Inspection of The Mill Nursery

St. Vigor & St. John C of E Primary School, Wells Road, Chilcompton, Radstock, Somerset BA3 4EX

Inspection date: 21 June 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

Children arrive at The Mill Nursery happy for their day to begin. They are met at the nursery door by warm and welcoming staff who support children to feel safe and secure. Staff promote a wonderfully nurturing environment which promotes close and trusting relationships with the children.

Children show curiosity and confidence as they move around the provision. The environment is well organised to enable children to make independent choices in their play. Staff continuously promote children's sense of belonging and emotional well-being through positive interactions. For example, staff offer the youngest children encouragement and praise as they begin to learn to walk. Children enjoy playing together to develop their imagination. For instance, they laugh together as they move their plastic cars and trucks along the car track and into various tunnels.

Staff gather detailed information from parents when children first start at the setting to enable effective planning for each child's next steps and interests. As staff are unable to carry out home visits, they have adapted their settling-in processes to ensure each child has a smooth transition into the setting. For example, staff hold telephone sessions with parents to gather information on each child before they start. They use this information to plan and adapt each child's settling-in sessions depending on children's individual needs.

Due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, parents are unable to enter the nursery building. Staff now make greater use of electronic communications to ensure information about their child's progress, including their individual care routines, is shared effectively with parents each day.

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

- The newly appointed manager works in close partnership with the headteacher. They are both passionate and dedicated to their roles and share a clear vision for the setting. They speak confidently about their curriculum and how they have made changes to their planning to suit the needs of the children.
- Staff provide a range of activities to support children to develop and strengthen the small muscles in their hands and fingers in readiness for early writing. For instance, children curiously explore the sensory tray filled with play dough, leaves, and plants. They show concentration as they squeeze, poke, roll, and splat the dough between their hands.
- Staff develop children's self-care skills well. For example, they encourage children to drink from an open cup when they are thirsty and support them to wash their hands before mealtimes. However, routines such as getting ready to go outside and mealtimes become extremely busy and result in children waiting

without anything to do for extended periods. During these times, children can become restless and their behaviour deteriorates.

- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents comment on the excellent progress their children have made since starting at the setting, particularly their personal, social and emotional development. Parents feel that the staff prepare children well for their next stage of learning. Staff use monitoring and assessments effectively to identify what children need to learn next and share these findings with parents.
- Staff use the outdoor space to enrich children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live in. Children are encouraged to use all of their senses to explore the natural environment. They gently feel the texture of different flowers and plants growing in the garden. Children giggle with excitement as they use watering cans to create puddles and streams for their friends to jump in. Staff utilise the open spaces to enhance children's physical development. For example, children squeal with delight as they run up and down grassy slopes. However, some children, particularly those young children who are not yet mobile, are less involved in outdoor learning. As a result, they become disengaged with their learning.
- The registered person failed to notify Ofsted about a change of manager within the required timescale. While this is a statutory requirement, on this occasion it did not have an impact on the quality of provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and the headteacher ensure that all staff keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date through regular training. Leaders and staff understand their responsibilities in helping to keep children safe. For example, effective staff deployment ensures that children are well supervised. Staff have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures, including wider safeguarding concerns. Leaders and staff work together to carry out regular risk assessments to ensure the setting is safe and secure for all children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation of daily routines to ensure the length of time children spend waiting does not have a negative impact on their behaviour
- ensure all activities, in particular those outdoors, are planned to match the developmental stage of all children, specifically the youngest children who are not yet mobile.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY560349
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10194156
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 2
Total number of places	9
Number of children on roll	18
Name of registered person	The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust
Registered person unique reference number	RP532718
Telephone number	01761 233847
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The Mill Nursery became part of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust in 2018, along with St Vigor and St John C of E Primary School. The nursery setting is within the school grounds which is located in Chilcompton, Radstock. The registered provision cares for children under the age of two years. However, the setting also provides care for older children under the school registration. The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust has appointed a headteacher who leads both the school and the nursery site. An early years lead teacher, who is appointed through the school, works across the Nursery and Reception Years. The nursery provision employs a manager who is level 6 qualified and 10 members of staff. Three of these staff work within the registered provision and hold relevant level 3 childcare qualifications. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, 8am until 5pm.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Terri Breakwell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- Leaders explained the nursery curriculum during a learning walk with the inspector.
- The manager, the headteacher, and the inspector held a meeting together to discuss the leadership and management of the nursery. The inspector looked at a sample of documents, including evidence of staff suitability.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an activity together and discussed the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, the headteacher, and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Parents shared their views about the setting with the inspector.

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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