

Inspection of Micklands Pre-School

c/o Micklands Cp School, Micklands Road, Caversham, READING RG4 6LU

Inspection date: 15 July 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Leaders and staff prioritise children's happiness, well-being and safety at this welcoming pre-school. They work closely with parents from the outset and gather detailed information to find out more about each child's home experiences. This provides leaders and staff with an extensive insight into the community they serve. Staff use this knowledge to plan exciting and enriching opportunities that children may not have experienced before. This is especially evident in the stimulating outdoor environment, where children thoroughly enjoy the freedom to explore and play with friends. They show impressive creativity, imagination and resilience, especially when playing with mud and water, which is a firm favourite, and create interesting characters, such as 'Mr Mud' and 'Mrs Mud'. Staff praise their ideas and suggestions. Children flourish at this busy and vibrant pre-school.

Leaders and staff strongly promote children's personal, social and emotional development. They ensure staff understand that supporting children's skills in this area, helps to lay foundations for their future learning. Children happily separate from their parents, smile warmly at the friendly staff and hang up their belongings on entering the pre-school. They show extremely positive attitudes to learning and readily engage with friends in cooperative play. For example, they actively play 'superheroes' and wear large pieces of material for capes. Children who are a little unsettled initially, are quickly comforted by nurturing staff. These children receive gentle reassurance and cuddles. Staff celebrate children's unique personalities, including those who show a witty sense of humour. Consequently, children develop a strong sense of belonging and emotional security.

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

- The outdoor provision, a standout feature of the pre-school, plays a pivotal part in supporting children's overall development. Children's confidence in their own abilities increases greatly as they engage in a wide range of physical challenges in the well-equipped garden. Staff provide them with ample opportunities to strengthen their physical well-being. For instance, children work together to arrange large pieces of apparatus and build a challenging obstacle course. This swiftly becomes a popular task, with children showing high levels of perseverance, balance and coordination. Children develop strength and stamina, as well as the will power to succeed, such as when they use climbing grips to pull themselves up a rope attached to tree branches.
- Leaders design a tailored and aspirational curriculum that reflects the needs and interests of all children. Some staff implement it effectively by skilfully adapting activities to help children progress. For example, they give children time and space to solve minor problems during their independent play, such as when they attempt to carry water in plant pots with holes. These staff members show a

strong awareness of when to step in to extend children's thinking. However, not all staff confidently use the most effective teaching strategies to build on individual children's existing knowledge and skills. While leaders recognise these inconsistencies in staff practice, a sufficiently personalised and targeted professional development programme for them, is not yet firmly in place. Consequently, the quality of the curriculum delivery varies and some children do not always reach their full potential.

- Knowledgeable leaders strive for continual improvement. They clearly identify strengths and areas for development, such as aiming to further improve partnerships with parents to support children's continuity in learning. Leaders offer families opportunities to borrow resources, such as books to share at home to boost children's vocabulary. Although leaders greatly value collaborative working with parents, promoting children's understanding of healthy lifestyles in a more shared and consistent way, is not yet fully embedded.
- Enthusiastic staff read and sing with children throughout the day. They teach actions to songs and ask questions about events that happen in a story. Younger children sit on staff's laps and point to pictures in books, while older children lay on their tummies and carefully examine the pictures to retell the story to their friends. Staff introduce new words and remodel children's sentences, using the correct structure and pronunciation. As a result, children develop a real love for literacy and make good progress to become confident talkers.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported very well. Leaders ensure all staff fully understand children's individual needs and their use of targeted interventions, such as 'bucket time' to develop children's attention and listening skills. Leaders and key persons work closely with external professionals to aid children's smooth transition on to their next stage in education. This effective support is underpinned by staff's skilful approach to meeting children's emotional and communication needs.

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:

- enhance all staff's teaching skills further by establishing effective and individualised coaching, training and mentoring programmes that helps them to support children to make the best possible progress
- strengthen partnership working with parents to further support and embed children's understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY349432
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10399453
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	Micklands Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP909004
Telephone number	01189 471 976
Date of previous inspection	3 December 2019

Information about this early years setting

Micklands Pre-School registered in 2007 and is located in Caversham, Reading, Berkshire. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, from 8.45am to 3.15pm, during term time only. It employs 10 members of staff, of whom nine hold relevant childcare qualifications from level 2 to level 4. The pre-school is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sonia Panchal

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 and the manager carried out joint observations of an indoor and outdoor activity.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the 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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