

Inspection of Bargates Children's Centre

The Bargates, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8QS

Inspection date: 3 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are excited and happy as they arrive at this nursery. They relish the thoughtfully planned, exciting and appealing play opportunities. They are highly motivated and eager to join in. Their relationships with staff are strong and secure. This helps them settle quickly. For example, two-year-olds who wake from a sleep seek comfort from staff as they take time to join in with a painting activity. Staff reassure babies when they feel paint on their feet as they make footprints across paper spread out over the floor.

Children make excellent progress across all areas of development. This is because staff are extremely knowledgeable, understand children very well and offer challenge where appropriate. For example, they pose tricky mathematical problems for some children. Children persist and successfully work out the answer to a sum ' $10 + 2 = 12$ '. Staff help to extend communication and language development by using a wide range of describing words in interactions. For example, three-year-olds playing in the large plastic tray with cereal and toy diggers hear staff say, 'Let's dig deep and explore the dry, brown sand'. Their understanding of mathematical ideas is encouraged, as staff comment 'It's a small sandcastle – how could you make that bigger do you think?'

Children develop their physical skills very well because staff provide carefully thought-out opportunities and a wide variety of resources for them. They climb, balance and crawl over, through and on top of complex structures they have built themselves using tyres, crates and planks. Younger children pull themselves up to explore the rice sensory play. They cruise around the table top with increasing skill and confidence. Pre-school children develop independence skills as they zip up their own coats, showing off this skill to others with great pride.

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

- Leadership in this nursery is inspirational. Highly qualified and experienced leaders ensure that their strong vision and clear ethos is threaded through the play-based curriculum. Staff understand this curriculum and implement it successfully across the nursery, for all children. Interactions with children are of very high quality and help children build knowledge and skills over time.
- Staff have a deep knowledge of child development and how children learn. They use this knowledge very well when they assess what children can do and when they plan for progress. They are enthusiastic and passionate about providing children with motivating, exciting play experiences. Furthermore, they expertly reflect on children's interests, fascinations and learning styles.
- Staff benefit from excellent support from the leadership team. Leaders are very aware of ensuring that the well-being of staff is recognised and considered.

Regular supervision and appraisal meetings mean that staff can share their thoughts and discuss any issues. Staff develop their knowledge and skills because they access an extensive range of training and professional development opportunities.

- The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptional. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about children's needs. They support realistic, focused next steps seamlessly in play. Individualised support, such as short intervention sessions and specifically planned invitations to play, are very effective and ensure that all children are included. Children receive the targeted support they need to help them make swift progress, particularly where there are concerns about progress. Leaders act quickly to get the support children need.
- Parent partnerships are excellent. Leaders and staff prioritise and nurture a very strong and effective two-way communication to ensure that children's needs are met. Parents benefit from information sessions about a wide variety of aspects of child development. For example, they have recently enjoyed practical sessions looking at the importance of messy play, and encouraging the use of books and reading with children at home.
- Leaders and staff maintain and utilise excellent partnerships with external agencies. For example, they complete the progress check for children between the age of two and three years alongside the community nurse and with parents.
- Children learn about their community and the world around them in a variety of ways. They see diversity in activities and resources, and access the community often. For example, they visit the local library and local cafés. Children's social experiences are broadened as they visit the local care home. This means that children and residents can enjoy singing nursery rhymes together.
- Staff teach children about the cycle of life and being healthy, for example, as they plant seeds to grow cress, which they intend to use in sandwiches. As a result, children confidently describe how seeds and plants need sunshine and water to grow. In turn, they learn about what they need themselves to grow healthy and strong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have an excellent understanding of their roles in safeguarding children. Staff confidently outline a wide range of signs and symptoms that would indicate that a child is at risk of harm. They know how to make referrals should they have any concerns about children in their care. Leaders check staff's understanding of safeguarding regularly, for example in discussions at team meetings. Staff attend regular training so that their knowledge of safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty and extreme views is current. The nursery premises are secure. Staff risk assess the space to ensure that it remains a safe place for children to play and learn. Leaders have robust recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so.

Setting details

Unique reference number	223498
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10280718
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	111
Number of children on roll	141
Name of registered person	Gillian Bilbrough and Robert Bilbrough Partnership
Registered person unique reference number	RP522829
Telephone number	01568 610400
Date of previous inspection	8 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Bargates Children's Centre, Leominster, registered in 1997. The nursery employs 24 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with early years professional status and three with qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Juliette Freeman

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 setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together. They observed staff's teaching practice during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the provider.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of their views.
- Meetings were held between the inspector, the provider and the manager at different times during 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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