

Inspection of Dicker House Preschool

Community Room, Birchwood Grove Road, Burgess Hill RH15 0DP

Inspection date: 11 November 2022

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 are happy and enthusiastic learners in this welcoming setting. They make good relationships with the attentive and caring staff. This helps them to feel secure and settle quickly. They follow the clear routines, put away their water bottles and find their name to self-register when they arrive. Children benefit from the inclusive ethos. For example children, including those who speak English as an additional language, enjoy rolling and cutting play dough. They strengthen their fingers and learn new vocabulary to describe their actions. Children confidently count and name the shapes they make as they play together. They are friendly and confident in their interactions with their peers, staff and visitors.

Children choose their own play from the good range of learning experience provided both indoors and outdoors. They develop the social skills, independence and positive attitudes to learning that they will need when they move on to school. For instance, children learn to listen carefully and control their body movements during the regular yoga sessions. They quickly develop a sense of belonging to the group and behave well. Children independently use timers to help them take turns and solve their own conflicts. They wash their hands when needed, and older children easily manage their own self-care.

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

- Staff support children well to develop good physical skills. For example, children ride on scooters and tricycles and balance on tyres in the garden. They fill and empty containers with pasta and strengthen their arm muscles, as they use small brooms to sweep it from the floor. Older children hold pencils well for writing and write letters of their name.
- Staff read stories expressively throughout the setting and help children develop a love of books. They build a sense of anticipation and children talk about the story. Children learn how books work and gain new vocabulary. Older children use them to find information and link letters to the sounds they make. Staff encourage parents and children to borrow books to share at home and link learning.
- Children have ample opportunities to learn about the differences and similarities between themselves and others. Staff celebrate children's birthdays and their family festivals, such as Diwali. Children begin to learn about remembrance as they make poppy pictures. This helps them to build respect and tolerance.
- Staff provide activities to spark children's interest and enjoyment, often linked to a seasonal theme. However, staff do not consistently consider children's learning needs when planning. As a result, there is insufficient focus on what they need to learn next. Children do not all make the very best possible progress.
- Staff play alongside children and generally teach well. They comment on

children's play and make suggestions to direct learning. However, at times, staff are less successful at supporting children's learning through their self-directed activities. Staff ask too many questions and overly direct children's activity. This does not allow children to follow their own thinking and ideas and develop their learning fully.

- The experienced special needs coordinator ensures children who may need additional help are supported effectively. She works closely with parents, other professionals, such as speech therapists, and staff from other settings the children attend. This provides continuity, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- The manager and staff form successful partnerships with parents. Parents praise the friendly staff. They feel well informed about their children's progress and say children are carefully prepared for the transition to school. The manager meets regularly with the committee to discuss how the pre-school is operating, plan fundraising and ongoing improvements, such as the outdoor cabin for children's role play.
- The manager knows her staff team well and supports their well-being. Staff are experienced and say they are happy in their work. This helps them to provide a happy environment for the children. The manager shares her expertise and offers training to help develop staff's skills and knowledge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures all staff receive regular training on first aid and safeguarding. Staff know what to do in a medical emergency. They confidently identify the possible indicators of child abuse and know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. They receive regular updates about safeguarding issues and discuss these at staff meetings to help keep children safe from harm. The managers and committee follow good recruitment processes that help to assure the suitability of adults working with children. Children and staff practise emergency evacuation, so they know what to do in case of fire.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review and focus the system for planning activities to consistently link to children's learning needs
- improve staff teaching skills so that they ask questions that fully support children in developing their own thinking and ideas as they play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY397474
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10233752
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	26
Number of children on roll	42
Name of registered person	Dicker House Nursery Group Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523208
Telephone number	07707892532
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2017

Information about this early years setting

Dicker House Preschool registered in 2009. It operates as an independent setting on the site of Birchwood Grove School in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 8.55am to 2.55pm during school term time. There are 15 members of staff, 10 of whom hold early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sue Suleyman

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school 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 her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspector viewed a sample of documentation and checked the suitability of adults working with the 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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