

# Inspection of St Michael's Pre-school

St Michael's Woolmer Green School, London Road, Woolmer Green, Hertfordshire  
SG3 6JP

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Inspection date:

24 March 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Outstanding

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is inadequate

Weaknesses in leadership and management mean that children's welfare is compromised. The provider has not ensured that full suitability checks are completed on all staff to verify their suitability. Complaints received and their outcomes are not recorded.

Children arrive happy and make independent choices about what they would like to play with. Staff assess and monitor children's learning. However, they do not have a successful system in place to ensure they complete the required progress check for all children between the ages of two and three years. Staff do not provide rich learning experiences that support children to build on what they need to learn next. Partnerships with other settings that children attend are not in place to support children's continuity of learning. Staff are not well supported to understand their roles and responsibilities and build on the quality of teaching they provide. Children show an interest in books. They listen intently to stories that staff read to them and comment on what they see on the pages. However, children who speak English as an additional language are not encouraged to develop their home language. Children work out how to create different sounds using an accordion.

Children are independent. They successfully manage to change their footwear and follow a good hygiene routine with minimal support from staff. Children receive reminders from staff to replace their sun hat. This helps them to learn about how to stay safe in the sun. They know the importance of a healthy lifestyle as they regularly help themselves to fresh water and talk about the foods that are good for them. Children experiment making different marks in dough with their hands and small tools. This helps to develop the small muscles in their hands in preparation for writing. Children show that they understand the behavioural expectations in place and express warm bonds with staff. Most-able children use complex sentences to recall previous learning. They identify 3D shapes, such as a cuboid and cylinder.

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

- The newly appointed management committee has not checked or taken action to ensure robust recruitment procedures have been implemented to ensure staff's suitability to work with children. This involves obtaining and verifying references for all staff. Disclosure and Barring Service checks are in place for all adults working directly with children and committee members.
- The provider does not support staff with an induction programme that provides them with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They do not ensure that staff have completed this or review their understanding. Staff complete training and receive regular supervision meetings with the manager or

deputy manager. However, these do not focus on supporting staff to raise the quality of their practice.

- Parents are well informed of how to make a complaint should they wish to. However, the provider has not kept an accurate record of complaints and their outcomes to precisely monitor and inform improvement of the service the pre-school provides.
- Staff understand what children already know and can do, which helps them to plan what they intend for them to learn next. However, staff do not implement this within an ambitious curriculum. For instance, learning experiences do not focus on supporting children's next steps in learning. As a result, although children make some progress in their learning, they do not make the best possible progress.
- Staff do not work in partnership with staff at other settings that children attend. Therefore, children do not benefit from a shared approach to their continued learning. They do not fulfil the requirement to complete the progress check for all children between the ages of two and three years within the required timescale. This means they do not identify or seek additional intervention that children may require.
- Children enjoy learning the words to new songs about spring during whole-group time. Staff are animated, which engages children's attention. They encourage children to suggest some actions they would like to add to the songs. Children show they understand the behavioural expectations and follow instructions. They know to put up their hand and wait for their turn to speak. Staff praise children for their suggestions, which supports their emotional well-being. However, less confident children do not benefit from whole-group times. Staff do not adapt their teaching to enable them to express their ideas to build on their confidence and practise their language skills.
- Staff do not support children who speak English as an additional language to develop and use their home language within their play. Children have some opportunities to learn about people in the community. A police officer and nurse have visited the children to talk about their occupations. However, staff do not provide opportunities for children to learn about their own and other cultural backgrounds to broaden their understanding and appreciation of diversity.
- Staff work in partnership with parents to support children to settle swiftly. They obtain important information from parents about children's previous experiences and what they know and can do. However, staff do not make the best use of this information to inform children's next steps in learning from an early stage. Parents comment that staff are 'very friendly' and appreciate their genuine interest in children's achievements from home.
- The outdoor area enables children to develop good physical skills. They swing on ropes, balance on planks and assess their own risks.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider has failed to follow their robust recruitment and vetting procedures to

ensure that staff working with children are suitable. References have not been obtained for some staff. Despite the provider being aware of this, they have failed to take appropriate action. All staff regularly complete safeguarding training. Staff understand and recognise signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of neglect or abuse and know the correct action to take. The provider ensures that there are sufficient staff members to supervise children. Staff trained to provide paediatric first aid are available at all times when children are present.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
implement an effective system to ensure that robust recruitment procedures are followed to verify the suitability of staff	25/04/2022
ensure that induction, supervision and professional development opportunities for staff are robust	15/04/2022
improve and monitor the implementation of the curriculum to ensure that staff deliver learning experiences which are focused on what children need to learn next	15/04/2022
work in partnership with staff at other settings that children attend to fully support their continuity of learning	15/04/2022
ensure that the staff complete and share with parents a progress check for all children between the ages of two and three years old	15/04/2022
ensure that a written record of complaints and their outcomes is kept and maintained	15/04/2022
provide children with opportunities to develop and use their home language.	15/04/2022

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

- improve the quality of teaching to support less confident children to contribute and express their ideas
- make better use of the information provided by parents to inform children's next steps in learning from the outset
- extend opportunities for children to learn about their own and others' cultural backgrounds.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY272315
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10127389
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	26
<b>Name of registered person</b>	St Michael's Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP902071
<b>Telephone number</b>	01438815003
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 June 2016

## Information about this early years setting

St Michael's Pre-school registered in 2003 and is managed by a committee. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday from 9am until 3pm, and Friday from 9am until 1pm, during term time only. There are six staff members who work directly with the children; of these, five hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 and above. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Lorraine Pike

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector and third in charge completed a learning walk across all the areas of the setting to understand how the curriculum is organised.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspector and the third in charge. The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors. She assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to children and held a number of discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the co-chairperson of the committee and the third in charge. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting and committee members.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

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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