

Inspection of St Peters Thundersley Preschool

St Peters Church Hall, Church Road, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3HG

Inspection date: 17 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enter the pre-school cheerfully and wave goodbye to their parents and carers at the main door. They are greeted by friendly staff, who welcome them, ask how they are and help them to begin their pre-school day by washing their hands. Children excitedly skip into the main hall, where they find their friends and engage in their chosen play. They enjoy each other's company and form small friendship groups.

Children behave well. They understand the pre-school's boundaries and follow staff instructions confidently. Children are caring towards each other and demonstrate that they understand the need to take turns and share. When two children want the same piece of equipment or resources, staff help them to find and set a sand timer, so that they can monitor how long they have left before passing the toy to another child. This helps children to begin taking responsibility for managing turn taking and sharing. Children listen attentively as staff read them a well-known story. They enthusiastically join in with familiar parts, using props and puppets to depict the characters in the book.

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

- During the COVID-19 lockdowns, the manager and staff kept in regular contact with families who could not attend the pre-school. They shared ideas with parents about learning they could do with their children. Parents were asked to send photos of activities the children did at home, which the manager copied to their website. On return to pre-school, staff assessed the individual needs of children and planned effectively to help close any gaps in their learning.
- Parents speak very highly of the manager and staff. They comment how well their children settled back into pre-school after the lockdowns, due to the kind and caring support they received from staff. Some comment on the support the manager and staff give them, as parents, as well as their children. Parents are happy with the methods the staff and manager use to communicate with them. They appreciate the personal touch of detail, such as daily communication books for children who are unable to share their day verbally with their parents.
- Staff carry out effective risk assessments to ensure children's safety. For example, they manage access to fire doors that can be easily opened to ensure that children are always well supervised near these potential hazards. Staff monitor the outdoor area before using it, as it can be slippery and dangerous in icy weather.
- Children have fun making their own smoothies. They confidently chop a range of fruit with small safety knives and use electric whisks to blend their fruit with juice. Staff speak to the children about the different fruits they are using and model how to cut the fruit safely on the board. However, staff do not use

opportunities, such as these, to further enhance children's learning. They do not talk about the process used or ask appropriate questions to further challenge children's thinking.

- Children enjoy enacting favourite stories. For example, an area of the hall contains props to the well-known story, 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Children confidently sit the bears on the three different sized chairs and have fun putting them in and out of the different sized boxes used as the bears' beds. Staff are close by to support this play and to encourage children to converse and re-tell the story.
- Children play excitedly with the brightly coloured parachute. They listen carefully to staff's instructions, such as 'all the girls go under' or 'all the boys'. They giggle loudly when the instruction is for 'all the children to go under the parachute'. Staff manage this activity well, giving clear instructions and allowing children time to fully explore and enjoy the experience.
- Children have some opportunities to develop independence, for example during planned adult-led activities. However, they have less learning opportunities that promote their independence in freely chosen play.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff demonstrate secure knowledge of their safeguarding responsibilities. They regularly update and improve their child protection knowledge, for example through training and in-house discussions. Staff recognise the signs and symptoms that would alert them to a child being abused or mistreated and to wider safeguarding issues, such as radicalisation. They would take appropriate action if they had concerns about a child's safety or well-being. The manager conducts robust suitability checks when recruiting new staff and carries out a thorough induction to ensure all staff understand the pre-school's safeguarding policies.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve staff teaching, for example through more effective questioning skills and explanations
- develop further ways to enhance children's independence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	204000
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10220036
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	30
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	St. Peter's (Thundersley) Preschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519144
Telephone number	07948570545
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Peters Thundersley Preschool registered in 1999. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3pm during term time only. There are seven members of childcare staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hughes

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 inspector viewed all areas of the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed their curriculum and what it is that they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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