

Inspection of Mulberry Preschool

Mulberry Road, Marchwood, Southampton, Hampshire SO40 4WB

Inspection date: 4 December 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

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

Many children run into pre-school in the morning, excited for their day. Children are incredibly safe and happy. Staff know the children exceptionally well and are very caring and nurturing. Staff go above and beyond to support children, their families and the community. Those children who need additional support to settle, when they first arrive, enjoy cuddles and familiar activities to help them feel assured.

Staff plan a rich and ambitious curriculum around the skills children need to learn. They have high expectations for children's behaviour and learning. Children from a young age develop independence skills exceptionally well, and their behaviour is exemplary. This is because staff securely embed routines and consistently apply the pre-school's boundaries.

The interactions between staff and children are exceptional. Staff maintain a constant focus on developing children's vocabulary. They use a range of core stories and songs to deepen children's understanding. Staff read to children with great expression, promote discussions and reflect back on previous learning. Children are highly motivated and very eager to join in and cooperate with others. They demonstrate excellent resilience; this is because staff support children to have a go and to keep trying. As a result, children develop positive attitudes to learning and have the skills they need to be ready for school and beyond.

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

- Leaders have a clear vision and strong commitment to continuous and future developments in the pre-school. They have devised and implemented a highly inspiring and well-structured curriculum with great success. Children are incredibly independent in managing their daily routines, and as a result, they feel a sense of accomplishment.
- Not all committee members have provided Ofsted with the required information to check their suitability. However, these committee members do not currently have any contact with children at the pre-school. In addition, they are not involved in any sensitive information or decision-making. This means there is no impact on children's welfare.
- Staff promote children's curiosity and sense of exploration effectively. For example, children demonstrate high levels of engagement and excitedly gather to take part in a Christmas card activity. Older children confidently write their own names, and younger children give meaning to their marks. Children share various tools and equipment as they cut, glue, paint and decorate. This supports children's vocabulary, turn-taking skills and fine motor control with their hands and fingers.
- Staff recognise that all children enjoy outdoor learning. Children have exciting

opportunities to develop their physical, creative and imaginative skills. For instance, children delight in exploring foam and foliage in the role-play kitchen area. Children are highly engaged as they use spray bottles to mix colours on hanging Christmas tree outlines. They demonstrate very good perseverance as they work out how to use the trigger and are very excited to see the paint spray onto the cloth.

- The pre-school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is experienced in her role. She is knowledgeable about the children who attend that require additional support. The SENCo works closely with each child's key person, family and agencies to ensure that they receive timely interventions and targeted support to meet their development needs.
- Children in receipt of funding make superb progress. Leaders and staff use funding effectively to give children opportunities that they may not ordinarily access. For example, some funding has been used to give children extra sessions, books and mathematical resources. Furthermore, it has provided staff with sensory processing training aimed at supporting children's development.
- Leaders ensure that staff have up-to-date knowledge and can access a comprehensive training plan. When staff express an interest in training, leaders act swiftly to arrange suitable courses. For example, staff recently completed autism awareness and emotional coaching training to develop their understanding of how to identify and support children's self-regulation and emotional well-being. As a result, staff are highly qualified and knowledgeable about how best to support children.
- Parents speak very positively about the pre-school. They value the community ethos that the pre-school provides. Parents particularly like the regular exchanges of information and the online app that shows photos and observations of what their children have been learning. One parent reports, 'All staff are kind, caring and full of positive energy, and there is a real sense of family at Mulberry between staff and the wider community.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a secure understanding of how they can keep children safe. They ensure that children thrive due to the provision of safe and high-quality care. All staff attend regular training to stay up to date on effective safeguarding arrangements. They demonstrate that they recognise the signs of abuse and know what to do if they are worried about a child. Leaders confidently liaise with relevant agencies to ensure that families get the support they need. When recruiting and monitoring staff, leaders follow a robust process. This helps to ensure that staff are suitable for their roles.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure the required procedures are followed and Ofsted is provided with the necessary information to carry out suitability checks on all members of the registered body.	05/01/2024

Setting details

Unique reference number	511344
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10305465
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	26
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	Mulberry Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP519587
Telephone number	02380 660354
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Mulberry Preschool registered in 2001. The pre-school opens five days a week, during term time only, with daily sessions from 8am to 4pm. The pre-school offers funded early education to children aged two, three and four years old. There are 12 staff who work directly with the children; of these, three hold early years teacher status and five hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 and level 5.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anneliese Fox-Jones

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The inspector observed activities in the main base rooms and garden. She talked to staff about the progress individual children are making and what they want the children to learn.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk across all areas of the pre-school to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation was carried out by the inspector and the manager. The inspector observed interactions between staff and the children and the impact these have on children's learning.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation, including evidence of paediatric first-aid training. The inspector had a discussion with leaders about the evaluation of the setting and plans for improvement.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children 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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