

Inspection of Portico

106 Mere Grange, Leaside, St Helens WA9 5GG

Inspection date: 22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
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 appear to be extremely happy and settled in this high-quality nursery. Staff provide a variety of exciting opportunities that ignite children's curiosity and passion for learning. For example, babies investigate the 'curiosity corner'. They climb in and out of suitcases filled with sand and delight in exploring the texture with their hands and feet. Children have access to a variety of good-quality resources that spark their imagination.

The nurturing staff team support children to develop their emotional well-being. Children demonstrate secure emotional attachments with staff as they enjoy cuddles, giggle and share humour. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. Children are extremely kind, respectful and accepting of others. They demonstrate excellent behaviour, solve minor conflicts between one another and show a superb understanding of what is right and wrong.

Leaders and managers are highly passionate and dedicated to their role. Together with a well-qualified staff team, they provide children with a broad and ambitious curriculum. Children are keen and motivated learners who gain the required skills for the next stage of their education. They persevere during challenging activities and find new ways to achieve their goals. For example, when exploring powder paint, it tips over and children are fascinated by this. They eagerly mix the paint together and talk about the different colours that they can see.

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

- The leadership team has a clear vision for the future of the nursery. Overall, they use self-evaluation effectively to reflect on practice and identify areas for improvement. For example, professional development has enabled staff to enhance their environment to inspire curiosity, awe and wonder in children. Children relish the rich opportunities presented to them, such as mysterious trinkets with hidden treasure.
- Staff know children well and have an accurate understanding of children's capabilities. However, some staff do not make the most of interactions with children to fully engage them in learning to further extend their knowledge. That said, staff incorporate exciting activities into the daily routine. For example, children explore flour in large trays and make large and small prints with the tractor wheels. Children are excited by the different marks they make and use mathematical language in their play.
- The well-being of staff is of utmost priority for the leadership team. Their hard work is recognised and celebrated. Staff feel valued and appreciated with the exceptional support they receive.
- Effective partnerships with parents are of paramount importance. Leaders share

their expertise as they support children's emotional development. The leadership team delivers a presentation on neuroscience to support parents to understand their children's behaviours.

- Procedures for children with allergies and medical conditions are monitored meticulously. Parents comment that they are confident in staff's abilities to manage the care of children with medical needs. Staff have attended comprehensive medical training to ensure they can expertly attend to children's needs in an emergency.
- Staff obtain important information from parents to establish starting points in children's learning. They plan for children's interests and stage of development, creating a personalised curriculum. Children make good progress from their starting points, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff provide excellent support for children with SEND and work closely with professionals. For example, the introduction of a sensory room has created a calming space for children to engage with sensory resources.
- Children of all ages enjoy an excellent array of rigorous physical activity. Pre-school children take part in a daily mile, showing an obvious sense of achievement. Children talk about the changes in their heartbeat and what effect it has on their breathing. Younger children play football and beam with pride as they shout 'goal'. They show great pride as staff join in with their celebration.
- Children are immersed in a language-rich environment. A sharp focus on language development supports emerging vocabulary extremely well. Staff skilfully talk to children while they play, introducing new words. For example, during a traditional story, children delight in joining in with the familiar phrase, 'Who's been eating my porridge?'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities to protect children from abuse and neglect. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about children's welfare, including protecting children from wider safeguarding concerns. For example, staff are secure in their knowledge of how to recognise signs of a child being drawn into extreme situations. Robust policies, inductions and regular staff training strengthen all aspects of safeguarding practice. Staff are clear about the procedures to follow in an event of an allegation against a member of staff. Staff vigilantly provide a safe and secure environment for all children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- Continue the monitoring of staff practise to help to continue the quality of staff interactions with children to a consistently high level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY552592
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10133747
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 to 4
Total number of places	118
Number of children on roll	66
Name of registered person	Portico Day Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP900806
Telephone number	07747 105644
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Portico day nursery registered in 2017. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, two at level 4, one at level 5 and three at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Strutt

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector observed the quality of education and the support for children's learning during activities inside and outside.
- A joint observation of an activity was conducted by the inspector and the manager.
- Parents' views were taken into account through verbal and written feedback.
- Discussions were held with staff and the children at appropriate times during the inspection.

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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