

Inspection of Preston Nursery School

Preston Village Hall, School Lane, PRESTON, Hertfordshire SG4 7UE

Inspection date: 4 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's safety is compromised by significant weaknesses in leadership and management. Some staff do not have a sufficient knowledge of safeguarding. They do not fully understand their role and responsibility to protect children. The provider has not made arrangements to ensure there is a designated person for safeguarding children available to contact in her absence.

Children do not always show high levels of curiosity or engagement. They demonstrate they are happy at the nursery and play together generally well. There is a strong emphasis on the curriculum to promote children's awareness of mathematics and literacy through the use of numbers and rhyming words. This works well with the older children who staff challenge to make predictions and introduce to addition and subtraction. However, staff do not always show the ability to adapt their teaching to accommodate the needs or interests of the younger children. They do not make the most of prime opportunities to extend children's learning beyond what they already know and can do.

Children learn that they need to help at tidy-up time and to line up when it is time to come in from the outdoors. They show independence as they use the toilet and wash their hands before they eat. Children are confident to ask for help as they need, or let adults know when they feel unwell.

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

- Breaches to the welfare requirements have a significant impact on children's safety and welfare. Although the provider keeps her own knowledge up to date, she does not use the information she has access to effectively. She does not reflect on her practice well enough to identify areas of weakness.
- The provider does not have effective systems in place to monitor staff practice. She does not provide staff with adequate support or ensure they all have the skills and knowledge required to perform their roles effectively. At present, supervision consists of meetings between the core staff team, and the provider makes suggestions about reading materials staff might like to review.
- While some staff say they feel supported by the team and are willing to complete further training, others show a lack of focus or motivation to improve on their practice. This has led to a rapid decline in the quality of provision.
- Staff's interactions with children are not of a consistently good quality. For example, at times, staff continue to focus on number recognition with young children who struggle to pronounce their words. Outdoors, staff do not always step in at opportune moments to show children how resources can be used.
- The provider and staff use a range of ways to communicate with parents and involve them in children's learning. For example, parents receive regular

newsletters that detail the rhyming word for each week. In addition, they are invited to regular social outings and parents' evenings and are encouraged to view their child's learning journal at any time.

- Staff establish relationships with the other settings children attend. For instance, they gain information from childminders who share care of the children to help identify each child's starting points. Through the use of assessment, key staff help children to make steady progress and gain the basic skills for future learning.
- Children enjoy activities linked to a weekly theme. They listen to familiar stories, such as 'The Gingerbread Man', and recite the phrases they have learned during play. Children complete related computer games and demonstrate their smaller physical skills as they move the mouse control to select the correct answer.
- Staff strictly adhere to children's dietary requirements and remind parents when medication their children require is about to expire. They make sure that children have regular access to outdoor activities, including weekly woodland walks where they explore the environment and can search for bugs. These activities help to promote children's health.
- Parents are very happy with the care their children receive. Many have attended the nursery themselves and are eager to register their own children. Parents feel that children make especially good progress in their use of numbers and words, and that they are always eager to share what they have learned.
- On occasion, young children are expected to sit for too long during adult-led activities and become a little restless. Staff do not show enough flexibility with the daily routines to be responsive to children's changing needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider does not take all reasonable steps to ensure children are kept safe. She has not considered that staff who support the nursery on a part-time basis must also be alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect. The provider has not ensured that they know the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child or the practice of another member of staff. She has not considered how staff will receive support and guidance if a safeguarding issue was to arise in her absence. The core team of staff understand their responsibilities to promote children's welfare.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date

ensure that there is always a practitioner available who takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the nursery	04/03/2020
ensure all staff receive training to understand the safeguarding policies and procedures, in order for them to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way	04/03/2020
ensure that the arrangements for staff supervision are effective to monitor the quality of teaching, identify ongoing training needs and tackle underperformance	04/03/2020
improve the quality of staff's interactions with children so that they are consistently engaged in purposeful learning experiences, in particular to consider the needs and interests of the youngest children during planned activities.	04/03/2020

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

- develop the process of self-evaluation to clearly highlight strengths and weaknesses of current practice and support continuous improvement
- review the organisation of daily routines to be even more flexible to children's changing needs and help children to sustain high levels of engagement.

Setting details

Unique reference number	146756
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10127376
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	22
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	Woolner, Jenny
Registered person unique reference number	RP909556
Telephone number	01462 438985
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2016

Information about this early years setting

Preston Nursery School registered in 1988. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including one with early years professional status. The nursery opens from Monday to Thursday, during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until midday and from midday until 3pm. There is a lunch club available between midday and 1pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Pepper

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 spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a walk around the nursery to find out about children's learning experiences and a joint observation with the nursery provider.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- 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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