

Inspection of Riding Mill Preschool

Broomhaugh C of E Aided First School, Church Lane, RIDING MILL,
Northumberland NE44 6DR

Inspection date: 2 July 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff make good use of the natural outdoors as an exciting learning environment. Children are incredibly happy and arrive at the setting eager to start their day. They show a positive attitude to their learning and are keen to explore the resources on offer. For example, older children plan and construct a large tractor using tyres and crates. Younger children enjoy filling the watering can and relish pouring the water on the vegetables in the allotment. Children show they remember what they have been taught. For example, older children remember the names of the vegetables and discuss how to harvest them. Children show high levels of confidence and concentration as they take part in self-chosen activities. They make dough, taking turns to add the ingredients, and squeal with delight as they propel themselves on the tree swing. This helps to support their physical development.

Staff use positive behaviour management strategies, such as praise and encouragement. Children are reminded of appropriate behaviour, for example how to use equipment safely. Children are beginning to take turns, with support. For example, staff encourage children to use a sand timer to share resources fairly. Children confidently discuss their feelings and explain when they feel sad. Furthermore, they are beginning to understand how their behaviour might have an impact on others.

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

- Relationships with parents are positive. Parents say that they feel very well supported by the setting. Staff exchange information about children's daily activities, and parents provide information about their children's interests at home. Initial visits support children to settle into the setting. Staff gather records and information to ensure the needs of all children are met. However, they do not gather sufficient information from parents about what children already know and can do when they start the setting.
- Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well supported. Staff produce in-depth support plans to help to ensure that children's individual needs are met and that children make good progress in their learning. They work very closely with schools, speech and language and other external agencies to provide children with any additional support they require.
- Overall, children's communication is well supported. Story times are interactive and engaging. Children listen attentively as 'Flip' and 'Floppy' the puppets tell a story. They excitedly join in, guessing the names of animals from initial letter sounds. Children are fully engaged as they sing the welcome song. Staff ask questions that encourage children to think and develop their ideas. However, occasionally staff are too quick to offer answers during activities. This does not

support children's critical thinking as effectively as possible.

- Staff incorporate the teaching of mathematics into everyday activities. For example, children count as they add scoops of mud into pans and compare sizes of crates and logs.
- Staff support children to develop good levels of independence. Children cut up their own fruit at snack time and put on their coats and wellies. Staff teach children to take appropriate risks and challenges as they play and learn. For example, children climb step ladders and enjoy scaling the large wooden climbing frame. Staff have established good routines that children readily follow. Children give their friends a five-minute warning by tapping a triangle before starting tidy-up time.
- The manager and her team have a clear vision of the knowledge they want children to learn before they leave the setting. They have a good understanding of how children learn and the order in which they need to learn the knowledge. For example, they encourage older children to draw plans as they build with loose parts. Younger children are encouraged to make marks in the mud with sticks.
- Leadership is good. The manager understands how to support her team through regular supervision sessions and training. The manager is fully aware of maintaining staff well-being.
- Staff greet children and parents warmly. They provide cuddles and reassurance for children who need it. Children settle quickly and demonstrate high levels of curiosity as they investigate the outdoor environment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular updates and training about safeguarding and child protection. They are aware of wider safeguarding issues, for example the signs or changes in behaviour that may point to radicalisation or extremism. All staff are confident of the procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff. They are vigilant and complete daily checks and risk assessments that help to provide children with a safe environment. Children learn how to keep themselves safe and assess risks well. The management team has robust recruitment processes to assure the suitability of adults working with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- gather more detailed information from parents about what their children already know and can do when they first start at the setting
- support staff to make more effective use of questioning techniques to extend and challenge children's thinking skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY560328
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10194211
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 5
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Riding Mill Pre-School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519478
Telephone number	07368 223910
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Riding Mill Preschool registered in 2018. It is situated in the Riding Mill area of Northumberland. The pre-school operates Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm, term time only. It employs six members of staff. Of these, three hold qualified teacher status and one holds a qualification at level 3. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Julie Campbell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) 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 and the inspector observed and evaluated an activity together.
- The views of children and staff were taken into account during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager. They looked at relevant documents, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- Parents shared their views with the inspector through discussions.
- The inspector carried out a learning walk with the manager. They discussed the learning environment and how the curriculum is organised.

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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