

Inspection of St Agnes Preschool

St. Agnes School, Trelawney Road, ST. AGNES, Cornwall TR5 0LZ

Inspection date:

22 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Despite inconsistencies in the quality-of-care practices, children arrive happy and settle quickly to the exciting activities. Leaders are clear about what they want children to learn and how staff should support this. Children are confident and form good relationships with the staff and each other. However, staff do not ensure children develop a good understanding of keeping safe and healthy. Children play together well, taking turns, listening, and contributing their own ideas. Staff plan effective activities to help children explore their natural environment and understand about cause and effect. For example, older children use magnifying glasses to help them look closely at a beetle's legs, noticing how the glass has made them bigger. They know why plants have roots and confidently explain how bees collect pollen to make honey.

Children enjoy reading books, develop confidence in mathematical language and have good opportunities to strengthen their hands ready for writing. Parents no longer enter the premises as they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they appreciate the pandemic has changed previous procedures and confirm they still exchange daily verbal information with staff. They particularly mention the good relationships and nurturing staff.

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

- Staff plan the environment well to excite children to learn. Children engage well and are eager to take part in activities. However, staff are not always proactive in considering the risks involved in new activities nor do they support older children in identifying risks. For example, staff build an obstacle course using tyres and small planks, which is unstable, causing a couple of children to have minor accidents. Having said this, staff then realise the activity needs greater supervision and hold children's hands to enable them to balance safely.
- Children have good communication skills. Staff engage children in conversations, observing their interests to motivate discussions. Staff ask good open-ended questions, and help children to make links, so that they remember their learning. For example, staff use books to help young children recall shapes and name items in their home the same shape. Staff recast words so that children hear the correct pronunciations and introduce new vocabulary. However, they do not use all opportunities to help children to use the new words as they play and occasionally staff answer questions too quickly, not giving children enough time to respond.
- Key persons know their children well. They monitor children's development to know what they need to be learning next and identify any gaps. The room leaders use all information to plan effectively, overseen by the deputy to ensure they cover all areas of development. Staff use some good teaching techniques,

such as making deliberate mistakes, so that children correct them. This enables staff to know how much children have understood. However, they are sometimes too quick to resolve problems for children, instead of helping them to use trial and error, to determine what works best.

- Staff support children's emotional development well. They have strong bonds with children, which underpins children's confidence and willingness to have a go at new experiences and make new friendships. Staff praise and encourage children, so they are confident and make choices about what they want to do. Staff are consistent and fair managing children's behaviour, so children understand right from wrong. Children keep trying and want to persevere; they are proud of their achievements.
- Children have good opportunities to be outdoors and develop their large muscle skills. They enthusiastically take part in activities that help them learn to care for their teeth. However, staff are not vigilant in supervising children's personal hygiene and occasionally, children do not wash their hands after using the toilet. In addition, children are not always encouraged to wipe their runny noses and occasionally, wet pants go unnoticed for a while. This compromises their health and children's hygiene was raised as a recommendation at their last inspection.
- The management team now involve parents in evaluating their practice; also an area to improve at their last inspection. Parents say staff work well with them, such as supporting potty training. The manager and trustees monitor staff well-being and provide good support for their ongoing development. However, in the manager's absence, staff do not carry out risk assessments on activities, saying that is her role. The special educational needs coordinator is new to her role and is being mentored by the manager. She has a good understanding of her responsibilities and continues to develop her knowledge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive safeguarding training, and the manager has cascaded training in wider aspects of safeguarding, such as the 'Prevent' duty guidance of England and Wales. Staff and management have a good understanding of their responsibilities and know what to do if they have concerns a child may be at risk of harm. In the manager's absence, the deputy knows what to do if an allegation is made against staff and staff know what to do if they have concerns about a colleague. Good recruitment procedures help to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
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focus staff development on risk-assessing activities and supporting children to manage age-appropriate risks safely	30/04/2022
ensure staff are vigilant in helping children to manage their personal hygiene.	30/04/2022

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

- help children to recall new vocabulary in their play and give them time to respond to questions, to help them make even greater progress in their language skills
- support children further in considering how to solve problems for themselves.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY405150
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10062240
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	56
Name of registered person	St Agnes Pre School Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP910827
Telephone number	01872 554005
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2016

Information about this early years setting

St Agnes Pre-school registered in 2010. It is managed by a voluntary board of trustees. The pre-school operates from purpose-built premises in the grounds of St Agnes School in the coastal town of St Agnes, Cornwall. The pre-school is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6.15pm, during term time only and provides wraparound care for school-age children, with occasional holiday care according to demand. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are 13 members of childcare staff, of these, two hold an early years qualification at level 4 and seven at level 3. Two staff hold an appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and two hold a playworker qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elaine Douglas

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 deputy led the inspector on a learning walk around the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum. They carried out a joint observation and discussed the quality of teaching.
- The inspector observed activities and the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's development.
- The inspector held a leadership and management discussion with the deputy and nominated individual.
- The inspector spoke with staff at convenient times and assessed their knowledge of the children and their understanding of safeguarding. The inspector spoke with several parents and children and took account of their views.

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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