

Inspection of St Francis Pre-School

Coronation Road, South Ascot, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 9HG

Inspection date: 24 January 2022

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 are happy and settled. Those new to the setting receive lots of attention and support to help them feel safe and welcome. They quickly become familiar with routines and begin to join in and enjoy the activities on offer. Children who have attended for longer arrive full of smiles. They greet staff enthusiastically and begin happily playing with their friends.

Children find the resources interesting and stimulating. This has a positive impact on their behaviour. They become absorbed in their play and are considerate and polite to each other. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff and gentle and effective support when needed. For example, staff help children understand how to roll balls safely indoors.

Children benefit from a curriculum that is, overall, planned well to meet their learning needs. There has been an especially strong emphasis children's personal, social and emotional development in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Children enjoy their interactions with staff, who join in children's play and help them to make friends, play cooperatively and develop their independence. All children, including those who speak English as an additional language, receive effective support to make good progress with their speaking and listening skills.

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

- The manager has led staff very effectively in a programme of improvements since the last inspection. Staff now feel more confident to support children's learning. Parents use words such as 'transformative' to describe the changes they have seen.
- Staff work closely with parents to establish if children need extra help to make the progress of which they are capable. Staff quickly seek support from other professionals and adapt their own teaching to meet each child's needs. This helps to close any emerging gaps in learning.
- Staff understand the importance of children developing a wide vocabulary and the confidence to express their thoughts. They regularly join in with children's play. Staff make good use of these times to encourage children to talk about what they are doing, their interests and their home life. Children respond enthusiastically to the interest staff show in their lives and opinions. They are developing well into confident talkers and effective listeners.
- Children show a love of books. They look forward to times when they come together to listen to stories. All staff join children for story times, prioritising this over other tasks. This helps to ensure that there are no distractions and children can listen and focus well. Children remember the stories they have heard. This was illustrated when they re-enacted stories in their play, repeating refrains

from the book and discussing the plot with friends.

- Staff plan activities to support literacy development. However, they do not always focus closely enough on the skills that will be of most benefit to children of pre-school age. Staff do not always ensure children receive accurate information. For example, they choose to teach about letters and the sounds they represent, but do not always correctly pronounce these sounds.
- Children are eager to learn. They enjoy learning alongside staff and are equally happy practising their new skills alone or with other children. For example, children enjoy it when staff join them in the 'home corner' to make pretend food and drink. They also enjoy working with friends outside to make pretend meals with available resources.
- Staff encourage children to play energetically in order to develop their good health and coordination. Children enjoy using wheeled toys and climbing equipment. This has a positive impact on their appreciation of the benefits of following a healthy and active lifestyle.
- Staff build strong bonds with their key children. For example, children look to their key person for reassurance if feeling a little unsettled. The manager has put in place effective measures to ensure that if key person arrangements need to change, children's needs will continue to be met well.
- Children are safe. Staff supervise them closely, including when using technology. However, staff have not yet incorporated teaching about the safe use of technology into the curriculum, to further children's understanding of personal safety.
- The manager, supported by the chair of the committee, has created a happy workplace. Staff speak very positively about their experience of working at the pre-school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures all staff receive regular training so they can identify the signs that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. Staff understand their responsibility to keep children safe. They know how to report any concerns, including how to escalate concerns beyond the pre-school if necessary. Staff have a secure understanding of wider safeguarding issues, such as signs that a child may be exposed to extreme or radical views. Staff supervise children closely and ensure the premises are safe and secure. The manager takes robust and effective steps to ensure any staff she employs to work with children are suitable to do so.

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 develop further a broad literacy curriculum so they can focus

confidently on the skills and knowledge that will best support children with later reading and writing

- develop children's understanding of how to use technology purposefully and safely.

Setting details

Unique reference number	108433
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10132004
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	St Francis Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522388
Telephone number	01344 291140
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Francis Pre-School registered in 2008 and is set in the grounds of St Francis School, in South Ascot, Berkshire. The provider receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. The pre-school opens five days a week from 9am to 3pm, during term time only. There are five members of staff. The manager and three other members of staff hold relevant qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Holley

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 and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation and evaluated what they observed.
- Children and parents shared their views and the inspector took these into account.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and the nominated individual, and looked at relevant documentation.

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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