

Inspection of The Garden Pre-School

Green Lanes School, Green Lanes, HATFIELD, Hertfordshire AL10 9JY

Inspection date:

4 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The pre-school committee has not completed the relevant processes to notify Ofsted when there has been a change to committee members. Despite this, children are safe and secure at the pre-school.

Children are warmly welcomed into this fun, well-resourced pre-school. Friendly and supportive staff greet the children as they arrive, which helps them to feel secure. Children enter the playroom and are eager to take part in the wide range of interesting activities. Staff gather a wealth of information from parents about children's care and learning needs when they start at the pre-school. They get to know the children and their families very well, which enables them to develop strong attachments with the children. This has a positive impact on children's well-being and emotional development.

Children behave very well. Staff are good role models and are calm, patient and kind. They support children to learn social skills and encourage them to use good manners. Children know the routines of the pre-school and respond well to instructions. For example, staff gently remind them to use 'walking feet' inside and ask them to line up to wash their hands at snack time. Children acquire a range of skills that help them to prepare for their future learning and school.

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

- The provider has not notified Ofsted of all committee members who manage the pre-school. However, the committee members do not have unsupervised contact with children or have sole responsibility for making decisions that affect children's well-being. Therefore, children's safety and welfare are assured. The provider is aware of the procedures to follow to address this weakness and has already started the process.
- Children make good progress in their learning and development from their individual starting points. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff attend specialised training to help them to support children appropriately. Children can freely explore the environment and activities at their own pace. The manager and staff make good use of additional funding to support children's individual needs.
- Staff think very carefully about the learning environment and resources to ensure that children can explore and build on what they already know. For example, some children are keen to build and construct. Staff provide many resources for them, such as large building bricks. Children assemble towers and measure them against themselves, using mathematical language such as 'taller' and 'shorter'.

- Arrangements for supporting children as they start attending the pre-school are extremely well organised. Settling-in procedures are very flexible and staff tailor them to meet the needs of the children and their families. Staff work closely with the host school, and regularly share information with teachers so they can support children effectively when they start school.
- Children demonstrate their good communication skills as they engage in conversations with each other and with adults. Staff introduce new words into children's play, which helps to extend their vocabulary. For example, when they are playing with dough, staff use words related to shapes, size and weight. Children particularly enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes and exploring stories with props. Staff ask questions to encourage children's listening, attention and speaking skills. They have created a cosy area for children who prefer quieter spaces. Children can relax in comfort as they chat to friends or look at books.
- Parents speak very highly of the pre-school. The manager has recently introduced an online system for sharing information with parents, and staff regularly add observations about children's activities and achievements. The system also enables parents to share what their children do at home, which helps staff plan to meet children's changing needs and interests. Parents comment that their children 'really enjoy their time at the pre-school' and that 'they are making very good progress'.
- The manager places high importance on staff well-being, and they support each other very well. The manager encourages staff to attend training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. However, she does not yet fully use systems for staff supervision, to identify ways to build on their already good practice.
- Staff work very well together as an enthusiastic and dedicated team. The manager is relatively new. However, she has made many improvements already, and demonstrates a strong commitment to continually improving the quality of the provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe. Robust recruitment processes ensure that those working directly with children are suitable. All staff complete safeguarding training. They are aware of the possible signs that might indicate that a child is at risk and know how to report concerns. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children. For example, they inform colleagues when they leave the room. Staff carry out daily safety checks in all areas of the pre-school to identify and remove hazards. This helps to ensure that children play and learn in a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
ensure that Ofsted is provided with the necessary information to enable suitability checks on all committee members to be completed.	30/11/2022

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

- strengthen the systems in place for staff supervision to help staff raise the quality of teaching to an even higher level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY458059
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10233880
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	The Garden Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904039
Telephone number	01707272893
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Garden Pre-School registered in 2012 and is run by a committee. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, during term time only. There are two sessions each day, from 8.50am until 11.50am, and from midday until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jacqui Oliver

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting has 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 showed the inspector around the areas used for children and discussed how staff organise the setting and plan the curriculum and experiences.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the pre-school's documents, including evidence about staff suitability and training.

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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