

Inspection of Dingley Family & Specialist Early Years Centres (West Berks Centre)

Poplar Place, Newbury RG14 1NA

Inspection date: 21 February 2023

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| 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 | Outstanding |
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children receive a warm and friendly smile from staff as they enter this pre-school, which specialises in care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff skilfully support children to settle quickly by guiding them to their favourite toys and activities. Children enjoy exploring the wide range of inclusive activities on offer. For example, staff lie on the floor with non-mobile children and gain good eye contact with them. This encourages them to try and shake instruments and ribbons. Children feel safe and secure.

Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. For instance, they remind children to tidy up and help them to put away toys in the correct place. This helps children to learn how to look after their belongings. Staff support children to manage their feelings and behaviour. They consistently use simple sign language and visuals to help children to understand what is happening, both in the moment and shortly thereafter. Children are happy and manage their emotions well.

Children with SEND make good progress from their starting points. Staff are knowledgeable about how to meet their individual needs. For example, they recognise when some children need time and space alone and follow their lead. Staff expertly use strategies and techniques, such as massage, to encourage children to interact with them. By following the children's wants and needs, staff ensure that they listen to children's voices.

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

- Leaders and staff are passionate about offering an ambitious curriculum to all children. Staff offer children individualised support that is tailored to their needs. For instance, staff recognise that some children like to repeat movements, such as tapping. They enthusiastically mirror them in play to support shared thinking. Staff skilfully offer children emotional support, such as exploring calming boxes full of their favourite toys. This helps all children to reach their full potential.
- Leaders and staff recognise the importance of children developing good communication skills. They expertly weave this into everyday routines and interactions with children. For example, staff repeat simple words alongside signs to help children to learn new vocabulary, such as 'finished'. In addition, staff plan activities to support children's attention skills and focus on learning. For instance, at group time, children delight in watching staff blow bubbles and giggle with glee as they pop them. However, some group times are too long or too large, such as music times. They do not always fully meet the needs of all children. As a result, some children lose interest or become distracted.
- The key-person systems are highly effective, and children share close bonds with the staff who care for them. Children regularly seek their key person for

comfort and reassurance when they need it. For example, they confidently take their key person's hand to show them what they need help with. Children have a secure sense of belonging and the emotional support they need. However, at times, staff will ask children questions but do not provide them with enough time to think and respond. This means that, occasionally, some children can become overwhelmed with the choices that staff offer.

- Children have positive attitudes to play. For example, they smile with joy as they climb equipment in the garden and laugh as they slide down. They have strong physical skills, and this helps to build their independence. Staff help children even further to learn the independence skills they need in a variety of ways. For instance, they encourage children to look in mirrors and brush their teeth after eating a snack. This helps children to meet their own health needs.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive meaningful and purposeful support. They provide regular opportunities to share information and reflect on practice. For example, leaders and staff liaise every morning to discuss the children's needs and how they would like to plan the day. Newer staff report that more experienced staff mentor and coach them. This helps them to learn strategies to support children's learning, such as intensive interaction. The provider supports staff's continual professional development further by offering SEND-specific training to help them in their role. This helps staff to improve their practice over time.
- Staff and leaders build trusting relationships with parents and families. For example, parents confidently share detailed information with staff about their children's weekend. This helps staff to understand and support children's changing needs. Leaders promote strong partnerships with parents by offering regular stay-and-play sessions. Parents say that they appreciate the information they have received from these sessions, such as how to use new communication systems with their children. This helps parents to support children's learning at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff attend regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff know how to spot signs and symptoms of children who may be at risk of harm, such as neglect or radicalisation. Staff know where and to whom to report if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Leaders know where to report if they receive an allegation about a member of staff. Staff carry out thorough risk assessments daily. For example, they ensure that all gates are clear and locked. This helps to minimise the risk to children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review group times to maximise the learning opportunities for all children
- further support staff to ensure they give children more time to listen to and understand the questions they have been asked.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY486921 |
| Local authority | West Berkshire |
| Inspection number | 10276178 |
| 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 | 0 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 10 |
| Number of children on roll | 21 |
| Name of registered person | Dingley Family and Specialist Early Years Centres |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP905480 |
| Telephone number | 01635552458 |
| Date of previous inspection | 4 July 2017 |

Information about this early years setting

Dingley Family and Specialist Early Years Centres (West Berks Centre) is one of four centres run by Dingley Family and Specialist Early Years Centres. It re-registered at new premises in 2015 but has been established since 2004. It is one of three registered charity centres known as Dingley's Promise. It operates from purposefully refurbished premises in Newbury, Berkshire. The setting serves children with SEND. All areas of the premises and garden are accessible via ramps. The centre is open each weekday, from 9.15am to 2.45pm, during term time and offers a holiday provision during some holidays. There are nine staff, six of whom hold recognised childcare qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The setting is supported by a number of regular volunteers. The centre provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Mandy Cooper

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 viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- 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.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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