

Inspection of Wilderness Pre-School

Onslow Village Hall, The Square, Wilderness Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7QR

Inspection date: 14 June 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 | Good |
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are given a warm welcome at the pre-school, which is well established as part of the community. They appear happy and confident to access the learning environment. Children are familiar with the routine of the pre-school and are cared for by kind, sensitive and nurturing staff. Staff know children's individual needs well and carefully consider their unique family circumstances when planning for their next steps in learning.

Staff act as excellent role models and children behave well and are kind to one another. Children are taught to wait patiently and take turns with their friends. They listen attentively to staff as they share stories and learn about the wider world. For instance, children enjoy listening to staff at 'show and tell', where they learn about stag beetles and bird nests that staff have found. They are eager to join in with acting out the stories from well-known tales, such as 'The Three Little Pigs'.

All children make good progress. They are supported to develop a love of stories, books and rhymes. For example, children are proud to demonstrate their singing and signing abilities to the new teachers of the schools they will be moving to next. Mathematical concepts, such as number, shape and size, are well embedded into the daily care and learning activities. Children use a wide vocabulary of mathematical language, such as 'more of', 'less than', 'really high' and 'heavier'. Staff build children's confidence as they develop their early writing skills. For instance, children are eager to practise writing their own name. All children take ownership of the record of their learning and enjoy looking at their folders with their parents and staff.

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

- Staff know children incredibly well. They are sensitive to each child's unique needs and plan purposeful experiences to help them achieve their full potential. For example, some children enjoy breakfast when they arrive so that they are ready to play and learn. Others spend time tracing masks on the light box to help them develop greater control and precision with their mark making and writing.
- Children are supported to do as much as they can for themselves. They are provided with lots of praise and encouragement. This helps them to build self-confidence, develop greater independence and be ready for school. Staff bring stories and books to life with their enthusiasm. However, on occasion, children are not given the time they may need to think and respond to staff during activities, to fully extend their learning.
- Children are keen to try all activities and show great resilience. They keep trying

with things that they may find difficult, until they succeed. Staff acknowledge children's efforts and celebrate their achievements.

- Children are provided with ample opportunities to be physically active. They enjoy exploring in the digging area and learning to climb, using stepping stones. Staff remain nearby to carefully supervise but allow children to take appropriate risks during their play.
- Children are taught how to keep themselves safe and learn about being healthy. They know to wait for supervision before using large climbing equipment. They hold the handrail when using the stairs and understand the importance of sitting in the shade and regularly drinking water on sunny days.
- The manager maintains good oversight of the quality of teaching and meets with staff regularly to feed back on their personal effectiveness. All staff contribute to the evaluation of activities and the assessments of children. This allows them to reflect on practice and suggest improvements to the organisation of the pre-school. As a result, staff feel listened to, valued and supported.
- Staff work well with other agencies to promote the well-being of children and their families. Systems in place for supporting children's transition to school are excellent. Staff say that it is a highlight of the year when children's new teachers visit the pre-school to meet them. These arrangements are valued greatly by parents. The pre-school makes good use of the progress check for children aged between two and three years to establish starting points for new children and to help identify any emerging additional needs or support that may be required.
- Parents speak very highly of the manager and staff team. They talk of the strong bonds that their children have with their key person. They value the open-door policy to allow them to voice their concerns and views. The manager is particularly held in high regard, going above and beyond to support families. Parents are invited to meet with staff at least once each term and take their children's learning folders home on request. However, the systems in place for providing more regular feedback on what children have been learning at the pre-school are not as effective.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate suitable knowledge around the signs and indicators of abuse. They know how to report and refer concerns about a child who may be at risk of harm. The manager and staff are clear on how any allegations about staff should be managed. Effective risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety and security of children at the pre-school. Furthermore, children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe. There are robust systems in place for the safe handling of food, medication and children's allergies. The manager is aware of safer recruitment processes and there are systems in place to check staff's ongoing suitability.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop staff's skills in providing children with enough time to think through and respond to questions, to support their language and communication even further
- strengthen systems for providing regular feedback to parents so that they understand what their child has been learning at the pre-school.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY299152 |
| Local authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 10289367 |
| 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 | 24 |
| Number of children on roll | 25 |
| Name of registered person | Hatton, Karen Elizabeth |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP513281 |
| Telephone number | 07870409764 |
| Date of previous inspection | 22 November 2017 |

Information about this early years setting

Wilderness Pre-School registered in 2004 and is based near Guildford, Surrey. The pre-school is open from Monday to Thursday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am to 12.30pm. The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, one holds an early years degree, one has qualified teacher status and three hold early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Leanne Merritt

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector had a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the provider's early years curriculum.
- 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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