

Inspection of Blean Pre-School

Blean Village Hall, School Lane, Blean, CANTERBURY, Kent CT2 9JA

Inspection date: 25 June 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 at the pre-school with great enthusiasm, eager and confident to explore the exciting activities prepared by the highly skilled and competent staff, both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy a fully embedded routine that enhances their independence. For instance, on arrival, children take off their shoes and put on indoor slippers, either independently or with support from staff. The routine is so well established that children know either to change into their shoes or seek support from an adult when going outdoors.

All children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a well-sequenced curriculum. Staff consider the children's needs and interests when planning activities. This enables children to make good progress. For example, children spend time exploring and talking about snails they find in the garden. Staff extend this interest by incorporating activities that feature the different components of snails into various areas in the pre-school. Children have opportunities to create snail-related drawings and engage in mark-making activities throughout the pre-school. They make imaginary spiral shapes in the space and use shaving foam, water and brushes to make marks. These activities enhance children's engagement and support their early writing skills.

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

- Leaders and staff have an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum that considers the needs and interests of the children. They provide a wide range of activities that offer children opportunities to learn and develop. For instance, children spend extended periods exploring an activity sorting coloured balls in a tray. They use grabbers to pick up the coloured balls and drop them into matching bowls. This activity supports colour recognition and enhances children's fine motor skills.
- Staff provide children with opportunities to think critically and develop their problem-solving skills. For instance, while children transport coloured balls into matching coloured bowls, staff ask questions to support and extend their learning. They encourage children to count how many balls they have and to work out if they can fit any more in.
- Staff consistently create awareness of how children can keep themselves safe both in and beyond the pre-school. Children confidently respond that they 'need the hat on' when staff ask them what they need to put on when the weather is very hot. This ensures that children can safely access various activities, indoors and outdoors, throughout the day.
- Staff use various opportunities to extend children's learning. For instance, they offer suggestions to children when they are making a design with blocks, introducing words such as a 'beak'. However, at times, staff do not recognise

opportunities to encourage two-way conversations and extend children's language skills further.

- Children are mostly well engaged. They settle well into the pre-school. They form secure bonds with their key persons and other staff. Children enjoy activities such as reading sessions to help prepare them for going to school. Most children sit for extended periods while listening to books being read in an engaging manner by adults. However, staff do not always adapt these sessions successfully to meet individual needs and encourage full engagement from all children. On occasion, some children lose interest and so do not benefit from the intended learning.
- Staff are skilful at managing children's behaviour, using every opportunity to model respect for each other and the natural world. They talk to the children about being kind to their friends and respecting what they find in the garden, such as snails, ants and spiders. This fosters a caring culture among all the children.
- All parents speak highly of the skill of the staff at the pre-school. Parents express the support staff give them, such as adapting settling-in sessions to meet the unique needs of children and their parents. This supports easier transitions for children, both new starters and pre-school leavers.
- Leaders work closely with other professionals. For example, they liaise with primary schools to arrange settling sessions for children, when necessary. This gives all children, including children with SEND, a smooth and successful transition.

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 staff's skills and understanding of when and how to further extend children's communication skills
- review and adapt the organisation of group sessions to meet children's individual needs and encourage full engagement from all children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127023
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10351027
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	30
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Blean Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP519603
Telephone number	07944 290 301
Date of previous inspection	28 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

Blean Pre-School is managed by a parents' committee and has been operating since 1994 in Blean village hall, near Canterbury. The pre-school is open during term time only. Sessions run from 9.10am to 12.15pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 9.10am to 1.30pm on Tuesday and Thursday. There are five members of staff, four of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 3 and above. Of these, one member of staff holds early years professional status and another has qualified teacher status. The pre-school provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Toyin Aina

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed 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.

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