

Inspection of St Nicolas Pre-School and Playgroup

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

Inspection date: 22 June 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 arrive very happy and excited for their day at pre-school. They settle quickly and are warmly greeted by staff and their friends. Children confidently introduce themselves to visitors and are proud to show their pictures and independent writing. They engage enthusiastically with the activities staff provide for them that are based on their interests and what they need to learn next. The manager and staff organise a broad curriculum for children to motivate their play and learning. Children are keen to learn and concentrate well in activities. For instance, they enjoy using their imagination with their friends to navigate the castle in the garden and avoid the 'lava' floor. They encourage each other to join in and have a go and congratulate each other when they are successful.

Children feel secure and develop a sense of belonging. They understand the routines of the setting. For example, they know that when the triangle rings they must finish their activity and move to find their named space on the carpet. Children behave well and are kind and considerate towards their friends. When necessary, staff gently remind children of the expectations of behaviour.

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

- The manager, supported by the committee and staff team, has made effective improvements since the last inspection to support children's learning. They are much clearer about the intent for the curriculum and how best to implement it. Information is shared more swiftly after children first start, to enable staff to begin to support their learning sooner. The manager monitors staff practice effectively to support further improvements.
- The manager has an ambitious vision for the setting and a clear picture of what skills and knowledge she wants children to learn at the setting. She has developed a strong curriculum for all children and ensures this is adapted to meet the learning needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The manager also makes good use of pupil premium funding to meet children's individual needs. Consequently, all children make good progress and are well supported in the setting.
- Children's physical development is particularly well supported and they are very active. Staff support children to develop a wide range of physical skills. Children learn to climb, run, ride wheeled vehicles, jump, mark make and use tools and equipment.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents speak very highly of the setting. They value the support given to their children and their families and especially to those children with SEND. The setting provides effective ideas and suggestions for home learning to support children's development even further. Due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, parents are unable to enter the pre-school

building. Staff utilise electronic communications to ensure information is shared effectively with parents. Therefore, this has had no impact on children's learning and development.

- There is a sharp focus on supporting children's communication and language development. Children enjoy listening to stories and choose to read books independently. Staff help children who speak English as an additional language to develop early communication and language skills and also those children for whom communication is a little harder. They have made visual cards that children are able to use to share their emotions, feelings and needs. Parents are also able to use these at home. However, staff do not always make the most of large-group activities to extend children's learning and thinking or to support their engagement fully. This results in children getting bored and losing interest.
- The manager implements systems to ensure that staff's workload is managed effectively and their well-being is consistently supported. Staff are able to access regular training to keep their own knowledge and skills up to date and continue to improve their teaching and support children in the best possible way.
- Children's independence is not as well supported as it could be. Staff do not make use of all opportunities available to them to promote and encourage independence, such as involving children fully at group times or at snack times.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff make good use of risk assessments to provide children with a safe and secure environment. They support children to feel safe and secure. The manager follows robust recruitment procedures to ensure that those caring for children are suitable for their role. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. The manager ensures that staff keep their child protection knowledge up to date through regular training. All staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child or an allegation is made against an adult caring for children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to enhance the planning and organisation of large-group activities to maximise the engagement and learning of all children
- develop staff's understanding of how they can consistently promote children's independence skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	153062
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10124820
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 at time of inspection	3 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	St Nicolas Pre-School & Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519632
Telephone number	01235 536061
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2019

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 from 8.45am to 3.15pm. There are nine members of staff who work with the children. Of these, eight have appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The setting receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Clare Perry

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk and discussed how the curriculum and setting are organised.
- Children and parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- 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 at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector discussed the leadership of the setting. The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021