

Inspection of Sunflower Sherards

Ployters Road, Harlow, Essex CM18 7PS

Inspection date: 10 March 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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children confidently part from their parents and carers on arrival at the pre-school, where they are greeted by kind and caring staff. Children are greeted by their friends and quickly join them in their play. Some enjoy using their imagination as they dress in beautiful princess costumes and parade through the setting. Staff are close by to help and support children, always encouraging them to have a go before stepping in. This helps them to become strong and confident. Children are caring and thoughtful towards each other. They use good manners and speak kindly. When children show a fear of flying insects, others come to protect them. Staff act as good role models, calmly speaking to children and encouraging them to share the resources and work together.

Children understand the daily routines and enthusiastically participate in group activities, such as an adult-led dance and movement session. They efficiently follow the staff's instructions to wave their 'pom-poms' high in the air, down low or round and round in a circle. Staff use such activities to encourage children to exercise their fingers in preparation for developing their early writing skills.

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

- The senior management team has improved its effectiveness significantly since the last inspection. Staff and managers feel more supported in their roles and are now provided with better opportunities to access training. Staff receive regular supervision and support to help them to fulfil their roles.
- Staff now receive more effective training to help them understand the pre-school's safeguarding procedures, which have been updated to include what action to take for any allegations against staff. Staff are deployed effectively, so children are well supervised. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been reviewed and improved to help them make good progress.
- Parents speak highly of the staff and management team. They comment that they feel their children are safe and well cared for. Those with children who require special care feel that staff implement effective care plans to ensure their children remain well and safe. Parents say that a key strength of the pre-school is that staff are so caring towards their children.
- Children listen attentively to stories read excitingly and engagingly by staff. They join in with their favourite parts and enjoy predicting what is going to happen next in the story. Children enthusiastically participate in singing and rhyme sessions, choosing their favourite songs.
- Children enjoy participating in creative activities. At times, staff use too much direction, preventing children from freely expressing themselves. Staff provide some resources to enable children to choose creative materials. But, these are

not presented invitingly to enthuse and excite the children to use them.

- Staff find out about children's home language when they first start at the pre-school. However, they do not always make the best use of their knowledge of children's home languages to help children communicate and articulate their needs in their play.
- Children have access to some resources that help them develop an interest in mathematics. However, staff do not routinely use language that helps to enhance children's interest in mathematics in their everyday activities.
- Staff encourage children to engage in conversations as they ask clear and purposeful questions. Staff allow time for children to consider their thoughts and respond. This helps to enhance children's knowledge and develop their communication and language skills.
- Children have good opportunities to extend their knowledge of the wider community when they go for walks in the local area. They visit parks and playgrounds, shops and other places of interest. Managers and staff plan to further enhance children's outdoor experiences, both in the pre-school garden and through such trips.

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:

- review the use of available resources and teaching strategies to promote children's creativity and enable them to freely express themselves
- build on staff's understanding of the importance of using children's home languages to help children understand and extend their communication skills
- strengthen the implementation of mathematics to support children to use numbers and counting during their play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY420549
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10376507
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Great Parndon Community Association
Registered person unique reference number	RP910034
Telephone number	01279 291 399
Date of previous inspection	5 November 2024

Information about this early years setting

Sunflower Sherards registered in 2010. The pre-school employs three members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8.45am to 11.45am, and from 11.45pm to 2.45pm. The pre-school offers government funded places for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lynn Hughes

Inspection activities

- 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 her about the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation of a music and movement session.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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