

Inspection of The Orchard

Thame Road, Little Milton, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX44 7PZ

Inspection date: 21 November 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 settle quickly and eagerly start to play as soon as they arrive at the pre-school. The pre-school provides a colourful, stimulating and motivating learning environment for children to learn and develop. Children from a young age are encouraged to develop a real interest in books. Staff make books available for children to take home and enjoy with their family, cultivating children's early love of reading.

Children benefit greatly from the close attention they receive from staff. They talk constantly to children and listen carefully to what children have to say. Children become competent at preparing fruit for their snack. They use knives with care, placing the fruit on large plates. Children pour their own drinks and use small tongs to help themselves to fruit.

Staff have high expectations for children and provide activities that build on what they can already do. Children use their hand-to-eye coordination and small muscles well. This is evident, as children use brushes to paint or try to pick up large dinosaurs with tongs. Children enjoy pretend play in the imaginative kitchen area. The well-planned range of highly enjoyable activities and experiences sustains children's interests and keeps them engaged.

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

- The pre-school manager is a committed and thoughtful leader. She involves the committee, staff, parents and children in the ongoing reflection and planning of future improvements to the pre-school. The manager and staff provide a curriculum that follows children's interests, and supports the development of the skills they will need for future learning. They assess children's abilities and use the information to provide activities and opportunities to enhance their learning.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Staff use appropriate strategies, which help improve outcomes for children. They are proactive in seeking early help for children when needed. Staff work closely with other professionals to ensure children make the best possible progress from their individual starting points. For example, they use a picture-exchange system to aid communication.
- Parents speak very positively about the setting. They warmly describe the friendliness and professionalism of the staff team and how happy their children are to attend. Staff gather information to plan familiar care routines for children. There is a wealth of opportunity for parents to be involved in their children's learning, including face-to-face meetings and an online system to share information. However, staff do not always liaise effectively with other providers of settings children attend, to ensure consistency.

- A range of stimulating activities help children to develop their early writing skills. This also strengthens the small muscles in their hands. For example, children become increasingly confident as they draw and paint. Children follow a pictorial recipe to add ingredients to make their own play dough. They make shapes with the dough and imaginatively cook their cakes in the oven. However, staff do not make the most of opportunities to further extend children's learning in mathematics, for example by extending their understanding of capacity.
- Staff are good role models. They help children to understand about taking turns and sharing resources. Staff recognise and praise children's efforts and achievements. As a result, children grow in confidence and feel emotionally secure. A consistent approach to managing behaviour ensures that children feel safe and listened to. Children behave well and have good attitudes to learning. For example, they listen attentively to instructions when they enthusiastically dance to familiar music.
- Children learn to be independent from an early age. Transition arrangements are particularly strong. The Tuesday's 'big club' specifically targets activities for older children to prepare them for school. For example, they learn to write their names and get changed for physical education.
- Staff support children's emerging language skills well. They use books and songs, along with talking to children about what they are doing. Staff provide an environment where children hear spoken language clearly and fluently. This helps to promote children's correct pronunciation of words, and helps them to understand how to put words together to form sentences. As a result, children are confident communicators.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have good knowledge of safeguarding and child protection. They are aware of the different types of abuse and what signs and symptoms might indicate a child is at risk of harm. All staff know the procedures they must follow in the event of concerns about a child, or where an allegation is made against a member of staff. Risk assessments are completed regularly and help to keep children safe. Staff teach children about keeping safe and offer gentle reminders about potential hazards, such as not running indoors. This helps to prevent accidents and helps children to begin to manage their own risks. The recruitment and induction of staff is thorough, and ensures that all new staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop the sharing of information about children's care and learning with other

settings that children attend, to strengthen the consistency in the support children receive

- provide frequent and varied opportunities to improve opportunities for children to gain a deep understanding of numbers and other mathematical concepts, to support their overall development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	134995
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10234172
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	22
Name of registered person	The Orchard Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP909856
Telephone number	01844 279989
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Orchard pre-school registered in 2000. It operates in the village of Little Milton, in Oxfordshire. The pre-school is open five days per week during term times. Sessions are from 9am until 2.45pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 9am until midday on Thursday. The Orchard receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school employs five staff, two of whom hold relevant childcare qualification at level 3 and one who is working towards this qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Robertson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 provision.
- The inspector and manager completed a 'learning walk' throughout the pre-school. They discussed how the early years provision is organised and how the curriculum offered supports children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of practice with the manager
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector held discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and talked to children during activities.
- The inspector had meetings with the manager and chair of the committee. She looked at a sample of policies and procedures, staff qualifications and evidence of 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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