

Inspection of Isleham Pre-School

3a Malting Lane, Isleham, ELY, Cambridgeshire CB7 5RZ

Inspection date: 22 June 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children form good relationships with their friends. They work well together, and their behaviour is very good. Children show a deep understanding of how their actions might affect others because staff encourage them to talk about their feelings. They explain that if you do not share then it might make your friends feel sad. Staff provide a welcoming and secure environment where children feel safe. They are kind and nurturing, helping children to develop good levels of self-confidence and an enjoyment of learning. Children are highly competent at managing their personal care. Staff are very clear about helping children to be ready for school by ensuring they learn the key skills to support their future learning.

Children have developed strong bonds with staff. They know that staff will help them if they need it and say that their key person 'is very special'. Children are confident speakers and are developing good communication skills. They are keen to share their thoughts and recall past experiences. Staff introduce new words to extend children's vocabulary. Children listen intently to well-read stories and join in with rhyming the words, excitedly pointing it out when staff say the wrong word.

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

- Staff are very understanding of the potential effects that the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic has had on children and their families and have kept in regular contact with them during lockdown. They helped parents to guide their child's learning at home, providing well-chosen resources to support them during this time, such as activity bags and access to the pre-school allotment.
- Communication and language are a strong focus in the pre-school. Staff talk to children during their activities. They ask questions that engage children's thinking and play small-group games to practise their listening skills.
- Parents praise the quality of care their children receive and provide positive comments about their children's experiences. They appreciate the good information staff share about their children's learning and feel supported to continue this at home.
- Staff are well qualified and most hold paediatric first-aid certificates. The manager provides effective supervision, ensuring staff have regular opportunities for training. Staff work very well together. They say they enjoy working at the pre-school and the manager is very supportive.
- Staff have a detailed knowledge of their key children. They understand what children need to learn next and use information from their observations to guide their planning. Staff gather good information about children when they first start at the pre-school. This enables them to tailor their support for children, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that

all make good progress in their learning. Additional funding, such as early years pupil premium, is used well to support children's needs.

- Staff promote children's good health and encourage them to be physically active. Children follow sensible hygiene routines and understand the importance of washing their hands before eating. They show how they need to wash between their fingers and competently carry out this task independently. Children help themselves to their own drinks and learn how to open their own lunch boxes.
- The manager and staff work closely with local schools to support children's transfer to full-time education effectively. They take children on several visits to the school to become familiar with the space and to get to know the teachers. Staff have created a 'getting ready for school' pack for the summer holidays to help parents encourage their children's independence and self-care, so that when they go to school they are ready for more formal learning.
- Although children enjoy being outdoors, the curriculum content is not embedded securely across the provision. There is less focus on using it to guide children's learning in the outdoor area in more meaningful ways. Sometimes children's learning is less purposeful.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children and are aware of wider safeguarding issues. They know the importance of acting swiftly to protect children and understand the procedures to follow. All staff and the committee attend safeguarding training to ensure their knowledge is up to date. Robust recruitment and vetting arrangements help ensure that staff working with children are suitable for their role. Effective staff deployment means that children are well supervised and cared for. Staff carry out daily checks and risk assessments to ensure that the premises remain safe and secure.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- strengthen the planning for the outdoor area to provide children with the same rich experiences for learning as those inside.

Setting details

Unique reference number	221894
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10130610
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	26
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Isleham Under Fives Association
Registered person unique reference number	RP517179
Telephone number	01638 781 212
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

Isleham Pre-School registered in 1985 and employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualifications at level 2; four at level 3 and one at level 6. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, during term time only, from 8.30am until 3.30pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Emma Bright

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector observed activities indoors and outside and assessed the impact these have on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together to discuss and understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised. The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector had discussions with staff and parents at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- A meeting was held between the inspector, the manager, and the deputy manager. The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including the safeguarding procedures and evidence of staff suitability.
- The children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at pre-school.

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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