

Inspection of Potten End Pre-School

Potten End Pre School, The June Farmery Building, Water End Road, Berkhamsted
HP4 2QW

Inspection date: 13 June 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 Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are curious, enthusiastic learners. They embrace the activities and resources that staff set out for them, which link to a well-planned curriculum. For example, children use large magnets to find different objects made of metal. They are fascinated to feel the force caused when magnets repel each other. Staff explain to them what is happening and encourage them to see what happens when they turn one of the magnets around. Children show their friends what they have found out, helping them consolidate the new information staff have given them.

Children who prefer to learn outside are able to build on what they already know and understand. They look at the tomato and strawberry plants they previously began to grow. Clear pictures show them the stages the tomato plants go through. They talk to staff about what they can see and discuss what should happen next. Staff encourage children to recall the facts they already know about how plants grow and develop, correcting any misunderstandings. This helps children learn about the natural world.

Children behave well. Staff support children to learn how to regulate their emotions and give gentle reminders about sharing. Staff allow children to negotiate and find solutions to minor disputes they may have with their friends during their self-chosen play. This contributes to children's growing awareness of the needs and feelings of others in a safe environment.

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

- The team of staff and managers know the children very well. They quickly find out about children's interests, favourite toys and activities they can use to help trigger new learning experiences. This contributes to children's good progress.
- Staff build strong and trusting relationships with parents and carers. They use a variety of methods to help ensure clear communication is maintained, such as through a secure electronic app, newsletters and daily conversations. They share information about local groups and courses that parents can join to help them in their parenting role. This supports families to raise happy children, who thrive at home and in the pre-school. Parents speak highly of the staff and of the help given to support the whole family.
- Managers plan a clear curriculum with the staff. They take into account the different children who attend the pre-school. This helps to ensure that by the time they leave to go to school, children are confident, articulate individuals who are ready for the next stage in their learning. Children who are preparing to move on to school spend time in a quieter room, allowing them to concentrate and learn skills and concepts to support their early mathematics and literacy skills. For example, they play a game of bingo, covering pictures with the letter

that starts that word. Children carefully sound out the letter, helping them match it to the correct word. Staff do not rush children, allowing them time to think and work out what to do for themselves. This helps to build children's confidence and tenacity.

- Managers and staff work closely with professionals from outside agencies and organisations, such as those who give advice on ways to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff ensure that teachers from schools that children have been allocated spaces to for the next academic year receive all the information they need to help the move to school run smoothly. Teachers visit the pre-school and, when possible, staff take children attending the local school to visit their new classroom. Staff reassure children about their move to school. They answer children's questions and help children talk about how they are feeling.
- The manager and her deputy ensure staff are well supported in their roles. Regular team meetings, training and mentoring help to support staff's professional development. This enables staff to provide consistently good-quality care and education for all children. However, the trustees who hold overall responsibility do not always have a very clear overview of the pre-school to help them hold the manager and staff to account for the quality of care and education.
- The pre-school is at the heart of the community. Children have opportunities to visit the local shop and village green. Staff celebrate the different cultures and experiences children have. However, staff do not always provide broad, memorable opportunities for children to learn about different communities that enrich their knowledge of the wider world.

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:

- find ways for the trustees to develop a clear overview of the pre-school to help them hold the manager and staff to account for the quality of care and education
- support staff to find even more exciting and memorable ways to teach children about different communities from around the world in which they live.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY500714
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10344404
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	26
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Potten End Pre-School Association CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP535441
Telephone number	01442877489
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

Potten End Pre-School registered in 2016. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. It opens from Monday to Friday, from 9am until 3pm, term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It owns a building in the grounds of Potten End Church of England primary School.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Katrina Rodden

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and deputy manager and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the provision.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk of the pre-school. She described the curriculum and how this impacts children's progress.
- The inspector watched a planned activity with the manager. The manager described what she saw and how the teaching supports children's learning.
- The inspector observed activities inside the pre-school and in the garden. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection and took their views into account.
- The inspector looked at some documents, including the evidence of the suitability of staff and trustees and records of accidents.
- A small number of parents spoke to the inspector. She took their views into consideration in her evaluation of the provision.

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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