

St Nicholas Preschool

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



Inspection date	14 March 2019
Previous inspection date	13 January 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This is a provision that requires improvement

- The system for reviewing and recording information about the suitability of newly appointed staff is not sufficiently robust. This means the suitability of adults is not fully assured. For example, the manager has not referred to the guidance regarding the portability of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks or recorded the details of checks made using the DBS update service.
- The manager, who is also the registered provider, has not yet fully embedded the planned changes to staff supervision, coaching or targeted training opportunities, to develop staff's personal effectiveness.
- Staff do not make full use of the learning opportunities in the outdoor environment. This particularly impacts on children who learn better outdoors.

It has the following strengths

- The manager and her staff team are well qualified. The manager is committed to developing the nursery and taking steps to improve the quality of provision.
- Staff recognise children's efforts and encourage them to celebrate achievements with their friends during group times. This helps to promote their self-esteem and sense of belonging.
- The manager monitors children's learning regularly. She uses this information to help evaluate and identify areas for improvement in the provision.
- Parents praise the warm interactions staff have with children. They feel their children are safe and cared for during their time in the setting. Parents report being well informed about their child's learning and development, and they regularly have opportunities to talk about children's progress. They appreciate how well staff know their children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
maintain records of the vetting processes that have taken place to demonstrate how staff's suitability has been assessed, and make such records available for inspection.	05/04/2019

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

- strengthen the programme of supervision for staff, including the provision of training and coaching, to develop their personal effectiveness to the highest level
- maximise the learning and development opportunities in the outdoor environment to further support children, particularly those who learn better outdoors.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held a number of discussions with the manager. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector
Kate Oakley

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

Recruitment procedures are not fully developed. The manager's approach to checking the suitability of staff is not thorough enough and lacks vigour. For example, the manager has not made a record all of the required information to show how staff's suitability has been assessed. Despite this, the impact on children is minimal as the manager has gathered DBS checks for staff conducted by their previous employers and ensures staff do not work unsupervised with children. Staff have a good knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have attended training to help them recognise the signs and symptoms which may indicate a child is at risk. They know how to report their concerns if needed. The manager has sought support from local authority advisers to help her identify priorities for development and make changes.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The well-qualified staff demonstrate good teaching skills. They understand how children learn and develop. Staff build relationships with parents through their consistent key-person system. This helps them to effectively share information and work together to meet the individual needs of children. Staff promote children's early literacy well. They provide lots of opportunities for children to make marks with different materials and access high-quality books. Staff prompt children to find their name on arrival and self-register. This helps children to recognise letters. Staff talk to children as they play, offering key words and asking relevant questions. This promotes children's thinking skills and builds their vocabulary.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children enjoy exploring the range of interesting activities on offer. They pot seeds, weigh toy dinosaurs on scales and explore a tray of sensory materials such as pom-poms and pine cones. Staff support children to develop an understanding of positive behaviours. For example, children learn to hang their coats up, remember the rules for using the climbing frame and help to put away toys. Staff use a sand timer to help children prepare for changes of activity, such as tidying up for snack time. Children have lots of opportunities to be physically active. They scale the indoor climbing frame to use the slide and run around the garden. Staff help children learn to use the toilet and wash their hands to maintain their personal hygiene. Children practise being independent. They pour their milk at snack times and count out pieces of fruit on to their plate.

Outcomes for children are good

Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress well from their starting points. They develop key skills for their next stage in learning, such as school. Children are motivated, engaged learners. They are busy throughout their session and are able to concentrate on activities for periods of time appropriate for their age. Children enjoy group story times and listen carefully.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY371259
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10074092
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	T & M Cotter LLP
Registered person unique reference number	RP905652
Date of previous inspection	13 January 2016
Telephone number	07528714535

St Nicholas Preschool registered in 2008 and is privately owned. The setting employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two at level 6. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 9am until 3.15pm, during term time only. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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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