

Inspection of Barkway Preschool

84 High Street, Barkway, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire SG8 8EF

Inspection date: 31 January 2023

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 are happy and settle well. They thrive on the thoughtful and patient support that they receive from the pre-school staff. They form strong and beneficial relationships with their key person and the whole staff team. This helps to foster children's confidence and well-being. Children are keen learners and show a high level of self-esteem as they proudly show their artwork to staff. They are beginning to understand and explain how they feel. Whole-group time is a positive experience. Children develop sustained listening and attention skills as staff read books with immense enthusiasm. Children are fascinated with the range of fruit linked to the story and learn how to say and sign new words in context. Children practise their language skills as they eagerly respond to staff questions and describe what they see on the pages.

Children are inquisitive. They thoroughly enjoy laying down outdoors with staff to explore how the trails from aeroplanes cross over each other in the sky. Children show a can-do attitude as staff support them to develop their independence skills. They serve themselves their snack, pour their drink carefully and conscientiously clear away their items. Outings within the local community enrich children's experiences and build on their understanding of the world. They learn about how the trees change through the seasons during nature walks and explore historical buildings, such as the local church.

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

- The highly motivated manager and her staff team work very well together. All show dedication to the pre-school and the children who attend. They are highly reflective of practice and regularly liaise with the committee and parents to consistently outline improvements.
- Staff create a well-designed and sequenced curriculum. They provide a wide range of activities and experiences that reflect children's interests and their learning needs. Staff understand the importance of repetition to embed new knowledge. However, sometimes, they do not identify times in children's chosen play to extend their learning further. This means that children are not consistently provided with a strong level of challenge.
- Staff target their practice to close any gaps in children's learning and development due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They recognise that children have had less opportunity to mix with others. Children are well supported. Strategies are in place to help them to understand the pre-school's simple rules and routines, share resources and make secure, friendly relationships.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. The manager and staff work in partnership with parents and external agencies

to provide targeted plans that help children to make good progress. Staff fully consider the individual needs of children who are in receipt of additional funding to successfully support their developmental needs.

- Children benefit from an inclusive environment. Staff make effective use of personalised photograph books to teach children about diversity, similarities and differences.
- Strong partnerships are in place with the host school and other schools that children move on to when the time comes, to support them to make a seamless move. However, staff are not as successful in developing working partnerships with staff at other settings that children attend. This means that some children lack consistency in their learning.
- Staff support children to lead healthy lifestyles. Children relish their time in the inviting outdoor area. They benefit from an abundance of fresh air in all weathers and develop good physical skills.
- Regular supervision meetings are effective in supporting staff to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Staff benefit from a wide range of training opportunities that are focused on supporting the needs of children. Staff meetings enable new knowledge to be shared with the whole team to ensure a consistent approach to agreed strategies, such as a therapeutic approach to managing children's behaviour. Staff comment on how the manager places a high priority on their well-being.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents speak very highly of the nurturing pre-school and describe the staff team as 'professional' and 'amazing'. They welcome the informative updates about their children's progress and know what they will be learning next.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to ensure that children who attend the pre-school are kept safe. Staff carry out thorough risk assessments of all areas. They all ensure that the robust security procedures are followed closely. They know what to do if they are worried about a child in their care or the conduct of other staff. The manager follows a strict recruitment procedure to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. She conducts regular checks to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- continue to support staff to build on children's interests and extend their learning to a higher level
- develop partnerships with staff at all other settings that children attend to

support children's continuity in their learning and development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY464652
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10264936
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	37
Name of registered person	Barkway Preschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP908408
Telephone number	07964151288
Date of previous inspection	30 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Barkway Preschool registered in 2014 and is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school is open from 8.15am until 4.15pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. There are 11 staff members who work directly with children. Of these, seven hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school 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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector and manager completed a learning walk across all the areas of the pre-school to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- 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 through 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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