

Inspection of St Michael's Pre-School

Mace Road, Stanground, PETERBOROUGH PE2 8RQ

Inspection date: 29 June 2021

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

All children who attend the pre-school receive the early years education they truly deserve, to succeed in life. The very secure attachments formed between staff and children give them a strong sense of belonging. They are motivated to join in and 'have a go' in activities. Children show an excellent level of confidence and independence for their age. In large group situations, they readily tell everyone about their experiences outside of the setting and are self-assured to answer questions from staff. Children are consistently nurtured by highly skilled staff who understand the fundamental importance of helping children to be ready to start school and preparing them for life in modern Britain.

Children build strong friendships with their peers and are confident to ask them for help. When they are making a den, children work together to solve problems, such as how they can prevent material falling from each side. Children are proud of their achievements. At the water table they confidently tell staff, 'I am good at this' as they scoop up items in a net. Staff provide consistent meaningful praise that helps children to build high levels of self-esteem.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive exemplary care and learning opportunities. Staff are very quick to identify where additional support may be required. They work extremely closely with parents and other professionals to narrow any gaps in attainment and provide a fully inclusive environment in which children thrive.

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

- Staff consistently help children to follow and respect the rules of the pre-school, to understand how to behave appropriately and keep themselves safe. Children understand the consequences of their actions. They tell staff that if they hurt their friends, it will make them sad. As a result, behaviour is exemplary.
- Children and their family's well-being is highly prioritised especially during times of change, such as during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Staff consistently 'checked in' on families who were unable to attend. They sent a variety of thoughtful resources home to promote children's ongoing learning. This included video recordings of staff singing songs and reading books. Staff have fully embraced the extra challenges this time has brought and confidently adapted practice to ensure children's and family's needs are still consistently met. Parents are very grateful for the efforts that staff made. Those parents spoken to during the inspection were very complimentary about the pre-school and staff.
- Children demonstrate excellent independence skills. They rarely need reminders from staff to wash their hands before snack or to change their shoes for

wellington boots when playing outdoors. When a sound is played children know to calmly come and sit on the floor ready for circle time. This shows children are very familiar and comfortable with the daily routines. Children move confidently between play areas and make their own play choices from the interesting variety of experiences on offer. As a result, children show high levels of well-being and engagement.

- Children's communication and language development is given high priority. Children hear the initial sounds in letters and staff encourage them to think about words that begin with these sounds. When looking at books with staff, children are interested in what is happening in the story and ask meaningful questions to satisfy their own curiosity. Children use their own descriptive words, such as 'fluffy', to describe what they can feel in a book. They are introduced to new words, such as 'bamboo' and 'canes' that help to extend their vocabulary.
- The manager shares with staff the clear and ambitious aims for children attending the pre-school. She ensures staff implement a curriculum that enables children to securely build and remember new knowledge and skills. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of all children's families and backgrounds. This helps them to carefully tailor the support and learning needed for each individual child. Very successful systems are in place to observe and monitor children's progress to ensure they reach their full potential.
- The manager shares and promotes her passion with staff to provide the best possible care and education for all children. She meticulously and consistently evaluates the needs of the pre-school and the practice of staff through rigorous performance management. Professional development opportunities are plentiful and carefully chosen to make the very best impact on children's learning and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate a very secure understanding of safeguarding, including the wider remits, such as identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation. They fully understand their duty to protect children in their care and are clear on the procedures for reporting any concerns they may have about children and adults in the pre-school. Recruitment is robust and there are stringent procedures in place to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff and committee members.

Setting details

Unique reference number	256826
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10137531
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 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	45
Name of registered person	St Michael's Pre-school Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP517231
Telephone number	01733686158
Date of previous inspection	12 November 2015

Information about this early years setting

St Michael's Pre-School registered in 1992. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above. The manager holds appropriate early years qualifications at level 6. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday term time only. Opening hours are from 8.30am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Carly Mooney

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) 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.
- This inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together. They discussed the curriculum and the learning intent for children.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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