

Inspection of Shepherdswell Preschool

Shepherdswell Village Hall, Coxhill, Shepherdswell, DOVER, Kent CT15 7NN

Inspection date: 9 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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children demonstrate that they feel happy and safe on arrival at the pre-school and separate quickly from their parents at the main door. They instinctively know the routine as they independently find their pegs and self-register their names on the tree. Children swiftly settle and engage in play with their peers. They freely explore what is on offer.

Children make continuous progress from their starting points. Staff have high expectations for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For instance, any gaps in learning are quickly identified through thorough assessments that take place regularly. Targeted intervention is successful in ensuring that these gaps are quickly closed.

Children behave very well during their time at the pre-school. They are deeply engaged as they lead their own learning through play. They share and take turns with scissors independently, as they decorate their Christmas trees with buttons and ribbons. This has a positive impact on their attitudes towards learning.

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

- Staff know their key children very well. This enables them to create an environment and plan activities that fully support and extend children's current interests. For instance, children had shown a keen interest in frozen water that they discovered in the garden. Staff extended this well by freezing natural objects overnight. Children were excited and curious to explore the activity, as they used different tools to successfully to break the ice. They are curious and eager learners.
- Children have access to resources to support their early writing skills. For example, children independently make marks during play. Staff provide some opportunities to support children's early writing, such as when children 'write' and post letters in the post box. However, staff are not fully effective at recognising opportunities to further promote children's understanding that marks have meaning. This is not as successful as possible in helping to prepare children for the next stage in their learning.
- Children are confident learners who manage their own behaviour well. For instance, children independently ask staff for timers during free play, if they would like a turn on a bicycle that one of their peers is riding. They wait patiently for their turn, using the timer to support their understanding of the passing of time. This has a positive impact on children's emotional development.
- Staff support children well to become independent in their self-care routines. For example, at mealtimes, children instinctively know what to do. They independently wash their hands before collecting their lunch boxes. Children are

encouraged to open wrappers for themselves, guided by supportive staff. This has a positive impact on the development of children's character and their personal, social and emotional development.

- Staff are successful at providing an inclusive environment where all children, including those with SEND flourish. For instance, children's individual successes are celebrated and promoted through a 'celebration tree'. Children place smiley faces on the tree in recognition of their achievements. However, recent equality, diversity and inclusion training is not yet fully embedded. This means that staff do not promote children's understanding of other cultures and religions as well as possible.
- The manager talks passionately about the setting and her staff team. For example, she implements a thorough staff induction programme for all new staff, and regularly carries out staff supervision meetings. This ensures that all staff know what is expected of them and have a full understanding of the pre-school policies and procedures. This impacts positively on quality of teaching and the outcomes for all children that attend the pre-school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and her staff team have very good knowledge of safeguarding policy and procedures, that are in place to reduce the risk of harm to children and families in their care. They can confidently talk about a wide range of issues, such as county lines, domestic violence, the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation. They know who and when to make a referral to if they have any concerns about a child in their care. The manager takes her responsibilities seriously and ensures that she follows safer recruitment processes when employing new staff. She ensures that the environment is safe by implementing robust risk assessments that are carried out daily.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- further support children's early literacy skills and develop their understanding of how marks carry meanings
- embed training to improve teaching and develop children's understanding of other cultures and religions.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127535
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10264433
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	28
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Shepherdswell Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP906817
Telephone number	01304 830045
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Shepherdswell Preschool registered in 1972. It is located in Shepherdswell, near Dover. The pre-school operates from 8.30am to 3pm, term time only. There are 10 members of staff, eight of whom hold early years qualifications from level 2 to level 6. One member of staff holds early years teacher status. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nicky Webb

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 setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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