

Inspection of St Nicholas House

St Nicholas House, Walton Lane, Birchwood Park, Warrington WA3 6YL

Inspection date: 1 December 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	Good
--	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The nursery is filled with happy and confident children, who keep trying and express delight when they achieve what they set out to do. Babies create close bonds with skilled and experienced staff, which helps them to feel safe. Babies giggle as they play with familiar musical instruments. They learn to recognise themselves in mirrors, and begin to develop an early respect for books. Babies also make great progress in their physical development, such as crawling and taking their first steps, as staff know precisely how to support them in this. Toddlers develop their self-care skills as they begin to use potties and toilets and wash their hands independently. Children treat each other kindly and are respectful to everyone around them.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff are providing children with even greater support in the development of their communication and language, and social skills. They are also providing children with greater challenge in their learning to help them to catch up. Small group activities provide children with lots of opportunities to express their own thoughts and ideas, which helps boost their confidence. Children are learning the sounds that letters represent. They identify letters of the alphabet that are significant to them and make the links to a variety of different words.

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

- The support in place for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is excellent. Leaders leave no stone unturned when it comes to removing barriers to learning. External professionals monitor intervention plans, alongside nursery staff, and children with SEND make good progress. For example, very young children progress rapidly in their physical development, which prepares them well for the next stages in their learning.
- Partnership working is a strength of the nursery. Links with parents and external professionals are rooted in trust and respect. Parents comment that staff are 'amazing and really care for the children'. Staff provide daily updates to parents and share ideas to help extend their children's learning at home. For example, staff share consistent strategies to help children regulate their behaviour. This approach helps to provide continuity in children's learning and aids their progress.
- Children access a variety of books. Staff read to children with enthusiasm and children relish opportunities to enact the roles of their favourite characters. Pre-school children talk about taking books home to share with their parents. The impact of this can be heard throughout the nursery. Toddlers talk with increasing fluency, while pre-school children talk in complex sentences and are able to explain their ideas coherently.

- Overall, children are confident and competent communicators. However, some staff do not consistently pronounce the correct letter sounds and words when speaking to children. For example, staff, occasionally, say 'fing' and 'avin', which does not help to best support children's emerging vocabulary.
- In the main, children are taught about the world around them. For example, they enjoy learning about different celebrations, such as Christmas and Eid. However, children have limited opportunities to learn about similarities and differences beyond their own experiences. This does not help to fully enrich their awareness of the wider world.
- Staff support children's large-muscle development. Children relish opportunities to climb on low-level apparatus outdoors and show excellent physical skill while playing football. This helps to develop their balance and coordination.
- Overall, staff receive support during supervision sessions and appraisal meetings. They feel valued and, generally, staff morale is high. However, leaders do not consistently provide staff with incisive feedback to raise their teaching to a higher level.
- Leaders evaluate the nursery well. Priorities for improvement are accurate and include the views of children, parents and staff. The capacity for leaders to continually improve and bring about change is good. This helps to promote children's care, learning, and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and leaders at the nursery are fully committed to safeguarding children in their care. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns for any children in the nursery. The staff know the children very well and, as such, are attuned to changes in behaviour that might indicate concern. Both staff and leaders accurately recognise what constitutes an allegation. They are clear about the action they would take in the event of an allegation being made, or inappropriate practice being observed. On a daily basis, staff ensure that the nursery environment is clean, well maintained, and thoroughly risk assessed to ensure that children are safe. Leaders ensure that staff to children ratio requirements are always met and that staff are appropriately deployed to meet the needs of all children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff knowledge of how to teach children about differences and similarities
- provide staff with incisive feedback about their interactions with children, to raise their teaching to a higher level

- strengthen children's communication and language skills, by supporting staff to model the correct pronunciations of letter sounds and words.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY259610
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10214423
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	120
Number of children on roll	101
Name of registered person	Busy Nought to Fives Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP906936
Telephone number	01925 850755
Date of previous inspection	17 August 2017

Information about this early years setting

St. Nicholas House registered in 2003 and is one of six settings owned and managed by a private company. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas. It provides funded early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are currently 22 members of staff employed who work directly with children. Of these, two hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 6, two hold qualifications at level 4, 16 hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds qualifications at level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Richard Sutcliffe
Luke Heaney

Inspection activities

- This inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process.
- This was the first inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and took that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspectors took account of the verbal views of parents.
- A range of documentation was reviewed by the inspectors in relation to the suitability of staff.
- Observations of specific teaching and learning activities were carried out jointly with the manager. The inspectors evaluated the quality of education across the nursery.
- The inspectors spoke with a number of staff and considered their knowledge of how to keep children safe.

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