

Inspection of St Cuthberts Playgroup

St. Cuthberts Primary School, Balmain Road, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE3 3QR

Inspection date: 25 May 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and confident learners who seek adults when needed but are also happy to play independently for sustained periods. Children have well-planned resources, with picture cards to help them to understand what they are going to learn and to choose a new activity. Staff speak clearly and simply, reinforcing such concepts as 'your turn' and 'my turn' without cluttering or confusing the messages. As children play and explore, staff introduce new vocabulary. For example, as children use bricks to build a tower, staff talk about whether the tower is 'bigger' or 'smaller' than the children. Children listen to stories and engage in action songs. This helps them to build confidence and to understand new words. Children learn about concepts, such as 'floating' and 'sinking'. They watch in fascination as they discover which object will sink to the bottom or float to the top. Children behave well. Staff are good role models for them. They show children how to be kind and to respect others. They help children to take turns and share. Children are supported to learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, when they get up from the snack table with food, staff remind them about the importance of sitting down when eating.

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

- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes within the playgroup. The new manager has wasted no time in identifying what the playgroup does well and what it needs to do to improve. She has made changes to how staff assess what children can do and how this information is used to plan the next steps in their learning. This is beginning to have a positive impact on the progress that children make.
- Promoting children's communication skills is at the core of the playgroup's curriculum. The recent interventions, such as small group time and 'Talking with Twos', are enabling children to make strong progress in this area. Parents report how they have seen significant improvements in their children's confidence and speech.
- During the period when the playgroup was closed due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions, the staff provided parents with remote learning for children. For example, how to make play dough and sharing ideas for activities that children could complete at home. Since reopening, after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, staff have focused on children's social and emotional development. This is because they found that children needed extra help at this time in managing their feelings and in learning to work and play with others.
- Children are happy, safe and well cared for. Staff know the children well and, consequently, learning is effectively tailored to their needs. However, the pace at which staff give information during adult-led activities is, occasionally, too fast. This does not always give children time to consider, develop and express

their own emerging ideas.

- Children develop good listening skills and confidently talk together and with staff. They enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and show a good recall of the key facts. For example, children are able to recount enthusiastically and accurately the story of 'The Three Bears'. They delight in demonstrating how Goldilocks falls when she breaks baby bear's chair.
- Children achieve well in their physical development. They show confidence in peddling tricycles in the outdoor area and all thoroughly enjoy their early morning 'music and movement' session. Staff work together to promote children's understanding of routines and expectations. As a result, children behave well. They follow instructions, take turns and share equipment with one another.
- Staff have a good understanding of how to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. Initially, this is often in developing listening skills, before becoming confident as talkers.
- Staff are extremely warm, kind and patient in their interactions with children. They gather important information about children's daily routines and care needs before they start. However, they do not always ask parents to provide details about what children already know and can do, to establish children's starting points quickly and precisely.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to identify potential signs of abuse and neglect. They are confident in the procedure to follow if they have concerns about the welfare of children. Staff supervise children well and inform each other when they are moving children between different rooms. They ensure that the environment is safe through regular checks for potential hazards. The manager ensures that staff receive regular training to keep their knowledge and practice up to date.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- give children more opportunity to think about and consolidate the information given by staff during some activities, taking account of their need to think about and share their responses and ideas
- extend the level of initial information obtained from parents to include further details of children's development, to plan more precisely for their continued progress from the outset.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY479079
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10106928
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Hagan, Susan Jayne
Registered person unique reference number	RP514101
Telephone number	07890452279
Date of previous inspection	7 May 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Cuthberts Playgroup registered in 2014. The playgroup employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday during term time. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am and from 8.45am until 3pm. The playgroup provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- A joint observation was carried out by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the playgroup's documents. This included evidence about staff suitability and training.
- A meeting was held between the inspector, the manager and provider.
- The inspector and the manager completed a 'learning walk' across all areas of the setting to understand how the early years provision and curriculum is organised.

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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