

St Nicholas Pre School

St. Nicholas Church, Morton Road, LOWESTOFT, Suffolk, NR33 0JQ



Inspection date	26 March 2015
Previous inspection date	24 March 2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Evidence was unavailable on the day of inspection to confirm that the procedure for recruiting staff is sufficiently robust to protect children.
- The new systems for staff supervisions and peer observations have not yet been fully embedded or evaluated to maintain and enhance the good quality of teaching.
- On occasion, children are not reminded to take turns or value the contributions of their peers to fully promote their social skills.

It has the following strengths

- Staff provide a range of stimulating activities to engage children's interest. Older children practise tracing the letters of their name and learn a variety of shapes as staff help them to construct their buildings. These activities prepare them well for school.
- Children with additional needs benefit from able staff, who use targeted activities and implement ideas gathered from specific training. In addition, the manager establishes relationships with all the other agencies involved in their care. This enables a joined-up approach to support their progress and narrow any gaps in their learning.
- Partnership with parents are effective as staff invite them in regularly to discuss and view children's files. Parents are aware of the activities their children take part in and can clearly see the progress that they make. Children are proud of their achievements as they eagerly fill their trays with their work to share and extend the learning at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure the information gathered on vetting processes for staff is available for inspection, including checks, such as references and identity checks.

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

- consolidate the new systems for staff supervisions and peer observations in order to maintain and enhance the good quality of teaching
- enhance children's opportunities to develop their social skills even further by, for example, encouraging them to take turns and value each other's contributions during group activities.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children's activities in the main hall, outside and during the snack time routine.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and held discussions with the manager and all other members of staff.
- The inspector sampled the pre-school documentation including a self-evaluation, policies, children's learning journals and registers.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussions on the day.
- The inspector saw evidence of the qualifications of all persons working on the premises, and some documentation in relation to their suitability. First-aid and safeguarding certificates were viewed.

Inspector

Rachel Pepper

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff display a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and utilise the hall space to retain children's interest. For example, children role play with their friends in the set-up hospital and use various tools including a real stethoscope. Staff plan a range of activities to celebrate traditions, such as Easter, by making hats and organising an egg hunt. Children follow instructions as they attempt to find the eggs staff have hidden. They move back and forth excitedly as they listen intently to staff clues, such as how near or far away they are. However, on occasion, children are not reminded to take turns and listen to others' contributions as they compare their numbered eggs to the wall chart. This reduces their opportunities to develop social skills during group activities. Staff take turns to devise the weekly plans and complete observations on all children. This ensures they capture every aspect of their learning. Staff complete accurate assessments and consistently follow through next steps for learning to ensure children make good progress.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children is good

Children are familiar with the daily routines and help to tidy the toys away after staff provide suitable notice. This allows them time to finish their chosen games. Children practise their self-help skills as they collect wellington boots and attempt to dress themselves before they play outdoors. Children delight in chasing the bubbles staff provide to demonstrate the effect of wind and use up energy as they exercise. In addition, they enjoy nutritious, balanced snacks to promote their good health. Children receive comfort and reassurance from staff as needed. This supports their emotional well-being and demonstrates the secure bonds they have developed with other adults. Children are assigned to the key person they show a preference for following their first few sessions, supporting these attachments to form.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision requires improvement

The manager has made some improvements to practice, as staff now evaluate all planned activities. Therefore, they are able to monitor the learning and development requirements and extend the future learning for individual children. Improvement plans also include increasing the resources available outdoors to enhance children's experiences. Through self-evaluation the manager acknowledges her weakness in organising the pre-school paperwork. Generally, she has an appropriate understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. For example, the manager explains in detail the procedures she follows for the safe recruitment of staff. This includes completing vetting processes, such as gaining references to assess their suitability. On the day of inspection, Disclosure and Barring Service checks were seen for the staff in attendance. However, further documents to demonstrate that the other suitability checks have been undertaken were not available to view. This is an identified breach. The manager is in the process of implementing more formal staff supervisions. These will include findings from the new peer observations with the aim of further enhancing staff teaching practice.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY371259
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	858055
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	Cotter Coxon Limited Liability Partnership
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2009
Telephone number	01502 582643

St Nicholas Pre School was registered in 2008 and is privately owned. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon, with a lunch club available from 12 noon until 12.55pm. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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