

Inspection of Early Days Pre-School

Oughtonhead Primary And Nursery School, Mattocke Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire
SG5 2NZ

Inspection date: 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive and have immense fun in this safe, highly nurturing and caring pre-school. Children are at the heart of everything staff do. Staff carry out home visits and gather information so they can plan for children's learning needs. As a result, children feel safe and secure and form lovely relationships with the staff. Children behave well and have a good attitude to learning. They follow simple instructions and respond positively when staff prepare them for changes in their routine such as tidy-up time. Children call out, 'It's tidy up time'. Staff encourage children to share and take turns and use good manners, such as 'please' and 'thank you'.

Staff plan a broad and stimulating curriculum tailored to meet the needs of all the children. From the moment children arrive, they engage in rich experiences that are carefully planned to inspire them to become active learners. Children have a 'can do' attitude' as they explore an Antarctic theme in the tray with ice and toy animals, such as penguins and seals. Staff engage children in meaningful conversations that ignite their curiosity. They ask questions, such as 'What other animals live in the Antarctic?' Children say, 'Polar bears'. Staff ask 'What happens to ice when it melts?' Children share their thoughts and say, 'Water'.

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

- The management team has created a curriculum that follows children's interests. They build on what children know and can do, to enable them to make the best possible progress. Children collaboratively play together as they take part in keeping a large parachute up in the air. They cheer everyone on as they coordinate their movements and raise the parachute higher or lower it to the ground.
- Children's communication and language skills are well supported. Staff role model language and repeat words back, so children hear the correct pronunciation. They engage in purposeful back-and-forth conversations and narrate their play. Staff introduce new vocabulary, such as 'stretchy'. They ask questions and give children time to think and respond. This supports all children, including those with speech delay, to make good progress in their language development.
- Staff support children well to become increasingly independent. Children relish the responsibility of finding their name through self-registration. They confidently make choices on what peg they want to hang their coat and bag on. Children pour out their drinks. They peel and cut their fruit up at snack time.
- The special education needs coordinator has high aspirations for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She works closely with families and external services to implement effective strategies to provide targeted support. As a result, children access a curriculum that meets their needs and provides

them with positive learning experiences. The management team uses additional funding to buy resources to enhance the children's learning needs.

- The stimulating and engaging learning environment motivates children to participate in activities. As a result, children develop new knowledge and skills across areas of the curriculum. During circle time, children come together to build on what they know about the days of the week. They develop hand-to-eye coordination as they manipulate the play dough into small shapes. Children learn new vocabulary. However, in mathematics, at times staff do not build on what children already know and can do. Although children are acquiring some mathematical skills through their play, their progress in this area is not as secure.
- The management team is exceptional. They meet with other childcare providers and share their ideas and new initiatives. Staff are very enthusiastic and keen to develop their professional development. They seek out training courses to enhance their knowledge. They learn new skills, which they embed into the everyday running of the pre-school, such as behaviour strategies and supporting children's communication skills. The impact of the training is evident as children are making good progress in these areas.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents talk positively about the caring staff and the progress that their children are making. They state that they are regularly kept up to date with their children's learning. Parents comment on how much they enjoy the stay-and-play sessions and that the pre-school is a 'creative' and 'fun' place for children to thrive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the pre-school, which seeks to eliminate the risks of harm against the children. The management team and staff are extremely knowledgeable in identifying signs and symptoms of abuse or indicators that might alert them of a child at risk. They are clear about the procedures they must follow should they have concerns about the suitability of colleagues working with children. The management team and staff are quick to respond to concerns and take swift action. They work in partnership with other agencies to ensure the safety of children. Robust recruitment procedures and regular checks of ongoing suitability ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to implement the mathematical curriculum consistently to enhance children's knowledge and skills further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY492398
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10305546
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	30
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	Early Days Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP907066
Telephone number	01462437643
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Early Days Pre-school registered in 2015. It is situated on the grounds of Oughtonhead Primary and Nursery School, Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time. Sessions are from 8.45am to 3.15pm. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Diane Middleton

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 management team joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- 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, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between the staff and the children.
- Discussions were held between the staff and the inspector to establish their understanding of how to safeguard the children in their care.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector face-to-face and through written testimonials. The inspector took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working at the setting.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the management team during snack time.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023