

Inspection of Potton Woodentops

The Hollow, Biggleswade Road, Potton, Beds SG19 2LU

Inspection date: 27 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

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

Overall, the quality of teaching requires improvement. The interactions between the staff and children are variable. Staff do not constantly respond to each child's emerging interests and natural curiosity as they play and participate in planned adult-led activities. For example, younger children show an interest and are eager to take part in a dough activity. However, they are told it is not their turn, to move away and play with something else. Consequently, younger children sometimes cry and begin to wander around the room with no purpose to their play. Furthermore, children's behaviour sometimes deteriorates.

Nevertheless, children demonstrate that they are happy to attend and independently select what they would like to play with. Children enjoy being physically active in the fresh air. They develop their hand-to-eye coordination skills as they pour rice from one container to another. Older children demonstrate their problem-solving skills. They successfully create a see-saw by placing a wooden plank across a tyre, proudly showing their friends by demonstrating how to use it. Children make constructions out of bricks and build the train track. They make marks on paper, learn to use scissors safely and are introduced to mathematical concepts such as 'big', 'small', 'long' and 'short'.

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

- The provider, who is also the manager of the provision, demonstrates a willingness to make improvements. Staff state that they enjoy working at the provision and have opportunities to complete training courses. For example, staff have completed training about understanding autism to broaden their knowledge. However, training opportunities overall are not broad enough to ensure that all staff have good knowledge and skills to enhance the quality of education provided for the children.
- Staff are not always deployed effectively to ensure that they meet the needs of the children and ensure their safety. During the inspection, staff failed to consistently monitor children in a corridor that leads to the children's toilets and outdoor area. A child was observed wandering in and out of the toilets, and a further child positioned themselves behind the wellington boot rack. This meant that they were not supervised appropriately by the staff.
- Staff demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the children's stage of development. They complete observations of the children and share photos of them participating in activities with parents. However, overall, staff do not always extend children's interests as they play and build on what each child knows and can already do.
- Staff reinforce rules and boundaries with the children at the start of the morning. However, on occasions, staff do not consistently notice when children's

behaviour declines or reinforce their strategies to support them to manage their feelings and behaviours. For example, one child was observed pushing another, and one was observed rolling on top of another during the inspection.

- The managers and staff demonstrate good relationships with the children and their families. Children are confident to approach staff for reassurance and a cuddle. These interactions help children to form attachments. Children's independence is encouraged. For example, children choose their snack and learn to put on their outdoor clothing before going outside to play.
- Management and staff continue to recognise that some children need additional support with their language development. They provide opportunities for the children to sing rhymes and songs. Children particularly enjoy songs with actions, such as 'The wheels on the bus'. They learn sign language to aid communication, learn to differentiate between different sounds and are introduced to descriptive language as they explore items in the treasure tins.
- Staff undertake additional training to enable them to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work closely with children's families and other professionals.
- Staff appropriately support children who receive early years pupil premium. Additional funding has been used to purchase additional resources, for example, to enhance learning opportunities in the outdoor area.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers and staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the possible signs of abuse and neglect. They understand the importance of making a swift referral to the relevant agencies if they have a concern about a child in their care. Furthermore, managers and staff know what to do in the event of an allegation being made against them. Staff receive regular child protection training and participate in quizzes to ensure that their knowledge is up to date. Managers follow appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. They complete daily checks of the premises and surrounding outdoor areas to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
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improve the delivery of activities and staff interactions with the children to ensure that they stimulate children's interests, respond to each child's emerging needs, and guide their development through positive interactions	23/06/2023
make sure the deployment of staff meets the needs of all children to ensure their safety and well-being at all times; this refers to the supervision of children in the corridor and toilet area	31/03/2023
target staff development more sharply to develop high-quality interactions between the staff and children during play.	23/06/2023

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

- reinforce strategies to support children to manage their own feelings and behaviours.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY478548
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10283854
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	48
Name of registered person	Noakes, Anne Jacqueline
Registered person unique reference number	RP905418
Telephone number	01767261100
Date of previous inspection	26 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Potton Woodentops registered in 2014. The pre-school employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including one member of staff with early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 8am until 4pm on Monday to Thursday, and from 8am until 1pm on Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Ann Austen

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 registered provider, who is also the manager of the provision, completed a learning walk with the inspector across all areas of the provision to enable the inspector to understand how the early years curriculum is organised.
- The inspector observed staff's interactions with the children during indoor and outdoor activities, and assessed the impact this has on the children's progress and achievements.
- The manager, staff and children engaged in discussions with the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and discussed the children's progress and achievements.
- A sample of documents was reviewed by the inspector. This included evidence of staff suitability and training.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents by speaking to them at the inspection.

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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