

Inspection of Pirton Pre-School

High Street, Pirton, Hitchin SG5 3PS

Inspection date: 18 June 2025

| Overall effectiveness | Outstanding |
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| The quality of education | Outstanding |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children delight at exploring the wealth of exciting learning experiences in this friendly pre-school. They flourish in the nurturing care of the attentive team of staff who plan interesting experiences each day that support the needs and interests of children attending. A highly effective key-person system ensures children form close attachments to staff who are highly responsive to their individual needs. These close relationships are particularly evident when supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Children's behaviour is exceptional with all children demonstrating emotional fluency and deep empathy for others. They independently organise group games, creating their own boundaries and rules. Staff facilitate this well through daily group discussions and providing props such as timers to monitor the time spent exploring popular activities. They use innovative ways to encourage children to make sense of their emotions. For example, children create erupting volcanoes when exploring how anger can make them feel.

Children are incredibly curious and relish challenges in their play. Staff embrace this as opportunities to promote children's development further. Children develop skills such as perseverance and resilience when faced with tricky situations. Staff provide support and advice but encourage children to follow their own ideas and overcome obstacles independently.

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

- Parent partnerships are strong. Families praise leaders and staff for their exceptional knowledge of children and acknowledge how this promotes their learning and supports their well-being. They comment on the home learning packs that children receive, providing targeted support for their individual needs. Parents appreciate how this enables them to engage deeply in their children's learning.
- Leaders construct a well-considered curriculum that supports children's long-term learning and progression exceptionally well. This is shared superbly with staff who consistently deliver precise teaching that meets the needs of all children. Every morning, leaders and staff tour the setting. They hold discussions around how they can enhance each activity and learning opportunity to meet the specific needs of each individual child who is due to attend.
- Children are confident communicators who delight at discussing their thoughts and ideas with their friends in group discussions and during sociable meal and snack times throughout the day. Staff take every opportunity to support children's communication through language-rich interactions and consistent role modelling of new and increasingly complex vocabulary. For example, when

exploring pictures of animals, staff offer alternative, more sophisticated vocabulary for children's descriptions.

- Leaders and staff strive to enhance practice and create an exceptional learning environment for all children. They continuously reflect on children's experiences to ensure all aspects of the pre-school environment promotes the precise needs of the current cohort of children. For example, recent changes to lunchtime routines mean that children's play and learning is not interrupted. Staff observe how this has reduced children's frustration, and acknowledge the positive impact this has on their behaviour.
- Children are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage of learning. Leaders and staff implement excellent strategies such as online and face-to face tours of their new environments. They provide opportunities for children to familiarise themselves with uniforms and practise putting them on. Specific areas of the pre-school are transformed into a classroom environment where children explore their new routines. As a result, children are extremely confident and excited about their progression to school.
- Leaders place exceptional focus on supporting staff practice and development. Induction processes are robust and provide staff with a strong foundation and understanding of the pre-school ethos. Leaders build on this with fortnightly meetings where staff reflect on practice and their own well-being. Methods of ongoing coaching and mentoring are very strong, with leaders sharing their expertise and enthusiasm. As a result, staff are motivated, feel valued, and morale is high within the team.
- Partnerships with other professionals are strong and supportive. Leaders work closely with other early years providers to share best practice. These close relationships are extended to the children who attend by sharing their different experiences with one another. For example, children delight at helping their friends at a neighbouring pre-school by looking after their setting pet.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY422664 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10398753 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Sessional day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 32 |
| Number of children on roll | 42 |
| Name of registered person | Pirton Pre-School |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP902884 |
| Telephone number | 01462 711817 |
| Date of previous inspection | 7 November 2019 |

Information about this early years setting

Pirton Pre-School re-registered in 2011. It's a committee-run preschool. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including one with a level 5 qualification. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday, and from midday until 3pm, or 9am to 3pm. The pre-school offers government-funded care for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- The inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to several during the inspection and reviewing feedback letters.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff and committee members.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and manager completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the experiences of several children.

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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