

# Inspection of Chalk Hill Pre-school and Toddler Group

St Mary's Church Hall, Church Street, Willingdon, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN20 9HT

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Inspection date:

14 December 2023

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## **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

Good

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is outstanding

The pre-school environment is alive with the sound of children laughing, talking and singing. Children are extremely enthusiastic and independent learners. They confidently explore the resources and activities that staff set out each day. Staff provide an exciting and carefully targeted range of activities and experiences that successfully capture and maintain children's imaginations. For example, through ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation, staff have identified scope to expose children to more written numbers. As two-year-old children eagerly scoop and dig in sand, they are delighted to discover the large, shiny gel numbers that staff have hidden. They become engrossed in the process of excavating their found treasures. Staff skilfully implement their intended learning as they introduce the idea that numbers have names, just like the children and their friends.

As they journey through the pre-school, children develop a wealth of knowledge and practical skills that prepare them exceptionally well for the next stages of their education. Older children very confidently use the skills that they have developed and honed over time to complete ambitious and complex tasks. For example, a card-making station is a hive of activity as children busily design, fold, cut, tape and glue with tremendous proficiency.

Staff have a thorough knowledge of each child's personalities and emotional needs. This enables them to help children to develop superb social skills sensitively and effectively. Children's behaviour is exceptional. They are generally much too engrossed in activities and busy having fun to display any unwanted behaviour. On the rare occasion when individual children need gentle reminders, these are given positively and with clear explanations.

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

- Leadership and management of the pre-school are exceptionally strong. The chair of the committee works closely with the manager and deputy. They are supported by staff who are highly motivated and highly skilled. Communication between the team is excellent. This results in care practices that are fully coordinated, consistent, and responsive to children's immediate needs.
- Teaching throughout the pre-school is of a tremendously high standard. All staff instinctively make the very best use of their interactions to extend children's learning. For example, children playing doctors offer to bandage a member of staff's 'injured' arm. As they declare that it is 'better now' and remove the dressing, the staff member encourages them to think about how long it would take for a real injury to heal. This small intervention leads to a wonderful discussion during which children reflect and build on their existing knowledge. Interactions of this quality are commonplace throughout the pre-school. Over

time, all children develop extremely impressive levels of general knowledge.

- Staff are fully successful in promoting children's emotional well-being. They observe closely to identify ways to offer individual children exactly the right support and encouragement. For example, staff identified that the youngest children love to dance. A member of staff has received training to provide music and movement sessions, which children thoroughly enjoy. This has significantly accelerated the settling-in process for new children, who have developed confidence and made friendships through these shared experiences.
- Staff skilfully enhance children's communication and language. They provide precisely targeted and coordinated support for those with speech delay. For example, staff recognise that some children are more confident singing than speaking. They use this knowledge to plan activities that enable all children to express themselves vocally. The varied and fascinating conversations that take place throughout the day inspire children to practise using their rapidly developing vocabularies. Staff provide increasing challenge to respond to children's interests. For example, they introduce words such as 'hypothesise' to curious children who have developed enough knowledge to understand their meaning.
- Managers and staff constantly seek out new experiences for the children. They make tremendous use of the facilities in the community to expand children's understanding of the world. For example, children visit the local school to become familiar with the environment and to take part in pond dipping. They also regularly visit the library and a forest school site. Staff plan a range of activities and experiences to help children develop positive attitudes to diversity. For example, they set up interest tables based on celebrations and events that reflect the cultures and beliefs of the children attending.
- Children benefit from observing the very friendly interactions between their parent and staff. The highly effective two-way flow of information means that children's precise and unique needs are fully understood. Staff provide resources to support parents in extending children's learning at home. For example, parents use the pre-school lending library to encourage children to develop a love of books.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They are trained to identify the potential signs that may indicate a child is at risk. They know the procedures to follow should a concern arise about the welfare of a child or if an allegation were to be made against a colleague.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	511229
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10304813
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	35
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Chalk Hill Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP903963
<b>Telephone number</b>	01323 504659
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 February 2018

## Information about this early years setting

Chalk Hill Pre-school and Toddler Group registered in 1985. It is situated on the outskirts of Eastbourne, East Sussex. The pre-school opens five days a week, during school term times. Opening times are between 9.15am until 2.15pm. There are seven members of staff, six of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Liz Caluori

## 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 showed the inspector all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during a range of activities.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation and discussed the quality of teaching.
- The inspector spoke with staff, parents and children during the inspection and took account of their views.
- A range of relevant documentation was reviewed.

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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