

Inspection of Waltham Preschool

Little Waltham Memorial Hall, 15 Brook Hill, Little Waltham, Chelmsford CM3 3LN

Inspection date: 24 April 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

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

The manager and her team provide children with a very calm, homely, and inviting environment in which to play. They take care to ensure this pack away pre-school offers children a welcoming space and exciting opportunities to learn. Children are greeted with genuine warmth and kindness by staff, who are happy to see them. Children demonstrate they are enthusiastic and eager to learn and settle quickly. They leave their parents with ease and become engrossed in activities offered. Staff plan an ambitious curriculum around the children's interests and developing needs, but also introduce seasonal activities to extend their learning about the world around them. Children positively respond to the request of staff. They listen with intent to instructions and staff speak respectfully to the children. Staff have high expectations for the children and children's behaviour is good.

An effective key-person system ensures the staff know the children well. They invest time in getting to know the children and their family well before they attend. Children have established trusting bonds with their key person. Children are supported to learn the skills required for independence and for transition to school, and successful future learning. Children are fully supported and positively encouraged to take care of their own personal needs. Staff are skilful in their interactions with children and provide running commentaries during play. Children's speech and language development is good, and they demonstrate that they are confident speakers and engage visitors to the pre-school in their games. Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the garden. They exercise and have fresh air as they play with their friends. Children excitedly plant sunflower seeds, negotiate space well as they ride bicycles and proudly make patterns and marks on the floor using chunky chinks.

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

- Parents speak highly about the friendly, welcoming staff and the good progress their children make while attending pre-school. It is very evident in parents' comments during the inspection that partnerships and communication are strong. Parents speak of how excited their children are to attend. They value the stay-and-play sessions offered and parents' evenings to discuss their children's progress. Many comment on the support and advice they receive and say the pre-school 'outshines' others they have visited.
- The quality of teaching is good. Children are offered a broad curriculum that covers all areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors. Staff plan according to children's individual interests and what they need to learn next when implementing activities. All children make good progress.
- Older children concentrate as they engage in life paintings of flowers, while others are fascinated as they mix paints and predict what colours they can

make. They negotiate together how to make boats and cars from large boxes and draw with precision and decorate their models. Children use sticky tape and scissors with skill. However, there are few opportunities for the younger children to express high levels of creativity and imagination through sensory activities or the use of resources that have no fixed purpose.

- Children's literacy skills are developing. Books are strongly promoted throughout the pre-school and activities. A cosy and inviting book area is well used and children's love for books is positively encouraged. Staff provide running commentaries during activities. They allow children ample time to respond to questions and broaden their vocabulary by introducing new words to the conversation.
- Children speech and language is fully supported. Effective systems in place ensure children, who speak English as an additional language or are bi-lingual, make good progress in both their home language, and in English.
- The manager is passionate about her role. Along with her team she is committed to provide the best outcomes for children. The team of staff speak highly of the manager, how happy they are in their role and how they feel valued and supported.
- Staff are encouraged in their own professional development. There is a culture of evaluating and sharing new ideas. For example, staff members share training attended with the team and support them when introducing new strategies, such as the introduction of Makaton. However, as younger children now attend all staff would benefit from refreshing their knowledge of how to promote learning for this age group.
- The pre-school is fully inclusive, and all children make good progress, including those who need additional support. The special educational needs coordinator is extremely knowledgeable and works closely with parents. Professional relationships have been established with outside agencies to ensure early intervention and support is in place to help children achieve their full potential.

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:

- help staff to extend opportunities for younger children to develop higher levels of imagination, exploration and creativity
- provide support and training opportunities for staff to ensure that they plan a broad range of activities for younger children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY544398
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10335382
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Little Waltham Preschool CIC
Registered person unique reference number	RP544397
Telephone number	07718278917
Date of previous inspection	13 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Waltham Preschool registered in 2017. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The manager holds qualified teacher status. The pre-school operates Monday and Tuesday from 8.30am until 12 midday, and Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8.30pm until 3pm, during term times only. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider has 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 pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what the team want the children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children at the inspection.
- Parents provided the inspector with oral and written feedback.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024