

Metheringham Pre-School

Unique reference number (URN): 253567

Address: The Village Hall, Fen Road, Metheringham, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN4 3AA

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 07/12/1992

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Metheringham Preschool Committee

Inspection report: 24 November 2025

Exceptional

Strong standard

Expected standard

Needs attention



Urgent improvement



Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive culture around safeguarding. This puts children at significant risk of harm.

Despite completing relevant training, staff fail to recognise when children may be at risk of harm or neglect. They lack professional curiosity and do not consider the reasons why children or parents act in a certain way. Staff know how to refer concerns on to the relevant safeguarding agencies, but because they do not assess children's safety adequately, referrals to relevant agencies are not always made.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Most children arrive at the setting with an expected level of development. However, for children who are facing barriers in their learning and development, staff are not doing enough to ensure they are making appropriate progress at home as well as at the setting, for example around their self-care abilities such as toilet training. Furthermore, leaders fail to challenge information that they do not agree with around children's development. This potentially means that some children are not achieving at the same rate as their peers.

Children make expected progress in their communication and language development. They engage in back-and-forth conversations with staff, answer questions using their growing bank of new words, and use their language skills independently when interacting with their peers. Parents comment that their children's speech is developing well.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Needs attention 

Staff have not established enough structure and order to some routine times, such as when they ask children to tidy away. During these times, some children do not follow instructions and show a lack of engagement in the tasks that staff assign them. This leads to incidents of poor behaviour, which sometimes go unnoticed by staff, as they are busy attending to other matters.

Leaders and staff promote the importance of attendance at the setting through discussions with parents. This supports children to regularly access and benefit from the provision. Children show they feel safe in their environment. They form positive attachments with staff

that support their emotional wellbeing. Staff are positive role models in their respectful interactions with children and one another. They talk regularly with the children during play times and reinforce social rules, such as to share. This helps children to understand the expectations and results in children playing harmoniously together.

Staff use some purposeful age-appropriate strategies to help children learn how to manage their feelings and interactions with one another. For example, staff provide egg timers to help children with turn-taking. Children work together and talk to each other about whose turn it is next.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Leaders do not make sure that all staff make an adequate assessment of their key children's learning and development. In some cases, staff do not gather enough information from parents and other settings that children have previously attended, to determine the stage of children's learning and development when they first start. Where assessments are made, staff do not consistently use this information to adapt the curriculum so that all children have the same opportunity to make progress.

While the setting's curriculum is designed to provide children with access to learn across all areas of learning, leaders and staff are unsure about why they provide some activities, such as a 'curiosity corner'. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the curriculum is not ambitious enough. Staff plan activities around children's current interests, such as exploring snow. They consider how they can support children to develop key skills. For instance, children develop their physical skills as they manipulate sticky foam into a variety of shapes. Staff weave in teaching that extends children's understanding of numbers and size.

The setting supports children's personal, social and emotional development. It helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe. For instance, staff provide children with gentle reminders on how to keep themselves safe when riding toy cars. Children's communication and language are adequately supported through the setting's curriculum. Staff encourage conversations by asking children open-ended questions.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders and staff do not collect enough information about children when they start at the setting, including those who are previously known to social care, to adequately assess their learning and care needs. This means that staff lack important information that they need to make sure all children make progress in all aspects of their learning and development.

During their time at the setting, staff identify when children start to show gaps in their learning and development, and leaders put some targeted support in place. Staff work with some parents to involve specialist services so that children who may have barriers to learning receive the support they need, but this is not sufficiently consistent.

Staff make use of additional funding to provide children with resources that support their learning or for one-to-one time with staff. For example, they have purchased sensory toys to support children's emotional wellbeing and attention skills.

Urgent improvement ●

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Urgent improvement ●

Leaders fail to gather sufficient information on children to ensure that all their individual care needs are met and well supported. They do not liaise with services that have previously been involved in children's lives, nor do they routinely gather information about children's learning and development from settings that they have previously attended. Leaders do not ensure effective lines of communication are in place with parents, to make sure that staff hold relevant and up-to-date information about children. This includes information about some vulnerable children's medical needs and the administration of medication.

The care practices that staff implement support children's good health. For example, children understand they need to wash their hands before eating. Staff promote children's understanding of leading healthy lifestyles. They do this by providing children with frequent opportunities to take part in physical activities. For example, children enjoy shaking the parachute up and down. Staff build warm and nurturing relationships with children through one-to-one activities, such as sharing a book together. This helps children to develop a secure sense of wellbeing. Staff have implemented strategies such as a 'breathing box' to provide children with time to be calm when they feel overwhelmed. This helps children to recognise and better manage their emotions.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement ●

Leaders have failed to ensure the requirements of the early years foundation stage are met. Weaknesses in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities put some children at risk. Despite carrying out regular supervisions with staff, leaders' oversight of practice is not effective in ensuring staff understand their role within the setting.

Staff have opportunities to progress their ongoing professional development. They report that they feel their wellbeing is supported well by the leadership team. Regular staff meetings allow staff the time to discuss ideas and developments for the setting. Leaders are considerate about how any additional funding is used to support children who have barriers to learning. For example, funding has been used to purchase resources such as stress balls 'feelings stones', which has supported children to regulate and talk about their emotions.

Leaders have implemented changes since the last inspection that include developing the learning environment for children to self-select and make more choices in their play. This has resulted in children engaging in play for longer periods and extending their play ideas independently. Leaders and staff have plans for the future that include enhancing the outdoor provision.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children's health and safety are not assured. Leaders and staff do not fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. They do not know enough about the children in their care to be able to identify potential safeguarding concerns and meet children's individual care and learning needs. Staff administer medication to children without knowing this is specifically prescribed and understanding medical professionals' guidance around this. Staff's assessment of children is not consistent, and some children play without staff having an exact idea about what children should learn next. They do not always know the purpose of activities that are provided.

Children arrive at the setting and are greeted warmly by staff. They settle quickly and start to explore the activities that are available to them. Children benefit from playing outside regularly. They giggle with their friends as they develop their physical skills while they transport bricks in wheelbarrows and build towers. Staff deployment is effective and contributes to children's safety in the setting. Children attend the setting routinely and regularly. Staff know what children are interested in and use this information to provide experiences that children enjoy. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from adapted teaching at times.

Staff are positive role models and develop secure relationships with children. They expect children to behave well, but they do not always notice when children's behaviour starts to deteriorate. This is notable at times of transition where children do not always follow instructions, such as to put away what they are playing with. Children sometimes seek support from staff to resolve minor conflicts with their friends.

Next steps

To meet the requirements of the Early years foundation stage the provider must take the following actions by the assigned date:

Action	Completion Date
ensure that concerns about children's safety and welfare are swiftly identified and referred to the local authority children's social care team	27/02/2026

Action	Completion Date
use assessment to ensure children's learning needs are being met when planning the curriculum and to involve specialist support services where needed	27/02/2026
ensure an effective key-person system is in place, whereby clear lines of communication are maintained with parents in order to obtain important information about children's lives outside of the setting	27/02/2026
ensure robust systems are in place to obtain information about a child's need for medication	27/02/2026

About this inspection

The inspectors spoke with leaders and practitioners during the inspection.

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.

A quality assurance visit by an additional inspector was carried out at this inspection.

Inspector:

Emma Curry

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 253567

Address:

The Village Hall
Fen Road, Metherringham
Lincoln
Lincolnshire
LN4 3AA

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 07/12/1992

Registered person: Metherringham Preschool Committee

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday : 09:00 - 15:00

Local authority: Lincolnshire

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 24 November 2025

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

2 to 4

Total number of places

40

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard 

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention 

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



