

Inspection of St Leonards Preschool

Palace Gate Centre, 3 Palace Gate, Exeter, Devon EX1 1JA

Inspection date: 30 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Weaknesses in leadership and management compromise children's welfare. Although the designated safeguarding lead can identify when children may be at risk of harm, she does not report identified concerns about children's safety to the relevant child protection agencies. Additionally, staff do not routinely challenge parents when they use their mobile phones in the setting around children.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and access a broad curriculum. They demonstrate an understanding of specific words, such as when playing with 'gloop'. They use good vocabulary to describe the cornflour and water mixture, commenting 'look, it's dribbling through my fingers', giving meaning to their actions. Children develop sound problem-solving skills as they try to guess whether the 'gloop' will go through the holes of a sieve. They learn about textures to help promote their creative development. For instance, they explore how the 'gloop' starts off as a solid and then turns into a liquid.

Children have a positive attitude to learning and staff help them to understand the rules of the pre-school. They use sand timers as a visual aid to help children understand when it is their turn to ride on the tricycles. Staff also encourage children to develop social etiquette. Children sit down at the table when eating and staff encourage them to wait patiently until all their peers have finished eating. Children's behaviour is good.

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

- The manager, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, does not recognise failures in her safeguarding responsibilities. She has not reported her concerns about children's welfare to local safeguarding partners and does not ensure that parents do not use their mobile phones in the setting around children.
- Children have good opportunities to visit places in the local community to develop their understanding of the world. Staff take them to the local cenotaph, where children talk about the poppies and what they represent. Children enjoy trips to the park, where they develop good balance and coordination on the climbing apparatus. They benefit from walks along the river, where children love feeding the ducks.
- Overall, children develop good communication skills. Staff are effective role models and know when to repeat language and add new vocabulary. They use sign language and visual aids to help younger children develop a basic understanding of routines. However, staff do not support those children who do not speak English as well as they could, to help them settle quickly and ensure they can communicate their needs effectively.
- Children develop good imagination skills. They pretend to be 'vets' as they

carefully look after the toy animals and write down any 'injuries' the animals may have. Children then pretend to give the animal an injection to 'make it feel better'.

- Staff help children understand about themselves and others. They talk about when they were babies and encourage children to weigh toy dolls on scales at the 'baby clinic'. Children learn how to dress dolls and wrap them in a blanket to keep them warm. They then take them for a walk in the pushchair around the pre-school.
- Children have good opportunities to be active. They enjoy climbing on the indoor frame and riding on tricycles. Additionally, children use small equipment, such as hole punches, and they squeeze pegs when hanging up their pictures to dry. This helps to develop children's strong finger muscles, helping them to hold writing tools effectively.
- Staff provide a calm and nurturing environment for children. They provide positive interactions and encourage children to recognise their feelings through a variety of activities. For instance, children make faces out of dough and textured materials. Staff use puppets to help them understand different emotions and how these make them feel.
- Staff try to find out about children's interests and abilities prior to starting at the pre-school, to help provide a smooth transition. Parents comment on the positive home learning activities, such as singing specific songs to help children learn about different parts of the body. They state that children's writing, drawing and knowledge of the world have developed significantly and this is noticeable at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Although the designated safeguarding lead has a clear understanding of when a child may be at risk and takes action to record these concerns, she does not share this information to enable local safeguarding partners to protect children's welfare. While staff have asked parents not to use their mobile phones in the pre-school, parents continue to use them, and staff do not challenge this.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that the designated safeguarding lead promptly reports any concerns about children's welfare to the local safeguarding partners	03/12/2021

ensure that all parents and carers are aware of the safeguarding policy around the use of mobile phones in the setting, to ensure children's safety at all times.	03/12/2021
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Setting details

Unique reference number	2541429
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10214384
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	24
Number of children on roll	15
Name of registered person	St Leonards Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP547224
Telephone number	07773656751
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St Leonards Preschool re-registered at its current premises in 2019. It operates in the Palace Gate Centre in Exeter, Devon. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday, from 9am to 2.30pm, term time only. The pre-school provides free early education funding for children aged three and four years old. There are six members of staff who all hold relevant childcare qualifications. The manager has early years professional status, the deputy manager is qualified at level 4, two staff hold qualified teacher status, and two members of staff are qualified at level 2 and level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Joanne Steward

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 manager and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and the manager talked about the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector spoke to the manager and staff. She also spoke with children and parents to gain their views on the provision.
- A range of documents were looked at by the inspector, including child protection records, safeguarding policies and staff suitability.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

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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