

Inspection of Bunnies Preschool (Shephall)

1 Featherston Road, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire SG2 9PP

Inspection date: 24 May 2024

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

The manager and staff create an exciting learning environment that supports children to settle swiftly and remain engaged in play throughout their day. They have a deep understanding of the children in their care and their early experiences. This enables staff to plan interesting learning opportunities that children may not otherwise receive. For example, children become absorbed in creating their own sensory garden. Staff encourage them to discuss the different colours and fragrances. Children delight in exploring the soil and collecting water in watering cans to feed their plants.

Children develop close bonds with one another and show consideration for their friends. For example, they create a human train on the balancing beam. Older children support their younger friends. They hold their hands and offer guidance and reassurance to complete the task safely. Staff encourage these respectful relationships and positive behaviours. They consistently recognise and praise children's kind behaviour and establish clear boundaries and rules, which children adhere to well.

Staff provide opportunities for children to show off their talents and celebrate what makes them unique. They use circle time to encourage children to share stories and pictures from home. Children's friends listen intently and show immense curiosity. They ask questions and demonstrate a genuine interest in the lives of others. As a result, children are confident and outgoing even in new situations.

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

- Staff place sharp focus on supporting children's emotional well-being. Children relax during daily mindfulness sessions where they explore their feelings in age-appropriate ways. They practise breathing deeply and acknowledge how this helps them feel calm. Children and staff explore books about feelings. They discuss the different characters, their emotions and how to display them appropriately.
- Staff make good use of numerous group sessions throughout the day. Children start the day with a positive attitude to learning by discussing the exciting activities they can explore. They remind one another of the setting rules and how adhering to them will keep everyone safe and happy. Children delight at the immersive song sessions staff create. Together they use foam, water and bubbles to re-enact children's favourite rhymes. However, during some group activities, children are not given sufficient time to respond to questions and explore their ideas fully.
- Relationships with parents are strong and respectful. Parents are complimentary about staff and the deep understanding they have of their children. They

appreciate the advice staff offer to them, for example when dealing with challenging behaviour. Parents acknowledge how this enables them to provide additional support for children at home.

- Highly effective induction procedures ensure that children settle well in the pre-school and make good progress. The manager organises picnics and social events for families. This encourages children and parents to establish supportive friendships prior to children starting. Staff gather detailed information about children's interests and stages of development. This enables them to plan appropriate learning opportunities that support children to make good progress.
- Staff place sharp focus on supporting children's communication and early literacy skills. Children enjoy regular group story sessions throughout the day. They explore books independently in the newly established cosy reading area. The manager shares her enthusiasm and knowledge of the importance of reading with parents. She invites the local children's library to attend open days, helping make its services more accessible to families.
- Morale is high, and staff report that they feel well supported. They discuss the numerous training opportunities they have and how these support them to improve their knowledge and skills. However, although the manager conducts regular appraisals, methods of coaching are not yet sufficiently embedded in practice to ensure sustained improvement in certain areas.
- Managers and staff build close relationships with other settings that the children attend. They share information about children's development. This allows all parties to adopt a consistent approach when supporting children's learning. Other childcare providers are welcomed into the pre-school. This enables staff to establish close partnerships that support children to settle well and continue making good progress.

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:

- promote children's critical thinking skills by allowing them sufficient time to respond to thought-provoking questions and explore their ideas further
- enhance current methods of coaching and mentoring to support staff to deliver consistently high-quality teaching opportunities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY414990
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10339299
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	40
Name of registered person	Crossley, Rachel Anne
Registered person unique reference number	RP515776
Telephone number	07754305185
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2018

Information about this early years setting

Bunnies Preschool (Shephall) registered in 2010. It employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including the manager who holds a qualification at level 6. The pre-school operates from 9am until 3pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

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 inspector considered the views of parents by speaking to several parents during the inspection and reviewing feedback letters.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and the manager completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of several children.

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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