

Inspection of Medstead Pre-school and Nursery

Roedowns Road, Medstead, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5LG

Inspection date: 2 May 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

Children arrive confident and ready to start their day. They hang up their belongings and receive a warm welcome from staff. They quickly scan the environment before immersing themselves in one of the many play experiences on offer. Staff carefully plan a variety of purposeful activities that support children's individual learning. They know children's uniqueness well. Staff pride themselves in providing personalised care and learning for children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children's interests are valued and fully incorporated into their day. This supports children to sustain interest in their play, behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.

Children delight in their freedom to investigate the great outdoors. Older children regularly access their own forest school. Here, staff capture and extend children's curiosities of the natural world around them. For instance, they teach children what they need to build their own bug hotels following an interest in bugs. Staff extend these activities, using books to reinforce new information. Children listen intently as they learn about new animals such as 'velvet mice'. In addition, children have opportunities to assess their own risk. For example, staff teach children about hazards in the forest. Children retain and recall this information. They place poles with red flags on in the ground to make the hazard known. Learning opportunities such as these enable children to become curious and confident learners.

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

- The manager and her staff team thoughtfully plan and provide a broad and well-balanced curriculum, that incorporates all seven areas of learning. They accurately plan for children's next steps. These are personalised and focus on what staff know children can already do and what they want to teach children next and why. This enables all children, including those with SEND, to continually strengthen their knowledge and make good progress.
- Generally, staff promote good hygiene routines for children. Staff support children to wash their hands and encourage older children to wipe their own noses. However, on occasions, staff do not always follow these hygiene routines with the younger children. For instance, staff do not always recognise when young children need their noses wiping. This does not consistently embed good hygiene foundations that help limit the spread of germs.
- Staff teach children how to keep themselves safe through everyday routines. They give gentle reminders and clear explanation as to why they ask children not to do something. Staff supervise safe risks that are purposefully present during forest school sessions as well as during other play. They support children to respond appropriately and make good decisions. This helps children to learn to keep themselves and others safe. However, staff do not plan opportunities to

help children learn about online safety. This does not fully support their understanding of how to keep themselves safe when accessing the internet.

- Children's communication and language are a priority. Staff provide purposeful interactions that are age and stage appropriate. Younger children, as well as those who require additional support, hear clearly spoken words as staff effectively narrate their play. Staff use repetition to widen the children's vocabulary. Older children delight in meaningful back and forth conversations, which are positively extended by staff. Furthermore, staff introduce new words such as 'shallow' and 'overflow', explaining their meanings. This supports all children to become confident communicators as they make connections in their learning.
- Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. They purposefully role model expected behaviours. This contributes positively to children's good behaviour, as they play collaboratively and are kind to their friends. Children who at times struggle to understand their own emotions, are consistently supported by staff. This helps all children to begin to understand their own and each other's feelings.
- Staff value the relationships they have with children. As such, children regularly invite them to join their play and seek them out for support. Staff are responsive which supports children to feel listened to and valued.
- All staff recognise the importance of developing positive relationships with families. They keep parents well informed regarding their children's ongoing progress. Parents speak warmly of the care and learning their children receive. Parents particularly value the range of activities on offer, especially the opportunities older children have to attend the onsite forest school.

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:

- support staff to extend their awareness of how to promote good hygiene and develop young children's self-care skills
- enhance the curriculum to provide opportunities to support children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.

Setting details

Unique reference number	109996
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10343231
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	38
Number of children on roll	51
Name of registered person	Medstead Pre-school and Nursery Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP902025
Telephone number	01420 561028
Date of previous inspection	16 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

Medstead Pre-school and Nursery registered in 1992. It operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of Medstead Primary School, near Alton in Hampshire. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday from 8.05am to 3.05pm, term time only. They employ 12 staff, 11 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Natalie Moir

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 provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager, and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a mealtime routine.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the interactions between the staff and children.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school 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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