

Inspection of Micheldever and Stratton Preschool

Micheldever Station Community & Recreation Centre, The Warren Centre, Warren
Corner, Andover Road, Micheldever Station, Winchester SO21 3AR

Inspection date:

30 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Everyone is valued and treated with respect in this inclusive pre-school, where staff instil friendship, responsibility, and pride in all that they do. Staff are conscientious but relentless in their pursuit of excellence, holding the highest expectations of all children. Children display exemplary behaviour. They are well mannered, considerate and care for their friends. Children persevere at tasks they find difficult. They quickly become resilient learners who are willing to try to work things out for themselves and learn from their mistakes.

Mathematics is taught very effectively. Outside of the excellent support for counting and recognising number, children eagerly explore complex mathematical concepts, showing a thirst for knowing and understanding the difference between 2D and 3D shapes. Staff rise to the challenge ably, supporting children to explain their thinking as they note the differences between the objects. Staff are adventurous in their introduction of new vocabulary. For example, they help children understand that the side of a 3D object is called a face and that the edges of a 3D shape are where the faces meet. Children relish the varied opportunities to engage in challenging activities outside that promote critical-thinking skills and equally support their good health. Children reflect on prior learning that has introduced them to properties of liquids. They compare how the now frozen shapes were previously a liquid but have changed to a solid.

Children are exceptionally well prepared to make a positive contribution in modern Britain. Children gain an appreciation of democracy and learn that their opinion matters and is valued. For example, children vote for their choice at song time. They learn that, sometimes, their song is not chosen and show a mature understanding of why. Staff enrich children's knowledge of different beliefs and cultures, recognising celebrations that are meaningful to their families. They help children to consider their own and other people's values and actively challenge gender stereotypes.

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

- The high quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum successfully motivates children. Activities are well planned to match children's abilities and focus very precisely on deepening their understanding and skills. Staff teach enthusiastically and inspiringly. They introduce key knowledge in a logical order, checking that children have understood their prior learning before building on what they need to know next. Children make rapid progress from their starting points and develop an impressive range of skills to support their journey into school.
- The manager is an inspirational leader who holds a compelling vision for all children. She promotes a supportive staff culture of mutual respect and

teamwork. The best interests of all children are at the heart of all decisions made. Children's health, safety and well-being are robustly promoted.

- Children are exceptionally well cared for, and their welfare is promoted outstandingly well. Staff provide an excellent range of opportunities for children to explore and find things out for themselves and make decisions about their learning. Children show high levels of independence. For example, when preparing their own snack, they competently handle child safety knives with great care and skill, and they chop cucumber into thin slices. Staff support children's emotional well-being and confidence as a priority. Staff place a strong emphasis on providing care and nurture, as well as challenge and ambition. New children settle quickly and become active members of the group.
- The committee provides robust oversight. Trustees are well informed and have an accurate understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for further development. They attend regular training and develop essential skills to hold leaders to close account. New staff are supported extremely well with a strong commitment to ongoing professional development. Rigorous and highly effective systems are in place for managing the induction and ongoing performance of staff, including supporting staff to work towards recognised qualifications.
- The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is exceptional. The manager, who is the special educational needs coordinator, proactively takes the lead with other agencies so that children have access to specialist help where required. She expertly designs and implements an ambitious curriculum for children with SEND, providing support that is carefully matched to children's individual needs. Children are developing in confidence rapidly and master the same skills as their peers. Additional funding is used very well to promote outstanding outcomes for all children.
- Highly skilled staff promote children's early communication effectively. They accurately model the sounds letters make so that children build their knowledge of early reading skills well. Children who speak English as an additional language make strong progress and achieve highly. Staff go to great lengths to recognise children's home language in the pre-school. They learn, and competently use, words from children's home languages so that children quickly make the links as they acquire a new language. Staff place excellent focus on encouraging and supporting children to voice their views and opinions. This contributes to the rapid progress made by all groups of children.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the pre-school. They praise the dedication and professionalism of the approachable staff team. Parents are provided with regular and accurate information about how their child is progressing. They are invited to share experiences from home. Staff weave these very successfully into their curriculum, resulting in teaching that is responsive to the needs of the families who attend. Exceptional working arrangements are established with local feeder schools. The manager acts on feedback readily to ensure consistency in the delivery of early letter sounds and handwriting, which in turn ensures a seamless transition into school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and the committee promote a robust culture of safeguarding that ensures continued vigilance on any safety matters. Staff remain highly alert for signs of concern, including outside the setting, and ensure safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously. They work in effective partnership with parents to promote the importance of regular attendance, in readiness for the move to school. Children are taught to keep themselves safe and know they have a trusted adult to speak to if they feel worried. Staff demonstrate continued vigilance in ensuring the premises and outdoor areas are safe. They ensure that they are well trained and kept up to date, particularly about risks that affect their immediate community and the families they serve.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 2647913 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10301530 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register |
| Day care type | Sessional day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 21 |
| Number of children on roll | 15 |
| Name of registered person | Micheldever and Stratton Pre School Group Committee |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP524582 |
| Telephone number | 07934981271 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |

Information about this early years setting

Micheldever and Stratton Preschool registered in 2021, having been previously registered since 1998 at an alternative premises. It operates from Micheldever Station Community and Recreation Centre, located in Micheldever Station, in Hampshire. The pre-school is open from 8.30am until 4.30pm, term time only. There are three members of staff, two of whom hold early years qualifications, including a BA Honours in early years and early years qualified teacher status. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Melissa Cox

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 pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children, to find out about their time at the pre-school.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The deputy manager and the inspector evaluated an activity together.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account their views. A number of parents also submitted comments via email, and these were also considered.
- 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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