

Inspection of Dorchester Opportunity Preschool Group Ltd

The Prince Of Wales Unit, Maiden Castle Road, Dorchester DT1 2HH

Inspection date: 6 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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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 with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) flourish in this specialist centre. They arrive happily and warm, caring staff greet them. The curriculum is expertly designed to ensure that all children make excellent progress from the outset. Staff know children extremely well and skilfully support children's learning through carefully planned activities. For example, children watch intently as staff sprinkle seeds onto musical instruments. They listen attentively to the 'musical rain' which holds their interest to develop their listening and attention skills. Children are eager to join in and show pride in their achievements. For example, they clap their hands with delight when they successfully build a tower.

Staff encourage children to make choices to help develop their communication skills and confidence. For example, staff praise children for choosing their own snacks. Staff prepare children for what is happening next, using words, signing and visual aids to indicate the next activity. This helps children feel safe and secure. Staff support children's emotional well-being very effectively. For example, using gentle touch and singing to sooth and calm children when needed. Staff notice and act swiftly to avert any challenging behaviour to promote and maintain children's focus on learning. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next steps in learning, including moving on to school.

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

- The manager designs an ambitious curriculum which firmly reflects that every child is unique. Highly committed staff show a secure understanding of the curriculum and how to meet children's individual needs. They meticulously monitor children's learning to ensure that children make the progress of which they are capable.
- The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, who is also the manager, works closely with staff and other professionals to ensure that appropriate interventions are in place to support children's learning. She spends any additional funding with integrity to ensure all children flourish. For example, to purchase resources that encourage sensory exploration to stimulate children's senses and promote movement and balance.
- Staff interactions with children are of a very high quality. Staff skilfully use a variety of techniques to develop children's communication skills, for example, sign language, picture symbols and objects of reference. They narrate children's play using simple sentences to give children's actions meaning and share stories and songs to help children develop their understanding of language.
- Staff have high aspirations for all children, who learn the skills they need to become future citizens. For example, staff take children to the supermarket to help them become familiar with this. Children enjoy trips into the community to

help them learn about the world around them.

- Children enjoy a wide variety of physical play, inside and outside. They safely explore the soft-play area and climb, balance and run outside. Children benefit from use of the on-site therapy pool to develop their muscles and coordination. Staff encourage children to make marks with paint and water and use their hands and tools to explore cereal and sand. This nurtures children's sense of exploration and develops their fine motor skills.
- Staff work closely together as a highly effective team. They continually update their knowledge and skills to ensure children receive the best possible teaching. The manager targets training effectively to meet the needs of the children who attend. For example, to ensure that staff understand any specific medical needs.
- The key-person system is exceptionally successful in ensuring that children build secure attachments with staff to promote their well-being. The manager and deputy manager manage two key groups, supported by staff who know each child incredibly well. Children new to the setting settle very quickly.
- Staff complete an in-depth handover of information when children start school to help ensure they make the best possible transition. For example, they visit the school with the child to help build their confidence and familiarity with the new setting. Staff work closely with parents to help them to prepare their children for the next step in their education.
- The inspirational manager goes above and beyond to provide support for parents. Parents report that her guidance has helped them to understand their children's additional needs and feel empowered to try new techniques to support them. They say they feel positive about their children's future as a result of attending the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of the signs and symptoms which might indicate that a child is at risk of abuse. They know the procedures for reporting any concerns about children's welfare and any potential allegations made against a member of staff. The designated safeguarding lead works proactively with external agencies to help ensure children's safety. The manager, deputy manager and staff work closely to ensure that risk assessment processes are robust and that the setting is safe and secure. The manager employs safer recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY492342
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10305004
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	20
Number of children on roll	17
Name of registered person	Dorchester Opportunity Preschool Group Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP534817
Telephone number	01305 751707
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Dorchester Opportunity Preschool Group registered in 2015 and is a specialist centre for children with SEND. It operates from rooms in the Prince of Wales Unit in Dorchester, Dorset. The setting opens from 9.30am to 3pm on Monday to Thursday and from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Friday, term time only. There are eight members of staff who work with the children. Of these, one holds a relevant level 6 qualification, two hold a level 3 qualification, two hold a level 2 qualification and three are unqualified. The setting is in receipt of funding for early education for children aged two, three and four years old.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lisa Large

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 manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this has on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff and parents at appropriate times 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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