

Inspection of St Michael's Playgroup

Finedon Infant School, Orchard Road, Finedon, WELLINGBOROUGH,
Northamptonshire NN9 5JG

Inspection date: 7 October 2019

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 are actively encouraged by staff to develop their confidence to choose their activities. Staff set out resources each day that spark children's interest. For example, children explore a large tray of conkers, conker shells, leaves and compost. They refer to pictures from an autumn walk they did a few days before. This prompts lots of conversation and discussion where children recall the event. Staff promote children's language skills effectively as they listen to them and describe the texture of the different items.

Children settle quickly when they arrive. Those children who require reassurance from staff are managed sensitively. This results in all children being happy and relaxed during the day.

Children learn to be independent and resilient. Staff have high expectations for every child attending. They support children to lead their own play and follow their interests effectively. The team of well-qualified staff think carefully about how they can build on what children already know. Staff are confident to help children make decisions. For example, they ask children to think about how they can stay safe when using the steps down from the lookout tower. As a result of this consistent and respectful approach, children's behaviour is very good.

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

- The manager works closely with the staff team. They have strong shared views and practice. They demonstrate high-quality care and learning experiences for the children. They know the children and their parents and carers well. They take account of parents' wishes when children start attending and keep parents informed about their children's care routines and progress.
- Staff reflect on their activity with children and make adaptations as required to meet children's needs and interests. For example, they notice that children enjoy using the torches and are curious about the shadows they make. In the afternoon, staff extend this interest by providing a light box for children to see how they can make their own shadows on the ceiling. Staff make accurate observations and assessments of children's progress and identify any gaps in their development. They use the information to plan activities that offer suitable challenges and to help children catch up.
- Staff use good teaching strategies. They are attentive to children and mostly approach those who require some guidance or support to choose toys or activities. Staff are enthusiastic, and children benefit from their positive approach. Relaxed and natural conversations take place between staff and children. Staff show children how things work, such as the lift in a toy garage and fire station. However, during tidy-away times towards the end of the

session, some children are not clear about what is happening or what they have to do to help.

- Children thoroughly enjoy exploring the outside play area. They are physically active, as they run from one end of the garden to the other, skilfully avoiding obstacles during a game with a member of staff. Children become deeply involved in water play, filling and emptying containers. They know how to put their wellington boots on before they squat down in a shallow pool to play. Children are supported to be independent. Most children can change out of their wet clothes after playing in the water.
- Children take part in a range of activities that broaden their knowledge. Staff work well with parents to find out what children already know, and they plan activities to extend their experiences. For example, children go for a walk to a local woodland to see the changing colours of the leaves and collect conkers. Indoors, staff set up resources that show a hairdresser's salon for children to take part in role play with their friends and the staff.
- Children enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes during group activities. They join in enthusiastically with the actions as staff demonstrate them. However, staff occasionally select stories that are too long for younger children and this results in some children becoming distracted.
- Playgroup staff work closely with other providers the children attend and with the Reception staff in the school. For example, a childminder who cares for a number of the children attending the playgroup spends time with them at playgroup. This contributes to a consistent approach for children. The playgroup is involved with activities within the school. For example, the children join in with singing for the harvest festival that is due to take place at the local church. This partnership supports children in being prepared for starting school when the time comes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff give high priority to making sure that children are safe in the playgroup. Staff know the signs and symptoms of abuse and they are familiar with the procedures to follow, such as recording and reporting any concerns that arise. Staff complete training regularly to ensure that their knowledge of safeguarding is up to date. They are vigilant in their supervision of children and they carry out suitable risk assessments to identify and minimise hazards.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- enhance the planning of large-group activities to ensure they are meaningful for each child's age and stage of development

- focus more precisely on the organisation of the routines for tidying away at the end of the session so that all children know what to do.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY546320
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10102516
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	St Michael's Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522414
Telephone number	07597557861
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St Michael's Playgroup re-registered in 2017. It is situated on the site of Finedon Infant School in Finedon, Northamptonshire and is managed by a committee. The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff. All hold early years qualifications between level 2 and level 6. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

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 and the playgroup manager carried out a learning walk around the setting to help the inspector understand the organisation and structure of the playgroup curriculum.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the playgroup manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the playgroup manager and with two members of staff. She reviewed relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the playgroup.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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