

Inspection of St Nicholas Pre School Playgroup Hurst

The Small Village Hall, School Road, Hurst, READING, Berkshire RG10 0DR

Inspection date: 23 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

Children enjoy their time at this lively and fun pre-school. They are happy and excited to join in with the large variety of activities and experiences on offer. Children have the choice to play indoors or outside and explore freely. They are able to access resources independently to support their learning. Children express themselves and use their imagination as they mix potions with mud, flowers and leaves. They make large paintings on easels and sing songs as they ride on their pretend bus. Children create sledges out of large plastic mats. They laugh and smile as they whizz down a slope. Staff members join in with enthusiasm as they all have fun taking turns to have a go. Staff teach children about keeping themselves safe as they control the speed they move and carefully carry the mats back up the steep hill.

Children are confident and have a strong sense of belonging. They are looked after sensitively by the friendly and nurturing staff who know them well. Children behave well. They understand the clear expectations of the pre-school. They are polite and kind to their friends. Children help each other and share and take turns. Staff support children to think about how they can find solutions to conflicts and solve problems independently. This helps them in readiness for the next stage of their education, such as starting school.

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

- Staff have high expectations for all children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They form strong partnerships with parents and outside agencies to ensure children's specific needs are met. The manager spends any additional funding effectively to fully benefit children. Staff provide children with challenge and focus on the important skills they need to make good progress. They ensure children are well prepared for their eventual move on to school.
- Staff develop children's understanding of mathematical concepts. Children estimate how many scoops of water they will need to fill a container. They accurately count as they test their prediction. Children improve their hand-to-eye coordination as they focus and concentrate on carefully pouring each ladle in to the jar.
- Staff plan short group times for children to sit together and learn new things. They look at books and sing songs together. Children learn about the weight of objects and find out about animals from around the world. They gain a range of knowledge across a broad curriculum. However, when teaching is presented to larger groups, not all children are as involved or engaged as others. They therefore do not fully benefit from the experience.
- Staff help children understand the effect that physical exercise and fresh air has

on their body. Children run around as they play football together. They move their bodies in different ways, stretching, bending and flexing as they pretend to be superheroes. They balance on wooden beams and crates and practise lifting wheelbarrows filled with objects as they develop their strength.

- Staff regularly hold conversations with children, in order to support their communication and language skills. They talk to children about what they enjoy and discuss what they are doing. Staff introduce children to new vocabulary and concepts. However, at times, staff can be so eager and enthusiastic to share information with children that they do not leave them the time they need to think and respond to questions. Therefore, staff do not always expand children's critical-thinking skills.
- Staff kept in close contact with children and their families during the COVID-19 lockdowns. They shared learning videos daily, in order to support their learning at home. For example, short clips of staff counting feathers, demonstrating a yoga routine and making dough. When children returned to the pre-school, staff came up with fun and inventive ways to welcome them back. For example, they used the pre-school slide to enter the garden as they separated from parents.
- The manager is committed to ensuring all staff are well supported. Staff are provided with opportunities to take part in a range of training courses to enhance their teaching skills. They express that they feel valued and happy in their roles. This contributes to creating a positive atmosphere where children can thrive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are well trained to have the skills and knowledge they need to keep children safe. They know what to do if they were concerned about the welfare of a child. Staff understand the procedures for reporting any safeguarding concerns about children or adults working with children. They are able to recognise signs that a child may be at risk from abuse. All staff hold relevant paediatric first-aid qualifications. They demonstrate a clear understanding of how to deliver first aid and what to do in an emergency. The manager ensures robust risk assessment is in place to provide a safe and suitable setting for children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation of group activities to ensure that all children are fully involved, engaged and able to share their thoughts and ideas
- enhance staff's already good teaching to give children more time to respond and opportunities to answer questions to further develop their critical-thinking skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	148680
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10228277
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	43
Name of registered person	St Nicholas Pre-School Playgroup - Hurst Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518214
Telephone number	0118 934 3677
Date of previous inspection	6 January 2017

Information about this early years setting

St Nicholas Pre School Playgroup Hurst registered in 1973. The pre-school operates Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3pm, term time only. The pre-school employs 10 staff in total. The manager holds early years teacher status and six members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alice M Roberts

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 explained the pre-school curriculum during a learning walk with the inspector.
- Parents provided feedback about the pre-school to the inspector.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of a group activity together and discussed the quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation and discussed the leadership and management of the pre-school 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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