

# Inspection of Merton Pre-School

C/O Merton Infant School, Romsey Close, Popley, BASINGSTOKE, Hampshire RG24 9HB

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Inspection date: 6 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

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

### **The provision is good**

Staff provide a warm welcome and children enjoy their time at the pre-school. Children arrive happy and confidently leave their parents and carers at the door. They demonstrate they feel safe and have a good sense of belonging as they talk about their morning to members of staff. Staff know the children and families well. This helps children quickly settle in this friendly pre-school.

Staff use information gathered from families to plan a range of fun, themed activities. For example, they encourage children to engage in daily exercise. Before children take part in a 'daily jog', staff put their hands on their hearts. They encourage children to do the same. Children repeat this after their exercise and say that their hearts are going faster. This helps children to learn about healthy lifestyles and develop their awareness of how their bodies function.

Staff are good role models and have high expectations for children's behaviour. They teach children to play cooperatively together and learn to share and take turns. Children display a positive attitude towards their learning. For instance, children concentrate as they use ramps to roll balls down. They experiment and learn that the higher the ramp is, the faster the balls travel.

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

- Since the last inspection, the committee and leadership team have taken steps to ensure all members of the committee are suitable to fulfil their role. They have recorded these suitability checks and have ensured they have notified Ofsted of any changes.
- Staff develop children's communication skills well. They use children's favourite stories to broaden their growing vocabulary. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported. Staff use simple sentences and gestures to support children's understanding. This helps all children to achieve a good understanding of English and develops their speech over time.
- Staff interactions are mostly supportive of children's learning. However, on occasion, staff do not notice when individual children would benefit from their interactions to help to extend their play and support their learning further.
- Staff swiftly identify any children who will benefit from additional support. Staff use advice from professionals to develop plans that are specific to the needs of the children. This helps staff to deepen their knowledge and meet children's individual needs. Furthermore, leaders put clear strategies in place to ensure that children with medical needs are well supported and kept safe. For instance, staff are trained to care for children's specific medical needs.
- Staff sequence the curriculum based around the children's interests. For example, children thoroughly enjoy scooping flour and mixing it with water to

make play dough. This supports their small muscles for later writing. However, at times, staff interrupt children's learning and engagement to carry out group activities and routines.

- Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe. For example, children know they need to put on high-visibility vests before they go for a walk on the school grounds. Children also learn about sun safety. Staff talk about needing their sun hats before going outside.
- Staff help children understand and manage their own feelings. They talk to children about how they feel and use stories to help children understand their different emotions. This helps children to form friendships and play cooperatively together.
- Overall, parents are happy with the pre-school. They say that their children are eager to attend. Parents say that their children have progressed in their learning since attending. However, not all parents are aware of the plans for their children's next steps in learning, to enable them to continue to support their learning at home.
- Mostly, the supervision and arrangements to monitor staff practice are effective. Staff benefit from good training opportunities to help them extend and develop their skills. For example, staff have accessed training to support children's speech and language.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The acting manager and staff have a thorough understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff are aware of possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They are mindful of safeguarding concerns and confidently describe what action they would take to seek support. Staff know the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against staff. They implement daily risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor environment. This helps to ensure that children remain safe when playing at nursery. The acting manager has a robust recruitment process, ensuring that those working with children are suitable to do so.

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

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

- strengthen staff practice to ensure all children benefit from their interactions to support their learning further
- consider the organisation of routines and group times, so that they do not interrupt children's learning opportunities
- improve how information is shared with parents to ensure all parents know their child's individual next steps and can support their learning at home.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	511077
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257613
<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>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	3 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	33
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Merton Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP908418
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 353100
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 September 2022

## Information about this early years setting

Merton Pre-School registered in 1999. It is situated within the grounds of Merton Infants School in Basingstoke, Hampshire. The pre-school opens during school term times from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five staff, all of whom hold appropriate qualifications from level 2 to level 3.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Kelly Lane

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The acting manager, deputy manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- A joint observation of a language activity was observed with the acting manager and the inspector.
- The inspector spoke with parents 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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