

Inspection of Skylarks Community Pre-School

Village Centre, Wickhurst Lane, Broadbridge Heath, Horsham, Horsham, West
Sussex RH12 3LY

Inspection date: 8 January 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

Children demonstrate their excitement as they rush through the doors and cheerfully greet the staff who are waiting for them. Staff encourage them to independently put away their own belongings. Children quickly seek out their key person and friends to play with, eager to get on with their day. Staff provide a large variety of activities that cover a broad and balanced curriculum. Activities are planned based on children's current interests, such as dinosaurs and numbers. This helps to keep children motivated to learn as they play.

Staff gather detailed information from parents about their children before they start at the pre-school. This enables children to be fully supported to settle quickly as staff have a strong understanding of children's likes, dislikes and existing knowledge. Children who become upset are consoled and cuddled. They quickly develop a secure understanding that the pre-school is a safe and stimulating place to play and learn away from their families. Staff are strong role models for children. They are kind, loving and respectful and have high expectations for children's behaviour. Older children teach younger children to be kind and share. This has a positive impact on young children's behaviour and their ability to understand the boundaries at the pre-school.

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

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress at the pre-school. Staff are knowledgeable and are highly trained to deliver a bespoke support package to any children who are at risk of falling behind. Timely referrals are made to outside agencies to ensure that children with SEND access a fully inclusive curriculum and receive high-quality care.
- Leaders at the pre-school place children and families at the heart of everything they do. Parents and grandparents provide extremely positive feedback about the support that has been provided. They comment that the pre-school is well managed and that leaders constantly go 'above and beyond' to make children's learning experiences joyful and memorable. Staff say that they feel valued and listened to and that their well-being is high due to the positive atmosphere in their working environment.
- Overall, staff provide children with high-quality interactions that support children's emerging language and vocabulary. For example, children learn what a stethoscope is used for as staff play alongside them in a 'doctors' surgery'. Back-and-forth discussions support children's understanding and allow them to offer their own thoughts and opinions. However, occasionally, there are times when the quality of teaching is variable because some staff are not as experienced or confident as others. Consequently, not all children receive the same high level of interactions. Despite this, children's overall engagement and enjoyment

throughout the pre-school are high.

- Leaders and staff provide children with a large range of educational trips. Visitors are invited into the setting to share their knowledge on topics, such as caring for wildlife and the role of the fire service. Children visit their local shops, playparks and walk around their local community. Staff take children with SEND to enjoy sensory experiences and visit the shops in a smaller, less overwhelming group. Experiences such as this allow children to participate and reduce any gaps in their learning.
- Staff observe and assess children to make sure that future learning and next steps are relevant to children's individual learning needs and character. Development and progress updates are shared with families so that learning can be continued at home. Other settings and future schools are provided with up-to-date information about a child's progress. This supports future transitions and a continuity of care.
- Overall, children take part enthusiastically in group activities. From previous experiences, they eagerly anticipate an enjoyable time full of rich learning experiences. However, there are times when the organisation of some of the larger group activities is not fully effective in involving all children taking part. For example, older and more confident children sometimes receive more attention than less confident, often younger children. Consequently, not all children consistently receive the same high level of interactions. Despite this, children's overall engagement is high.
- Leaders and staff provide children with a strong understanding of healthy lifestyles. Children are gently encouraged to try new fruits and vegetables. Discussions around healthy food choices are weaved into everyday play and routines. Children have a constant access to outdoor play and climbing equipment. They are very physically capable and confident movers.

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 the monitoring of staff practices to identify and address minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching
- improve the organisation of planned group activities to help all children taking part to remain focused and engaged in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY543204
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10375827
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	50
Number of children on roll	84
Name of registered person	Skylarks Community Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP543203
Telephone number	07825603601
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2019

Information about this early years setting

Skylarks Community Pre-School opened in 2017. It operates from a village centre in Broadbridge Heath, West Sussex. The setting opens from 9am to 12.30pm on Wednesday and Friday and 9am to 3.30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, during school term times. The setting employs 14 staff. Of these, 10 hold relevant childcare qualifications up to level 6. The pre-school provides government funded early education places for children aged from two years to four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Tina Lambert

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk through all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education provided and assessed its impact on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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