

St Giles on the Heath Foundation Stage Unit

Inspection report for early years provision

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Setting address	St Giles on the Heath, Launceston, Devon, PL15 9SD
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

The St Giles on the Heath Foundation Stage Unit was registered in 2011, and has combined the existing preschool into the registration. It operates from a purpose built premises on the grounds of St Giles Community Primary School, a village between Launceston and Holsworthy, in North Devon. The premises is self-contained, and children have access to one main play room, with associated facilities, including toilets and a kitchen area directly off the main play space. There is a fully enclosed outside area suitable for play, including a covered area. The provision is managed by the school governors, and provides care for all the Foundation Stage children.

The setting is on the Early Years Register to take a maximum of four children aged from two to three years. The unit opens from 9am to 3.30pm every day during term time only. Children may attend for a variety of sessions.

The setting employs five members of staff including a qualified early years teacher, and other staff all hold level 3 early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The commitment, professionalism and passion of the staff team promote a highly effective learning environment where children make excellent progress in their learning and development. The inclusive and welcoming ethos of the setting, linked with the excellent partnerships formed with parents and others ensures that children's needs are well known and nurtured. Children are kept safe and secure in an inspiring environment, which is exceptionally well organised, both inside and out. The views of the parents, children and staff are all used effectively to accurately identify areas for enhancement and drive improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- maximising the use of the outdoor area to provide children with first hand experiences that encourage exploration, problem solving, critical thinking and decision making.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Highly effective systems are used to safeguard children's welfare. Comprehensive policies underpin the safe and efficient management of the provision. All regulatory documentation is in place and is reviewed regularly. For example, children's information and parents' contact details are checked for accuracy each term. All staff undergo robust vetting process under the school system, to ensure everyone who works and comes into contact with children is suitable to do so. All staff have attended safeguarding training and are confident in following the appropriate procedure if they have any concerns over a child's welfare. Daily checks are conducted on the environment, with rigorous risk assessments used to minimise hazards to children. The leadership and management of the provision is inspirational, with all staff demonstrating their enthusiasm and motivation for implementing excellent early years practice for all ages of children attending this provision. The qualities of each staff member is identified and celebrated as they are encouraged to use their skills and abilities to provide a dynamic and professional team, working cohesively to benefit the diverse needs of the children attending. Ongoing thoughtful evaluation of the provision leads to continual improvements. One area to consider is the use of the local natural environment, where children can take an active role in making decisions and assessing 'risky play' experiences.

The purpose built premises are very well organised and reflect positive images of the children who attend, as well as showing children about diversity in the wider world. Practitioners value the uniqueness of each child, and know their family backgrounds and needs through the detailed induction procedures and strong links established with the parents. Home visits are offered and sensitive settling-in visits are arranged so that children make a smooth transition into the provision. Parents are provided with detailed information and plenty of involvement in their child's learning. They are invited to stay and read with their child each week, and open days are offered, providing parents with an opportunity to see the provision in operation. Parents are exceptionally pleased with the high quality care and learning their children receive. Strong links are in place for the setting to work with other professionals to support children when necessary. Parents are involved in the observation and assessment process and exchange information on how well their children are progressing. Staff monitor children's learning closely and use observation information very effectively to identify and plan for each child's progress. All staff are well deployed and work together to extend and challenge every child, according to their own interests and preferences. The youngest children benefit from being able to join in with the activities planned for the older children if they wish, broadening their experiences and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children thrive in an environment where they are valued and respected by staff, who skilfully adapt to meet each child's preferences and needs. Children feel safe and secure in the provision, as they have firm relationships with the consistent staff and are familiar with the routines. Children are very respectful and take responsibility for helping to organise their own activities. Children put on aprons independently before painting and know where to find pencils and paper if they wish to sit and draw. They confidently ask for help when needed and are keen to express their ideas and preferences. Their behaviour is exemplary, as children are kept engaged and engrossed in their play through the diligence of the staff. Activities are planned to help children recognise the different emotions they feel, and are provided with support and understanding when they may be feeling a 'bit grumpy'. Children learn to negotiate, share and take turns with others and develop good skills for future learning.

Children access a very stimulating and enabling environment, where they choose to play and learn both inside and out. The high quality resources are invitingly displayed and encourage children to make choices and plan their own activities, with the staff following their lead. Children develop their knowledge about vegetables, as they have grown and tended a garden area. They learn about healthy foods as they transform the vegetables into a nourishing soup. They also explore printing with various vegetables, commenting on the texture and shapes of the patterns they make on the paper. Children's understanding of being healthy is further supported, as they eat healthy snacks and meals, and access drinks whenever they are thirsty. They have good opportunities to be active as they play outside, but also enjoy dancing and moving to the Latin American music indoors.

Outside, children develop control and coordination as they peddle a selection of bikes and scooters around the track, skilfully negotiating others. They consider their own safety as they wear protective helmets. Children climb and slide on the large equipment, exploring ways of balancing and controlling their bodies safely on the apparatus. They climb into the tunnel and staff help children to explore the space as they calculate how many children can stand in the tunnel as it is pulled up over them. Children enjoy water play and digging in the sand, or making music with the wide range of instruments to shake and beat in time to a rhythm.

Children's language and literacy development is effectively supported as books and mark making are used throughout their play. The younger children are invited to sit and listen to a puppet show for the older children, which sparks their own interest in re-enacting the story to each other in their own puppet show. They also use the slide to pretend the 'three billy goats' are crossing the bridge with a troll hiding underneath. Children frequently recognise their names and staff help children to identify the phonic sounds of letters as they label their paintings and pictures with them. Children are encouraged to converse with the staff throughout the sessions and develop their communication skills and confidence in talking about their interests.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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