

Inspection of The Grove Pre-School Playgroup

The Grove Pre-School Playgroup, The Bungalow, Damers Road, Dorchester, Dorset
DT1 2LA

Inspection date: 9 November 2023

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

There is a calm atmosphere across the pre-school. Children follow effective behaviour expectations. Staff model using manners, and children repeat these throughout different routines during the day. They show respect to staff and their friends and understand how their behaviour affects others. Children have opportunities to help prepare breakfast for their friends and to make their own breakfast. This helps them settle more quickly as they arrive in the morning.

Staff successfully help all children to develop the skills they need for the future. Children demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning and make good progress from their starting points, including children who learn English as an additional language and those who receive additional funding. Staff have used funding to provide children with cosier enclosed areas to support their emotional security.

The manager changed how parents drop off and collect their children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff meet children at the gate, and this has continued. Parents say that the staff are 'friendly' and 'warm' and that 'even the children are welcoming'.

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

- Overall, the manager ensures that the curriculum is well understood and implemented by staff. Staff know the children well and can talk about where they are in their development. They observe children as they play and make accurate assessments of what children know and can do. However, some staff do not use the information they have gained from these assessments to plan precisely for the next steps in children's learning. Consequently, their teaching does not consistently focus on what they want children to learn.
- Staff value children's input, and there are lots of sociable times during the day, for example when children and staff sit together, such as at breakfast and lunch. Staff hold conversations with children about healthy eating, and children eagerly talk about healthy options in their lunch boxes. Staff promote children's developing language and communication skills well. Children who learn English as an additional language have good opportunities to learn words in English.
- Children enjoy opportunities to socialise and explore their community. For instance, they regularly visit a local care home to share stories and take part in creative activities with the residents. These positive experiences encourage intergenerational learning.
- Children are supported well to lead active lifestyles. They play outdoors daily and enjoy using a range of equipment that supports their developing muscle control, balance and coordination. For example, children enjoy climbing on the climbing frame, using swinging bars and negotiating the ramp in the outdoor area.

- Parents speak highly about the care that staff provide for their children. They say that staff chat with them about their child's day at handover time. However, some parents do not know what their child's next steps in learning are, and they are unsure how to continue their children's learning at home. The manager acknowledges they have yet to ensure that all parents are consistently kept up to date with their children's ongoing progress.
- The manager values everyone's contribution to the pre-school and places a strong emphasis on the staff's well-being. There is a strong team spirit. Staff regularly attend training to enhance their knowledge and are continually looking at ways to improve the pre-school.
- The manager takes swift action when she identifies areas for development. She recognises the journey that they are on. The manager is passionate and proactive in her approach. She seeks out additional sources of support, such as the local authority. The manager has recently contracted an outside catering company to provide children with nutritious and balanced meals during the day.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager places a high emphasis on safeguarding in all aspects of their provision. All staff have completed child protection training to ensure their knowledge is up to date, and they all have paediatric first-aid certificates. They are confident about the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's well-being or safety. Staff keep doors and gates locked to ensure the building and premises are secure. When employing new staff, the manager ensures that they are suitable for their role by carrying out rigorous background checks. The ongoing suitability of staff is regularly checked throughout their employment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support all staff to embed the curriculum intent more securely so that their teaching consistently focuses on what they want children to learn
- ensure that all parents know their child's individual next steps and are kept informed of their ongoing progress so that they can support their child's learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	139370
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10305497
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	21
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	The Grove Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519782
Telephone number	01305 266766
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Grove Pre-School Playgroup registered in 1984 and is situated in Dorchester, Dorset. The pre-school is managed by a parent committee. It is open each weekday during term time from 8.15am to 3.45pm. The pre-school also offers morning and afternoon sessions and a lunch club between 11.30am and 12.30pm. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff who work with the children. Of these, one holds an appropriate childcare qualification at level 5, three hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Cornish

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 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 and several parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager spoke with the inspector about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- 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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