm on Monday to Friday during all school holidays, except for the Christmas holiday. It is closed on bank holidays. It also operates a breakfast club between 7.50am to 8.50am, during school term times. There are five staff who work directly with the children, and all staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager is qualified to level 4.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Dilys Vincent

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the playscheme received since the COVID-19 pandemic. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- A learning walk was conducted with the manager to consider the play activities and environment that the children access.
- A range of documentation was looked at, including suitability checks, registration and insurance documents and staff paediatric first-aid qualifications.
- Parent and carers views were taken into account with regards their child's experiences.
- The inspector also observed and spoke to children to gain their views of the care provided and experiences at this playscheme.

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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