

# Inspection of Walton Pre-Preparatory School

The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6BB

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Inspection date: 10 February 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children follow an exciting and ambitious curriculum that offers them a wide range of enjoyable experiences. For example, children take part in ballet and tennis classes and enjoy weekly cooking sessions. They grow fruits and vegetables from seed in the extensive grounds of the nursery. Overall, staff support children well and they make good progress in their learning. Children develop into confident talkers who can express themselves and their needs articulately and with enthusiasm. Staff support young children well, for example, using songs and stories to gain children's interest. Older children use questions to help deepen their understanding and staff give explanations, introducing children to new words and expanding on their vocabulary. Babies make good progress in their physical development and staff are alert to how babies learn best. For example, staff know babies need to spend time lying on their stomachs to strengthen their core muscles. There are multiple activities available to help children to practise and perfect the use of tools such as scissors, chinks, pencils and knives and forks.

Children behave well and show courtesy and respect for staff and each other. Staff teach children about good manners. Children show they feel confident and content at the nursery. They separate from parents with confidence and are eager to start learning.

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

- The matron, who manages the nursery, explains the intent of the curriculum and how staff nurture children to develop into independent individuals. The curriculum is well sequenced so that children accumulate skills they need in readiness for their futures. Parents report that their children emerge from the nursery as confident individuals who can read and write and who are emotionally secure.
- Older children explore the outdoor environment with a sense of freedom and excitement, and this is when some of their most productive learning takes place. Children talk with wonder about the 'carrot and pheasant smoothies' they make as they create potions and use their imagination. When children notice that a bent feather looks like a straw, they include this in their play.
- Overall, staff know children well and support their learning effectively. However, on occasion, staff do not find out detailed information from parents and professionals about children's prior needs and experiences. Consequently, staff cannot plan a precise curriculum that meets their individual needs from the very outset.
- Staff provide a programme for supporting children's early reading skills. Children start with picture books and learn about how to handle them, turn the pages and take information from illustrations. Parents report that children become

ambitious early readers who enjoy working their way through the extensive library of books.

- Staff do not always give children opportunities to lead their own learning and sometimes move them quickly from one activity to another. This means that children cannot become absorbed in their experiences and fully embed what they are learning.
- Staff value children's individuality and what makes them unique and special. They provide a wide range of resources that help children to identify with characters that reflect themselves and their families.
- Children remain in small groups throughout their time at the nursery. As a result, they form close relationships with their key person and each other. Parents know who their child's key person is and exchange information with them regularly to support children's learning and development at home.
- Staff complete mandatory training each year, such as in relation to safeguarding and first aid. Managers supervise their performance through regular appraisals and observations of their practice. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic began, opportunities for professional development outside mandatory requirements have been limited. This means that some staff have not had rich opportunities to increase their knowledge, skills and personal effectiveness in order to confidently put the curriculum into action.
- The routine at the nursery is familiar for children. They have enough time to rest and sleep and mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried occasions. Staff are respectful of children and ensure that they have plenty of warning before carrying out care practices, such as nappy changing.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are clear about their role in keeping children safe at the nursery. The leadership team put robust measures in place to recruit suitable staff and monitor their ongoing suitability. All staff readily recognise signs and symptoms that might indicate that children are at risk of harm. There is a well-established line of reporting to enable staff to pass on any concerns about children's welfare. Those designated with responsibility for safeguarding understand their role in working with local safeguarding partners. Risk assessments are effective in keeping children safe as they play and learn and move around the nursery premises.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- gather more information from parents and professionals to tailor care and support for children's needs from the outset
- provide children with consistent opportunities to lead their play and become

immersed in the exciting curriculum activities on offer

- expand on staff's professional development so they have wider opportunities to enhance their personal knowledge and more confidently deliver the curriculum.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY349307
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	10108646
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	106
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	103
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Milton Keynes Preparatory School Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901326
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 678 403
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 April 2013

## Information about this early years setting

Walton Pre-Preparatory School registered in 2007. The nursery employs 20 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 5.45pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspectors

Hayley Marshall-Gowen  
Lisa Dailey

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspectors discussed the intent of the curriculum and observed its implementation during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- A joint observation was completed and discussed with the matron.
- The inspectors held a meeting with matron and the senior staff. They looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and children at suitable times throughout the inspection.
- Parents were invited to share their views with the inspector. Several parents discussed their views during the inspection and the inspector took account of all feedback received.

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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