

Inspection of Cold Norton Pre-school

Village Hall, Cherry Blossom Lane, Cold Norton, Chelmsford CM3 6JQ

Inspection date: 6 November 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children and their families are greeted with genuine warmth and kindness by the enthusiastic staff, who are happy to see them. They arrive at pre-school and are warmly welcomed into a fun play environment. Children demonstrate that they are keen and eager to explore the planned activities provided and leave their parents with ease. The team of staff provide children with a variety of exciting activities that cover all seven areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors. The curriculum is planned around observations and what children need to learn next. Staff plan in the moment and follow children's interests, which influences the activities provided. This ensures that children engage in learning and prompts their curiosity to explore. There is a strong emphasis on supporting children to develop the skills they need to be independent learners.

The effective key-person approach ensures that children form secure attachments and settle well. Staff are positive role models to the children, which supports them to develop kindness and empathy. The team has high expectations and praises children for making positive choices, such as when they play well together and help to tidy. Children understand the pre-school core values that underpin the curriculum, and their behaviour is good. Children demonstrate that they are confident communicators. They happily engage in conversation with visitors to the setting. They explain with pride about their colourful paintings and confidently ask for help as they make good attempts to store their work on drying racks.

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

- Children enjoy fresh air and exercise outdoors. They relish time in the garden and show enthusiasm as they participate in planned walks in the local environment. Staff encourage them to collect leaves for their artwork and they discuss the colours and shapes of leaves that they find. Staff respond to children's fascination when they find cobwebs and toadstools and engage them in meaningful conversations.
- The quality of teaching is good. Children are offered a broad curriculum that covers all areas of learning. Staff plan according to children's individual interests and what they need to learn next, promoting the skills they need to be independent learners. However, the curriculum is not consistently challenging and, sometimes, the most able children are unable to build on what they already know and extend their knowledge to an even higher level.
- Children learn the importance of staying safe and healthy through daily routines. For example, they are gently reminded about the 'snuffle station' where they access tissues to wipe their noses. They tell staff they need to wash their hands afterwards and throw the tissues in the bin. They enjoy healthy snacks, and stringent procedures are in place ensure children's allergies and dietary needs

are supported.

- The pre-school is fully inclusive and all children make good progress, including those who require additional support. Professional relationships have been established with outside agencies to ensure continuity of care and early intervention. Good support is in place to help children achieve their full potential.
- Staff share relevant daily information with parents and have established friendly but professional relationships with them. They welcome and positively encourage input from parents into the children's learning and encourage them to share what they know.
- Parents speak highly of their children's time at pre-school, commenting that they are eager to attend, settle quickly and make good progress. Many comment on how welcoming the staff are, and that the pre-school is 'amazing'. Parents say they feel reassured that their children are in safe hands and appreciate the updates and good opportunities for communication.
- Staff are encouraged and supported in their own professional development. The management team promotes a culture of evaluating and sharing new ideas and knowledge learned from training opportunities to improve outcomes for children.
- Overall, there is a calm and happy atmosphere throughout the morning, and children are engaged in their play. However, the organisation of snack and preparation for playing outdoors means staff are sometimes busy with other tasks at these times. Therefore, they are not able to focus on supporting the children for a smooth transition to play in the garden or when they choose to have snack.

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:

- plan more opportunities in the curriculum to challenge children's thinking to consistently build on what they already know and can do
- improve the organisation of transition times, such as snack time and preparation for outdoor play, to ensure that all children are fully engaged at these times.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2647175
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10332496
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	35
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Cold Norton Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2647174
Telephone number	01621828845
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2024

Information about this early years setting

Cold Norton Pre-school registered in 2021 and is situated in Cold Norton, Essex. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only, from 8am until 4pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what it is that the team want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with the staff team during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the pre-school.
- Parents provided the inspector with oral and written feedback.

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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