

Inspection of Ickwell Pre-School

Ickwell Village Hall, Ickwell Green, BIGGLESWADE, Bedfordshire SG18 9EE

Inspection date:

9 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

The provider has failed to ensure that they meet all their legal roles and responsibilities. The safe storage of confidential information cannot be verified. Not all committee members have had their suitability checked. This indicates a lack of efficiency in the leadership and management of the setting, which means children's welfare cannot be assured.

Children are warmly welcomed by staff on arrival. They settle quickly and are inspired to explore the inviting environment and activities. Group time is a positive experience where children learn about the days of the week and practise their counting skills. They confidently use complex sentences to explain how they will keep safe outdoors in the very cold and frosty weather. Children have a wonderful time using small tools to search for hidden treasure in the sand. They shriek with delight as they find this. Children are patient and know that they must wait their turn to hide in the large cardboard box with their friends. Staff introduce children to new words and skilfully adapt their speech to meet children's individual stage of development. This motivates children to have a go at pronouncing new words, such as 'stethoscope', as they pretend to be a vet. Children benefit from many opportunities to learn about the natural world during woodland walks. Outdoors, children relish the challenge to build on their physical skills as they throw different-sized hoops over a cone.

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

- The provider does not have adequate oversight of the setting or fulfil their responsibility to ensure that all legal requirements are met. Ofsted has not been informed of the details of committee members who have been appointed for a significant amount of time, to enable their suitability to be checked.
- The provider uses the services of an individual to manage some of the setting's administrative tasks. This requires the individual to have access to confidential information about staff, children and parents. They hold a Disclosure and Barring Service check from several years ago. At the time of inspection, the provider did not make information available to verify this individual's ongoing suitability, or how they securely store confidential information. This means that the provider is not aware of their responsibilities under data protection legislation. The new manager has implemented strict procedures for the safe storage of electronic devices used in the setting that contain information about children.
- There is no current system in place for the supervision of staff to help them continue to improve their practice. Some staff complete training, and their new knowledge is shared at staff meetings. The manager reports of difficulty in finding the time to meet individually with staff. This has an impact on staff's individual practice. For example, some staff do not deploy themselves well to

support children to build on their learning. In addition, they do not notice children sitting inappropriately on the lid of the sand tray. However, most staff provide children with gentle reminders that help them to understand the high expectations for behaviour. Children follow staff's instructions and put up their hand when they wish to speak in whole-group activities.

- The manager and staff do not consistently keep an accurate daily record of children's names and hours of attendance. This does not help to ensure that information is correct and that all children can be accounted for in the event of an emergency or a safeguarding concern.
- The manager and staff team are reflective on how they deliver an ambitious curriculum. They have made successful adjustments to ensure that children's learning is well sequenced to help them build on their knowledge and skills. Key persons have a good understanding of their key children's achievements and what they need to learn next. Staff carefully plan the learning environments to ensure they meet the needs and interests of the children. However, when key persons are absent, there are not yet arrangements in place for other staff to fully understand how to support children's next steps in learning.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. They are pleased with the progress that their children are making. Parents comment how they regard the staff as 'part of their family'.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported to reach their full potential. Staff provide a truly inclusive environment and work in close partnership with a wide range of other professionals.
- Relationships between staff and children are secure. Children welcome staff's nurturing cuddles as they read them their favourite stories. Good hygiene practices are consistently implemented. Children manage their own personal needs and persevere to put on and take off their outdoor clothing.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider does not check the ongoing suitability of individuals who have access to confidential information, or ensure that this information is securely stored. This means that children's safety is compromised. The staff and manager complete regular training to ensure their child protection knowledge remains up to date. The manager frequently checks staff's understanding through regular questioning. Staff can clearly explain wider safeguarding issues, such as county lines and female genital mutilation. Staff know the action to take should they become concerned about a child's welfare. Staff's ongoing suitability to work with children is regularly reviewed and checked. Clear procedures are in place to protect children on outings in the community.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
provide Ofsted with the details of individuals associated with the setting to enable them to carry out all relevant checks to verify their suitability	12/12/2022
ensure that information is available to verify that individuals who have access to confidential information and records about staff, children and parents remain suitable and that records are held securely	23/12/2022
introduce effective arrangements for the supervision of staff that promote the continuous improvement of staff skills and knowledge	23/12/2022
ensure an accurate daily record of the full names of every child being cared for and their hours of attendance is kept.	12/12/2022

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

- improve the deployment of staff to consistently support children in their learning and in their understanding of the high behavioural expectations and boundaries
- strengthen the sharing of information between children's key person and other staff so that staff fully understand how to support children's next steps in learning when their key person is absent.

Setting details

Unique reference number	219263
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10263718
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	Ickwell Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP519001
Telephone number	01767 627742
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Ickwell Pre-School registered in 1992 and is managed by a voluntary committee. The setting is open from 8.15am until 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and from 8.15am until 3.15pm on Friday, during term time only. There are nine staff members who work directly with the children; of these, eight hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

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 inspector and manager completed a learning walk across all the areas of the setting to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and the manager. The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors. She assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting and committee members.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and their written feedback.

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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