

Inspection of Downton Community Pre-School

The Memorial Hall, The Borough, Downton, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 3NB

Inspection date:

20 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children arrive happily and receive a warm welcome from the staff, which helps them feel secure. They settle quickly and confidently choose from an interesting range of activities and resources. These include newly acquired items designed to stimulate their imaginations and curiosity. Staff interact well with children, although, they do not consistently extend their learning as much as possible.

Children are well behaved and willingly follow instructions. They develop many independent skills, such as putting on their own coats and rubber boots before going out on a scavenger hunt. They develop good relationships and enjoy playing with their friends. For example, several children ride trikes together.

Managers kept in regular contact with parents while the pre-school was closed or children were unable to attend, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This maintained links between the families and the pre-school. Staff provided ideas for activities that children could do at home to support their learning. Parents drop off and pick up their children at the door. Staff maintain communication with them through handover discussions and by using an online platform.

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

- The joint managers were appointed at the beginning of the year after a difficult period for the pre-school. They work well together and share a clear vision for the future. They have made many positive changes, including replacing outdated resources, developing the outdoor play area and working to build staff morale. Staff work well as a team and are enthusiastic about their work. Managers recognise that there are still areas for development and are eager to move forward with these.
- There is a buzz of conversation throughout the day, as children and staff discuss a varied range of subjects, including the Halloween disco that is taking place. Children confidently initiate conversations with each other and with adults. For example, several ask the inspector what she is doing and describe what they like doing at pre-school.
- Children have good opportunities to develop a love of books. They enjoy snuggling up on the sofa to look at a varied range of books by themselves or with staff. Managers have introduced a book lending scheme so that every child has the chance to read books with their parents at home.
- Staff identify next steps for children's progress but these are not specific to each child's personal learning needs. As a result, planning is not fully effective in helping each child to make progress.
- Staff provide effective support for children who need additional support to make progress. They work with parents and other agencies to ensure a shared

approach to supporting these children and make sure that they benefit from funding, where applicable. For example, funding is used to buy resources recommended by professionals, such as occupational therapists.

- Managers do not monitor staff's assessments of children or the frequency with which these are shared with parents. Therefore, they are not aware of the quality of this aspect of staff practice.
- Managers have an overview of children's progress but they do not monitor whether there are differences in progress between different groups and analyse what they can do to close any gaps.
- Children are good at taking turns and sharing and this is a frequent topic of conversation with the staff. They wait patiently and talk about whose turn it is next. They know routines and expectations, such as washing their hands independently before lunch and then sitting at the table while they eat.
- Staff make good use of questions to encourage children to listen and think. For example, they ask them to consider whether animals will sink or float in the water tray. However, they do not consistently extend children's learning as much as possible across all areas.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff provide a safe and secure environment for children to play and learn in. They help children learn about potential risks, such as discussing the danger of slipping on water on the floor. Staff are aware of the potential signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know what to do if they have concerns and are clear that they would make a referral themselves if necessary. Managers ensure that safeguarding is always on the agenda of staff meetings and that staff's safeguarding knowledge is kept up to date.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that assessment is used effectively to identify next steps for each child that are tailored to their particular needs and use these to feed into planning a more effective curriculum	05/01/2022
ensure leaders and managers have a precise overview of the quality of assessments to ensure consistency of staff practice.	05/01/2022

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

- develop staff's understanding of how to take every opportunity to extend children's learning in all areas
- extend the assessment of children's progress to include groups as well as individuals in order to identify any emerging gaps.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2505980
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10194416
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	71
Number of children on roll	71
Name of registered person	Downton Community Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP520513
Telephone number	01725511178
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Downton Community Pre-School was originally registered in 2003 and re-registered at its current premises in 2018. It operates from The Memorial Hall in Downton, Wiltshire. It is open from 8am to 5.30pm every weekday during term time only. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for children aged two, three and four. There are eight staff, of whom seven have relevant childcare qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Catherine Sample

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual and joint managers about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.

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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