

Inspection of Caterpillars Pre-School

Calmore Infant School, Calmore Drive, Southampton, Hampshire SO40 2ZZ

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 are warmly welcomed into the pre-school by staff who recognise and value their uniqueness. Staff get to know children well. They build strong, trusting bonds to help children feel safe and secure. Staff place a strong focus on children's personal, social and emotional development. They understand the importance this has for children, from the outset. Children learn how to recognise and respect the differing needs of their peers. Where children need additional help with sharing and turn-taking, staff sensitively offer support. They praise children as they listen to their friends and share turns with favourite toys.

Staff have high expectations for all children. They plan and create play experiences which motivate children to learn. For instance, staff ignite children's curiosity to create colours as they excitedly notice what happens as they mix red and blue powder paints. Children develop good mathematical skills. Staff use daily activities to embed this area of learning well. For instance, older children count how many of their friends are in the line as they return from playing outdoors. Younger children confidently recognise shapes. For example, they identify in their drawings how 'this is only half rectangle' as they develop good knowledge of some mathematical concepts. All children, including those in receipt of additional funding and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress from their starting points.

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

- The manager is a strong leader. She works very closely with her staff team to provide children with a good start to their early education. Staff say that they enjoy working at the pre-school. They feel respected and valued in their roles and share the same vision in providing children with the very best outcomes. Staff benefit from regular coaching, supervision and support. The manager recognises the value of providing training to continue to develop staff knowledge and skills. For instance, staff have recently completed training which helps them to successfully support children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff plan and provide a range of learning experiences, across all areas of the curriculum, to support children's good progress. For instance, younger children learn to thread ribbons, and post wooden shapes onto pegs, as they gain good hand-eye coordination skills. However, during times when children choose their own play, some staff do not explore how they can use these experiences to continue to focus and challenge children's learning even further.
- Children develop good independence skills, as they take pride in being able to complete some age-appropriate routines for themselves. For instance, children help to tidy away insect hunting pots as they get ready to return indoors for lunch. Staff help older children to learn how to use cutlery to cut foods at

lunchtime. Younger children learn how to unwrap sandwiches and to tidy away when they have finished eating. Staff recognise the value these skills have for children in readiness for their transition to school.

- Staff work closely with other agencies involved in children's care. Regular exchanges of information between other professionals ensure that where children need extra support this is gained. Staff strive to ensure that all children receive the additional help they need to help them catch up where children start behind. This is particularly effective for children's speaking skills. For instance, additional funding has been used to seek support from private speech therapists. This helps staff to know and follow individual learning programmes to help children catch up in their communication skills.
- Children develop a positive attitude to learning. They concentrate well in activities that interest them and confidently share their thoughts and ideas. For instance, as younger children draw rainbows, they talk about what colours they might need. They write some letters of their names and proudly share their artwork with staff.
- Parents speak very positively about the pre-school. They say that children are well supported by the caring staff. Parents are informed of children's progress, as staff provide parents with information about the activities that children have enjoyed and the progress that they are making. However, staff do not consistently share learning ideas with parents and carers to enable them to fully support learning at home.

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 all staff to extend and challenge children's learning as they join them at activities
- build on the already good partnerships with parents to share more detailed information about children's learning at pre-school and help them to continue and extend at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	110465
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10351033
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	96
Name of registered person	Caterpillars Pre-School at Calmore Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP911092
Telephone number	02380864228
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

Caterpillars Pre-School registered in 1999. It operates from within Calmore Infants School in Totton, Southampton. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3.15pm, term time only. The pre-school provides funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 17 members of staff, of whom 12 hold qualifications at level 2 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Tara Naylor

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 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 spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Parents and carers shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at 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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