

Inspection of Mill Lane Pre-School Association

United Reformed Church Hall, Mill Lane, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire EN10 7BQ

Inspection date: 31 January 2023

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

Children have settled well into pre-school and have established secure bonds with staff, especially their key person. Children are confident communicators. They enthusiastically take part 'circle time' and enjoy lively discussions about animals. For example, they talk about what animals they are interested in and how they make them feel. Children show an interest in role play. They creatively explore the 'vet's corner' where they give their 'animals' medical help to make them feel better.

Children explore sand using tools such as spades. They transport sand from one place to another and talk about what they are doing. Children join in with familiar songs. For example, they sing the 'bubble song' while copying the actions and make loud claps as they 'pop' the bubbles. Children happily explore outdoors where they have opportunities to move in a variety of ways. They like to use plastic hoops and take turns to roll them outside, showing concentration and determination.

Children's behaviour is good. Older children are learning to manage their feelings and are beginning to understand how their behaviour affects others. Staff help children to develop the social skills they need to play together. They lead by example, encouraging children to listen to each other, take turns and share resources.

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

- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of changes to members of the committee. As a result of this, Ofsted have not received the necessary information to ensure the suitability checks on all individuals can be carried out. However, they do not have unsupervised contact with children or have sole responsibility in making decisions that affect children's well-being.
- Parents speak positively of their children's experiences and how they have settled well in the pre-school. They discuss the positive interactions with staff and how they value the communication about their children's progress. Parents are happy with how well their children have settled and make recommendations to other parents.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works together with the manager to identify any delays in children's development. They work in partnership with outside professionals to build effective strategies that ensure children's individual needs are met and that they receive the additional help they need.
- Staff interact enthusiastically with children and support them to become curious in their learning. Although children have opportunities to extend their learning through role play, the themes are introduced by staff. They do not consistently implement the specific intent of activities or link this to children's interests.

- Children have good opportunities to practise their physical skills outdoors, where they like to play energetically on cars and bicycles. Although staff identify the need for children to also practise their physical skills indoors, they have not focused the planning precisely enough to make the most of opportunities for children to extend this area of learning.
- The manager and staff work closely with the local school to support children's transfer to full-time education effectively. They take children on several visits to the school to become familiar with the space and to get to know the teachers. They encourage parents to support their children's independence and self-care so that when they go to school, they are ready for more formal learning.
- Staff are experienced and qualified. The manager provides effective supervision, ensuring that staff have regular opportunities for training. Staff work very well together. They say they enjoy working at the pre-school and the manager is very supportive.
- Staff know children well and develop their sense of belonging. Children understand rules and play well with one another. For instance, children join in with play gently, and understand that they use 'light touch' to make space to join in with activities when they become interested.
- Staff promote children's good health and encourage them to follow sensible hygiene routines. Children are beginning to understand the importance of washing their hands before eating and some competently carry out this task independently. They help themselves to their own drinks and learn how to open their own lunch boxes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding. They know the signs and symptoms to look for that might make them concerned about a child. Staff complete safeguarding training to keep their knowledge for child protection procedures up to date. The provider reviews policies and procedures to support staff and refresh their knowledge of safeguarding. There is a robust system in place for recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
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improve knowledge and understanding of the notification requirements to ensure that Ofsted are informed of any changes to the committee members so that suitability checks can be carried out promptly.	07/03/2023
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- support staff to consistently adapt the intent of activities in the curriculum in order to extend learning opportunities for children that link to their interests more closely
- continue to support staff to develop the planning for children's physical skills indoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY281631
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10264438
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	34
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Mill Lane Pre-School Association Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP520712
Telephone number	01992 466971
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Mill Lane Pre-School Association registered in 1964. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3. It opens Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday, with the exception of Thursday, when sessions run from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Courtney McAllister

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 management team and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum and the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the pre-school.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took into account their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager of a group activity.
- The manager showed the inspector relevant documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff and their paediatric first-aid certificates.

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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