

Inspection of Marden Pre-school

Marden Primary Academy, Marden, Hereford HR1 3EW

Inspection date: 20 March 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Caring staff support children effectively to be ready for the move from home to the welcoming pre-school. They invite parents and children to attend settling-in sessions, which they tailor to meet their individual needs. This helps children to become familiar with their surroundings and build secure relationships with staff from the very start of their attendance. Children arrive happy, leave their parents and/or carers with ease and are eager to engage in their chosen play. Staff greet children with a smile as they arrive and offer a reassuring cuddle if needed.

Each morning, staff take children out for walks into their community. This helps them to be physically active and learn about the world around them. Staff support children's communication and language skills well. They encourage them to listen to the sounds they hear, such as the birds singing. Staff engage children in thoughtful conversations and ask them to recall past learning experiences. Children are eager to talk about the lambs they recently saw. Staff use mathematical language, such as the words 'big' and 'small', to describe the lambs. They help children learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they remind them to hold hands and to stop, look and listen as they cross the quiet lane back to the pre-school.

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

- Children make good progress in their learning because staff have a good understanding of child development. They provide an ambitious curriculum inspired by children's interests. Although staff make regular assessments of what children know and can do and use this information to plan for their future learning, there are times when staff do not consider how to provide the older and most able children with resources and experiences that help to challenge their thinking and extend their learning further.
- Staff organise the learning environment generally well. They provide structure to the day and support children to independently access a wide range of toys and resources. That said, at times, children's play and learning are interrupted as they are left waiting for prolonged periods of time. Staff do not always organise themselves or the resources well enough to manage everyday routines effectively.
- The enthusiastic and experienced manager is dedicated to her role. She strives to deliver high-quality care and education to all children. The manager works alongside her staff team on a daily basis. This helps her to monitor the quality of the provision and identify staff's training needs and areas for further development. Staff morale is high. They feel very well supported in their roles and comment on the high levels of support they receive from the manager for their well-being.

- Children display positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and know what staff expect from them. Staff model good manners and treat children with kindness and respect. They recently attended behaviour management training to further their knowledge. This has resulted in all staff using a more consistent approach to managing children's behaviour.
- All children develop a love of books because staff read to them throughout the day. They provide children with books to read at home with their parents. Young children sit comfortably on a staff member's lap. They turn the pages to look at pictures. Staff use single words and associative sounds to support children's emerging speech.
- Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They work with parents and other professionals to share information and provide targeted support to help children with SEND make the best possible progress. Any additional funding the pre-school receives is used to support children's individual needs, such as purchasing additional resources or extra staffing to allow even more focused support.
- Staff keep parents updated on children's progress in a range of ways. For example, they speak to them at the beginning and end of the day, add photos and comments to children's online learning records and hold regular face-to-face meetings with them. Parents are extremely happy with the service the pre-school provides. They cannot praise the manager and her staff team enough. Parents value the welcoming and safe environment and the high-quality care and education their children receive. They comment on staff's great communication and state 'it is an excellent setting,' and 'the manager and staff go above and beyond'.

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:

- provide the older and most able children with even more experiences that challenge their thinking and further extend their learning
- strengthen the organisation of everyday routines and reduce the time children spend waiting, to minimise disruptions to their play and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2645138
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10332929
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	0 to 9
Total number of places	80
Number of children on roll	67
Name of registered person	Marden Pre-school CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2645135
Telephone number	01432880034
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Marden Pre-school registered in 2021. It operates at the Marden Primary Academy in Herefordshire. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3. The manager holds early years professional status. The pre-school operates Monday to Thursday from 8am until 5.15pm, and on Friday from 8am until 4.30pm, term time only. It offers a holiday club during school holidays. The club's opening hours are from 8am until 5.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tina Smith

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 inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- 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.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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