

Inspection of Mulberry Court Pre School

Wymering Methodist Church, Sixth Avenue, PORTSMOUTH PO6 3PD

Inspection date: 17 September 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

Adults are attentive to children's moods and feelings as soon as they arrive. They encourage children to join their peers inside with smiles and warm words. Staff reassure and stay close to younger children who need more support to settle. This helps all children feel safe and secure and have a positive start to their day.

Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They are quick to remind children of the rules, for instance to share toys and not to run. They talk to children with kindness and respect. Staff give fun instructions to get children's attention before an activity. Children listen to adults and their behaviour is good.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enjoy their time at this inclusive setting. This is partly due to how staff make activities accessible. For instance, adults model early writing skills by drawing spirals and lines on a chalkboard. They engage less confident children by making this a fun game, giving them the chalkboard rubber to delete the lines. This helps children with SEND develop their confidence and an interest in mark making.

Leaders have created a curriculum to help children gain independence as they grow. For instance, very young children learn skills to help them say goodbye to their parents at drop-off. Older children learn how to play cooperatively with their peers. Pre-school children are given the tools they need to manage the transition to school. This helps children of all ages to be well prepared for the next stage in their development.

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

- The curriculum is designed to follow children's interests. Adults and children talk to each other with high levels of curiosity. Children have the confidence to ask adults about unfamiliar resources, such as pastry brushes and rolling pins. Adults ask children to examine trays full of hidden animals. They encourage children to share their experiences of pumpkin carving, trips to the dentist and time with their pets. This helps children to practise new words in context, especially when sharing their experiences with their peers.
- Staff support children to look closer at things in their environment. Outside, adults guide children to notice a small snail and children excitedly gather round. Staff ask children to compare the snail with their pet snail inside. Later, children carefully sketch pictures of their snail. They proudly say, 'I'm making a drawing!' Staff teach children how to gently touch the snail's shell and ask them questions about what it feels like. This helps children to look at objects in greater detail, while teaching them to care and have respect for animals.
- Staff listen intently to what children say about their time at home. Staff then

adapt activities to focus on children's outside interests. For instance, staff have bought chapati pans, bakery items and dentistry resources for the role-play area. This enriches children's imaginative play and encourages conversations about their diverse family lives.

- Adults provide children with many opportunities to practise their number and counting skills. For instance, staff ask children to count objects, order numbers, or count on from a given number. However, consistent modelling of the vocabulary of weight, capacity, shape and measure is not as well embedded. As a result, children do not always have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of these concepts during their play.
- There are strong partnerships with specialist teams to support children with SEND. Staff readily accept advice and recommendations from visiting professionals. For example, staff have arranged for the use of specialist resources to help children communicate and better access activities. This has contributed to children with SEND making good progress from their starting points, especially in their language, communication and confidence.
- Leaders and staff have worked hard to help children learn about how to stay healthy. Staff share information with parents about the importance of nutrition. However, leaders recognise there is more work to do in this area to make sure children learn consistent messages.
- There is effective supervision in place for all staff members. Training opportunities are available for staff to further develop their skills. Staff feel very well supported by their caring, dedicated manager. This has led to a close-knit team where staff turnover is very low and well-being is high. This has also contributed to a positive and fun atmosphere in which children can thrive.

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:

- improve teaching to help children develop and use a broader range of mathematical language as they play and learn
- further develop teaching and partnerships with parents to make sure children learn consistent messages about healthy eating, particularly around the provision of lunch time.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2687378
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10242986
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	37
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Mulberry Court Pre School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2687376
Telephone number	07752228815
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Mulberry Court Pre School re-registered under the current ownership in 2022. It operates from the main hall in the Wymering Methodist Church in Portsmouth, Hampshire. The pre-school is open from 9am to 2pm every weekday except Wednesday during term times. There are six members of staff who work with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager holds qualified teacher status. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

David Watkins

Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke with leaders about the management of the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.

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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