

Inspection of Merry Go Round Pre-School

Jubilee Road, Sandwich, Kent CT13 0QP

Inspection date: 6 February 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 manager of this family-oriented pre-school is passionate about providing children with a good start in life. Staff welcome children in with a guiding hand or a cuddle. Children come in happily and enjoy the many activities set out ready for them. Staff sit close by children and support them to play together and to feel settled. Staff are clear with their expectations of children's behaviour. Consequently, children behave well towards one another and know how to use the equipment safely.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of what children need to learn and why. They work hard to involve all children in learning by listening to their interests and including these in their planning. Staff understand that all children are unique and learn differently. Most staff work well to provide the right level of support to each child to meet their needs. Indoors, children enjoy practising their fine motor skills with diggers in the sand and tweezers in the water tray. They thoroughly enjoy using the garden space, where they smile and giggle as they swing, climb, ride and build.

Staff focus on supporting children to build the fundamental skills to support them in their next steps of learning. They use clear instructions and patiently allow children to try and practise new skills themselves. Children grow in independence and confidence and their social skills blossom.

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

- The manager has a good understanding of special educational needs and/or disabilities. She works effectively with other agencies to provide a consistency in the approach to support these children. Staff provide simple targets that children can achieve in interesting ways. Funding is well spent on resources to support children to feel settled, secure and able to meet their individual goals.
- The overall quality of teaching is good. Staff interactions are engaging and children enjoy them. However, on occasion, some staff are less confident in extending children's learning and moving them forward. The manager has not focused sharply enough on staff supervision sessions to help her quickly identify and provide support for these minor areas of weakness.
- Staff are clear and consistent with their expectations for rules and boundaries. If children are upset or have a dispute with each other, then staff are quick to intervene effectively. Staff explain and help children to understand how their own behaviour makes others feel. Children are quick to respond and return happily to playing together. Staff use praise well to encourage good behaviour and use resources such as timers to support children to share and take turns.
- Children are motivated to engage with the activities provided. Staff welcome

them into play and show them how to use different resources. Children show great perseverance when staff support them to build a marble run tower and count cubes. However, at times, transitions into group-time activities are not managed effectively. This means that not all children are ready to join in, and some remain playing on their own, missing out on the learning. Other transition times, such as lunchtime, can feel slightly chaotic. Not all children are ready to sit and eat together for a positive lunchtime experience.

- Staff use a key-person system well to promote children's well-being and help them to form secure attachments. Children often seek staff out to play with them or to provide them with comfort. Children show they feel safe and close to staff by stroking their faces and cuddling into them. Staff are often heard singing to children to support their feeling of security.
- The manager and her staff have built strong relationships with parents. Staff inform parents of what their child is doing and what they are working on. They provide extra resources and support to help children at home, such as books and visual cards for communication. Staff support parents of children with additional needs well and signpost them to the correct agencies. Parents comment on the friendly and 'family feel' to the setting.

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 arrangements for staff supervision, coaching and training to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching across staff
- review and improve transition periods so that children are consistently engaged in meaningful learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY287735
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10317283
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	26
Number of children on roll	37
Name of registered person	Merry Go Round Pre School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524619
Telephone number	01304614425
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

Merry Go Round Pre-School registered in 2004. The pre-school is run by a parent committee and is located in Sandwich, Kent. It is open Monday to Friday from 9.15am to 3.15pm, during term time only. There are six members of staff, five of whom hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3 or above. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Harvey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum.
- The inspector spoke with staff, interacted with children and viewed appropriate documentation.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents shared their views about the setting with the inspector.

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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