

Inspection of St Nicolas Pre-School and Playgroup

St. Nicolas C of E Primary School, Boxhill Walk, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1HB

Inspection date:

12 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Staff provide a broad range of toys and resources. They encourage children to make choices about what to do. The manager finds out about children's interests and abilities before they start. However, this information is not always shared effectively with key staff to ensure their teaching is focused promptly on what individual children need to learn next.

Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure. They offer reassurance and cuddles to children new to the pre-school. However, staff do not consistently plan activities with a clear focus on learning. Children appear generally happy and to like using the resources. However, staff interactions are not effective in maintaining children's interest. For example, younger children become distracted during times when all children come together for stories or singing.

Children benefit from lots of fresh air and exercise. They are encouraged to spend time outside and to play energetically. This has a positive impact on their physical good health. Children are learning to share and take turns. For example, they share resources as they make pretend food from dough.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Staff who work closely with these children have a thorough understanding of their particular needs. They adapt routines and activities to enable children to join in and learn.

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

- The manager wants children to achieve well and start school as independent and knowledgeable learners. The focus when children first start is on helping them settle. However, this can be at the expense of challenging and engaging learning experiences. Staff provide children with familiar resources. There is less attention to ensuring these also support children's learning effectively. Although children are generally busy, they quickly move between activities and do not show high levels of engagement and curiosity.
- Staff do not successfully adapt their planning and teaching to take account of the changing needs and abilities of the children. They do not effectively sequence the learning for children new to the setting. For example, children are asked to join in with repeated refrains to stories before staff have taught them the words to these rhymes. Children find it hard to join in and lose interest and motivation.
- The manager and staff build warm partnerships with parents. Parents find staff helpful and approachable. Staff make useful suggestions about how to support children's learning at home, especially in preparation for children starting school.

There are effective systems for parents to share information with the manager about any concerns about their children's development. However, systems for them to share this information with other staff are less effective. For example, key staff are not quickly informed when children start with possible concerns about their language development. This means they are unable to quickly focus their teaching on this important aspect of development to help children catch up.

- Staff are jolly. They are enthusiastic when they join in children's play. For example, they laugh with children as they push them around on scooters. They splash their hands in water trays alongside children. However, they do not make consistently good use of these times to extend learning. On other occasions, teaching is more effective. For example, staff sometimes show children new skills, such as how to piece together jigsaws or use their fingers to count.
- Staff are attentive to children's care needs. They sensitively support children who need help with toileting. However, they do not always prioritise children's emotional development. For example, although staff identify children who are shy and anxious about talking to others, they do not prioritise this aspect of their development.
- The manager engages well with her staff. She appreciates their hard work. She ensures that they have regular breaks and time to complete any administrative tasks. The manager meets regularly with staff to discuss any concerns and encourages them to attend training. However, she does not monitor the quality of the curriculum closely enough to focus her support for staff on improving the quality and effectiveness of their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff understand their responsibility to keep children safe. They undertake regular training in line with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The manager discusses safeguarding at staff meetings and keeps staff updated about wider safeguarding issues to ensure their knowledge remains current. Staff have a thorough understanding of the signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know how to share these concerns. The provider and the manager follow thorough recruitment procedures to ensure those they employ to work with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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<p>monitor the quality of teaching more closely so that support, guidance and training for staff can focus more precisely on raising the quality of teaching</p>	<p>30/10/2019</p>
<p>plan and deliver learning experiences that consistently motivate children to learn and which provide good levels of challenge and support in relation to children's ages and developmental stages.</p>	<p>30/10/2019</p>

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

- develop more effective systems for the sharing of information with key staff about individual children so staff can focus their teaching and support more effectively on closing any emerging gaps in learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	153062
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10108503
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	3 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	St Nicolas Pre-School & Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519632
Telephone number	01235 536061
Date of previous inspection	9 June 2015

Information about this early years setting

St Nicolas Pre-School and Playgroup registered in 1982. It is located in Abingdon, Oxfordshire. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, during term time only, from 8.45am to 3.15pm. There are 10 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, eight have appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Holley

Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a learning walk with the manager.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff to find out about individual children and observed the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and children.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and looked at relevant documentation.

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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