

Inspection of Hermitage Pre School Playgroup

Hermitage Village Hall, Pinewood Crescent, Hermitage, Berkshire RG18 9WL

Inspection date: 22 January 2024

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

The curriculum is ambitious for every child. Staff use their comprehensive knowledge and understanding of each child's development to help them make good progress. They work well as a team to meet children's individual care and learning needs, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Children are motivated to learn. For example, staff help children to use binoculars they make during creative activities to look for wildlife in the area surrounding the pre-school. Children eagerly identify and talk about things they see in the trees, such as birds. Staff explain the names of the birds and help them to match them to related pictures. Children are inspired to engage in imaginative play. They run around pretending to be birds, flap their arms and make loud bird noises.

Staff have clear expectations of children's behaviour. They use positive language that gains children's cooperation as well as strategies that successfully help children with SEND self-regulate their emotions. Children are happy, settled and feel safe.

Staff skilfully weave mathematical development into activities. For instance, children learn to count when they play with dinosaurs and sing songs about speckled frogs. When children say they find an activity easy, staff challenge them to recognise and match objects to higher numbers.

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

- The special educational needs coordinator has an extensive knowledge and understanding of her role and responsibilities. She works well with staff, children, parents and schools to support children with SEND. For example, she makes use of opportunities for external support and mentoring to help staff meet the needs of children with SEND.
- The manager and staff establish good partnership with parents. They develop open communication with parents that provides continuity in children's care and learning. There is a strong focus on supporting families in need. The manager regularly attends relevant meetings with local schools to ensure children's safety and provide support for families.
- Overall, staff provide an ambitious curriculum that helps children develop the skills they need for the future. Staff successfully work towards their aim of supporting children to be unique, resilient, have fun, feel loved and be their 'best selves'. However, they do not consistently provide children with a broad curriculum outdoors. Consequently, there are times when children do not always engage in purposeful play.
- Children behave well and develop good independence and a sense of responsibility. They learn to take it in turns to help staff prepare food to eat at

snack time. For instance, under close supervision, they use safe knives to cut up fresh fruit and cheese and work cooperatively with their friends to wash and dry the plates and cups.

- Staff support children's physical skills well. For example, they develop children's confidence to keep on trying and practise what they learn while using a low level slide. Staff extend and challenge this area of children's development, for instance, as they add additional resources, such as small rock climbing steps.
- Staff motivate children to explore different textures and develop pre-writing skills. For instance, children make marks using paint, marbles and sponges, enjoy drawing and attempt to write their name.
- Staff provide children with a language rich environment. For example, when children choose to play with small toy teddy bears in a dolls house, they encourage them to remember and re-tell stories, such as Goldilocks. Children listen attentively, use the bears to re-enact the story, join in with the parts they know and widen their vocabulary.
- The manager supports staff professional development. Several staff are currently completing training to gain or extend a childcare qualification. Staff have become more reflective and often share and implement ideas with their colleagues that improve outcomes for children. For example, they plan to provide mirrors for children to use to further develop their self-care.
- Staff have a caring approach. They skilfully adapt their communication and interaction to meet children's individual emotional needs and develop their social skills. They build close bonds with children and support them to interact with others and form friendships.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the implementation of the curriculum outdoors so that children are inspired to engage in purposeful play and make even better progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY491191
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10322448
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	20
Name of registered person	Hermitage Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905320
Telephone number	07444 421917
Date of previous inspection	17 December 2018

Information about this early years setting

Hermitage Pre School Playgroup registered in 1989. It is located in Hermitage, West Berkshire. It opens Monday and Friday from 9.15am to 1.15pm and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.15am to 3pm, during term-time. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff, of which four hold relevant qualifications to level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Cathy Greenwood

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 inspector observed how staff support children during indoor and outdoor activities and assessed the impact this has on their learning.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk and a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with parents, staff, the manager and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working at 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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