

Inspection of The Park preschool

St. Andrews C of E School, Morton Way, HALSTEAD, Essex CO9 2BH

Inspection date: 8 November 2022

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

All children thrive within this inspirational pre-school. They are welcomed by an exceptionally motivated and nurturing staff team. Children form close and trusting bonds with staff. Staff know the children extremely well and have a detailed knowledge of what children are interested in and what they need to achieve next. Children self-register, identifying their names under a picture to pick their own pegs. Staff then further challenge the children to begin to read their names on the lunch box trolley, in preparation for their next stage of learning. Children show sustained concentration in the outdoor kitchen as they use a wealth of natural materials to make dinner and act out real-life scenarios. They learn how to solve problems when things do not go according to their plan. For example, children attempt to place baking trays with their creations in an oven and realise they do not fit in. They find the right-sized dish and transfer their mud cakes to a perfectly fitting bowl.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Children understand the pre-school rules and follow them superbly. For instance, they stand still quietly and listen to the staff when they ring a bell to explain what is happening next. As a result, children understand transitions in the daily routine of the pre-school. Children show high levels of respect for each other and for staff. For example, they negotiate sharing a balance bicycle and wait for their friends to finish riding, and they thank each other while swapping over.

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

- Parents speak highly of the staff and managers. They comment that their children thoroughly enjoy attending the pre-school and make extremely good progress. Parents say that staff and managers are always available for regular consultations and endeavour to make any necessary changes to meet their children's individual needs.
- Staff speak with parents and carers and carefully observe children's abilities and interests from their first day. This enables them to precisely identify and build on what each child knows and can do. The setting provides online journals for parents to look at their children's achievements and to share the learning that takes place at home.
- Managers support staff superbly to create a well-skilled and confident team, who clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. In addition, they give high priority to supporting staff's professional development continuously, and this contributes to excellent outcomes for children. Staff say they enjoy working at the pre-school and that their well-being is a high priority.
- Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, thrive in all aspects of their development. Staff liaise very closely with parents and

other professionals to ensure that each child receives the support they need. Managers use additional funding to target specific areas of development for children and reduce any gaps in their learning.

- The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. There is a very strong emphasis by managers and staff on providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The impact of this on what children know, understand, remember and can do is highly effective. Children demonstrate high levels of enjoyment and engagement in the interesting opportunities created for them.
- Staff skilfully support children in child-initiated play and learning. For example, children decide to set up a picnic in the room. Staff lay out a blanket on the floor and children begin to set it up with fresh fruit and vegetables. Children talk about juice being made of oranges and lemons, and staff skilfully extends this to encourage children to cut and squeeze fruit, to add to their water bottles. Children understand the expectations and boundaries when working with tools to help keep them safe.
- Staff consistently engage in highly effective interactions that build on children's speech and language skills. Children hear and use new vocabulary. Staff skilfully and sensitively correct misunderstandings, for example, when children think a parsnip is a carrot. Staff add this new word to the discussion, and children test it out by repeating and demonstrating it to the rest of the group.
- Staff place great emphasis on early reading and promote the enjoyment of books, indoors and outdoors. They provide high-quality reading materials for children to explore, and they constantly read with children, using the right tone of voice, pace, and animation.
- Children learn about the local community as staff take them regularly to visit residents in the nearby care home. Together, they sing songs and do various fun activities, such as art and craft. The residents have built positive relationships with the pre-school and visit children in return.
- Children thoroughly enjoy learning in the stimulating and adventurous pre-school garden. Staff support them to develop excellent physical skills. Children use their large muscles to pedal, as they manoeuvre over different surfaces on balance bicycles, and use their small-muscle skills for pegging washing onto the line.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers have a very secure knowledge of safeguarding and child protection. All staff have completed safeguarding training. They clearly understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child in their care, or a colleague. Staff know the indicators of abuse, including any concerns associated with female genital mutilation or radicalisation. Staff are alert to any possible signs or behaviours that may suggest children are worried or upset. The provider carries out a thorough recruitment induction and monitoring programme to ensure staff are suitable for the role.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY446086
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10233818
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	30
Number of children on roll	65
Name of registered person	The Park Preschool (Halstead) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP907356
Telephone number	07580385311
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Park preschool registered in 2012. The pre-school employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6 and eight hold qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, during school term times. Sessions are from 9am to 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Marta Kellouche

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 managers and the inspector completed a learning walk together, inside and outside, and discussed their curriculum and what it is that they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector about their play and learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with one of the managers and, together, they evaluated this.
- The inspector spoke with the managers, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The required documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including paediatric first-aid certificates and evidence of staff-suitability checks.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of what was said.

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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