

Inspection of Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School

Rathbone Pavillion, Church Road, North Waltham, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2BL

Inspection date: 6 December 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	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are very happy entering this homely pre-school. They separate from parents with ease and settle quickly. They are greeted by friendly staff who make them feel secure and safe. Children are comfortable approaching staff and have strong relationships. Staff rotate resources each day depending on children's interests. They make good use of the spacious outside space, large field and playground. This extends children's learning opportunities and development.

Children behave well, and staff consistently reinforce their expectations. As a result, the pre-school is a calm and relaxing environment. Children interact well with each other and make friends. They demonstrate respect for staff, their peers and outside visitors, such as the local vicar.

Staff focus on developing children's social skills, as they identified this was an area impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. They support children who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. For example, they encourage communication skills with a range of strategies, such as by using photographs and word cards. A visual timetable is available and children are encouraged to identify what is happening next. Makaton is widely used with all children to assist in their learning and understanding. This helps ensure all children are included.

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

- All staff have a confident knowledge of children in the pre-school. They identify children's initial starting points and monitor their progress closely. Staff successfully ensure the environment supports children's interests. They plan activities to build on these, such as a police officer visiting. The pre-school is inclusive and accessible for all children, and overall they make good and consistent progress across all areas of learning.
- Staff focus on communication and language and support this well in many ways. They talk to children and introduce new vocabulary, such as 'doorstop'. However, at times, they do not take full advantage of opportunities to extend this learning. For instance, during some activities, they do not consistently encourage conversation or give children time to think about their response to questions.
- Children with SEND and EAL are supported further by the effective partnership and input from parents and other professionals. The special educational needs coordinator actively seeks ways to implement interventions while awaiting assessment. Staff strive to ensure children achieve the most they can.
- Children are encouraged to be independent. At snack time, they pour their own drinks and carry them to the table. Children independently choose a snack from

a selection of fruit, vegetables and breadsticks. Staff promote good hygiene and help children choose their own named soap. Children wash their hands before snack and lunch. They are encouraged to blow their own nose and dispose of the tissue in the bin. Children know where the toilet is and those who are toilet trained take themselves. These skills help prepare them in readiness for school.

- Staff are a close-knit team who feel fully supported by the managers and the committee. They have staff meetings regularly to discuss the pre-school and the needs of the children within it. SEND meetings are held frequently to address the immediate and ever-changing needs of this cohort. Staff have continuous access to online training. They request training when it is needed, and this is always encouraged. This ensures staff continually develop and improve their knowledge and skills.
- Parents are complimentary about the pre-school and express how comfortable they feel leaving their children in their care. They comment on how staff are kind and caring and how their children are always happy to attend. Parents regularly receive feedback regarding their child's progress through an online assessment tool. They feel comfortable approaching staff at drop off and pick up. Staff work closely with parents to support their child's interests and needs. Parents comment how quickly staff identified gaps in learning after the COVID-19 pandemic. They promptly put processes in place to address this, such as additional support for settling in and social skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding. They confidently identify signs of abuse, neglect and radicalisation. Staff understand the process involved if they have a concern about a child or adult. They know where to access the safeguarding policy. Staff attend regular training courses or access online training for safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. As a team, they often discuss safeguarding topics and concerns, constantly refreshing their knowledge. Staff ensure children are constantly in a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop staff's skills in more consistently taking advantage of opportunities to extend children's communication and language further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY254143
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10263432
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522392
Telephone number	01256 398 172
Date of previous inspection	2 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Cuckoo Meadow Pre-school registered in 2003. It is located in North Waltham, Basingstoke. The pre-school opens five days a week, from 9am to 3pm, during school term times. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are five staff working with the children, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 to level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynne Murray

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 provider.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk of the pre-school and explained the curriculum intentions.
- Discussions and meetings were held with the managers and staff during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector observed and evaluated an activity together.
- The inspector gained some views from parents about the pre-school.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.

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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