

Inspection of Sandcastles Preschool Playgroup

Connor Downs Sunday School, Turnpike Road, Connor Downs, Hayle, Cornwall
TR27 5DT

Inspection date: 3 March 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

Staff greet children warmly as they enter the pre-school. Although parents do not come into the setting following the COVID-19 pandemic, the manager takes time to reassure them at the entrance. Staff help children settle quickly into an activity. This helps children feel safe and secure.

Staff know the children well. They find out about children's interests and learning needs. Children benefit from a varied and well-sequenced curriculum, which supports them to make good progress. Staff help children gain the skills they need for their future learning. For example, children use pencils and crayons to make marks, practise writing their names, and are keen to give 'messages' to a visitor. Children are well behaved. They share and take turns. Staff have high expectations. Children understand the rules and know the routines of the pre-school. They respond to the 'dingdong' bell and move without adult prompting to join together for an activity. They are confident and happy.

Staff help children to develop good language and thinking skills. Children hear a wide range of words, which helps to build their vocabulary. Staff encourage children to take part in conversations and treat their questions with respect. For example, a query about the smell of milk and the smell of cows provokes a thoughtful discussion about the origin of their snack-time food.

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

- The manager has an ambitious curriculum which focuses on teaching language, social and physical skills. There are strong links to other curriculum areas, such as mathematics and understanding the world. Children have lots of opportunities to know familiar stories. They model with clay to make a character from a book. Staff encourage children to talk about what they are doing and practise their skills. Children use mathematical language and manipulate different tools creatively.
- Staff provide a wide range of activities for children and add new resources when needed. Children access these independently and make decisions about what they want to play with. Staff encourage them to develop their imagination. Children pretend to make pasta in the role-play kitchen and sell ice creams in a shop. However, sometimes staff do not notice quickly enough when children are unsure what to do next. Some children become disengaged and their learning is not fully maximised until staff encourage them to join a new activity.
- The manager has a strong commitment to help her staff to improve the quality of their teaching. Staff feel well supported. They have appraisals and access to training. In addition, they have a daily reflection time to discuss the impact of the learning they provide for the children. Children benefit from some high-

quality learning experiences. For example, two-year-old children have a special together time to learn songs and rhymes.

- Staff identify any gaps in children's learning well. The manager and special educational needs coordinator work in partnership with parents and other professionals, to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This ensures that all children are fully included and have every opportunity to succeed.
- Children follow good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before eating and using hand sanitiser. They clear away their plates and cups when they have finished eating. The pre-school has a health and hygiene policy and the curriculum has a focus on oral health. Children choose their daily snack from a choice of healthy foods, water and milk provided by the pre-school. However, the management team does not ensure that lunch box contents always follow the pre-school's healthy eating policy. Therefore, children do not receive consistent messages to support healthy choices around food and drink.
- Children are active and enjoy physical activities. The pre-school has a weekly external sports coach to develop their skills further. Staff encourage children to try something new. Children climb up and through a climbing frame and manoeuvre through spaces on balance bikes. Children develop good self-esteem.
- Parents comment on how well the pre-school helps children to settle when they first start. Staff develop new ways to make learning opportunities available at home. The pre-school has a book lending service and a programme to reinforce vocabulary development at home. Parents feel well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The premises are safe and secure. The entrance to the pre-school is through a securely bolted gate. Staff ensure the areas are safe for children to play. The manager, committee and staff understand their responsibilities in protecting children from harm. Staff sign the safeguarding policy to show they have read and understood it. They are alert to potential signs of when children may be at risk and who to report their concerns to. The members of the management team understand their responsibility to manage any potential allegations against a staff member and how to protect children from wider safeguarding matters.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure staff help all children to fully engage in educational opportunities to keep them involved in learning and make further progress
- ensure staff give consistent messages to children about healthy lifestyles to further promote their understanding of healthy food choices.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY246058
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10070152
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	33
Name of registered person	Sandcastles Preschool Playgroup
Registered person unique reference number	RP521026
Telephone number	07976 315692
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2015

Information about this early years setting

Sandcastles Preschool Playgroup is committee-run and registered in 2002. It operates from the church hall in the village of Connor Downs, near Hayle, Cornwall. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am until 3.30pm during the school term. They receive the nursery education funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs six members of staff: the manager has a degree in early years, the deputy manager holds an early years qualification at Level 4, three staff hold qualifications at Level 3 and one at Level 2.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Nicki Bland

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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all the areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector.
- The inspector talked to staff and a committee member at appropriate times during the inspection.

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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