

Inspection of Sacred Heart Pre-School

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic School, Greys Hill, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire
RG9 1SL

Inspection date: 4 February 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 thrive in this nurturing and welcoming pre-school. They demonstrate that they feel safe and secure. Children develop close relationships with each other and the staff, who are passionate about their roles. Children enjoy taking turns to be a 'helper'. For instance, they assist in tasks such as serving snacks to their friends or recycling food and packaging. Children follow the nursery routines well. For example, they know to listen for instructions when the bell rings. Children show that they understand the expectations for behaviour. They understand how the use of a sand timer helps to ensure they all take turns.

Staff have high expectations for all children's development, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and for those who speak English as an additional language. Staff prioritise children's development of language and ensure that any gaps in learning close quickly. Children eagerly engage in a variety of planned activities based on their interests and what staff would like them to learn next. For example, they participate enthusiastically in a sensory activity. They walk with bare feet through different materials, while recalling the 'bear hunt' story. They eagerly describe what they are feeling, such as 'soft', 'hard' and 'cold'.

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

- The manager and committee work in partnership and are committed to providing good-quality care and education. They have made successful improvements since the last inspection. For instance, children are now able to access additional resources to support their problem-solving skills.
- The manager and staff have developed a curriculum to support learning. They build this on children's interests and what they understand children can already do. This ensures that children want to engage and that they receive effective challenge. However, on occasions, they do not extend sufficiently the explanations they give to children. Consequently, children do not always understand what is expected of them. For example, when staff ask children to sweep the floor, they do not explain that this is to stop them from slipping over.
- Staff support children to be independent in some of their care needs, such as putting on their coats. However, they do not encourage them to be as independent in their learning as they could be. Consequently, children seek out adult-led activities and do not often choose to play freely alone or with friends.
- Overall, the manager has good expectations of her staff team. She monitors the quality of teaching through regular observations. However, at times she intervenes to offer additional support. This occasionally impacts on the already good teaching that is taking place.
- Staff implement specific plans for children with SEND and those in receipt of

additional funding. They ensure that effective strategies are used to make the biggest difference for these children. Staff work well with other professionals involved in children's care to promote their learning and well-being.

- Children develop effective language and communication skills. Staff target their interactions for children who speak English as an additional language. They speak clearly and carefully to promote children's understanding. Staff skilfully build on children's vocabulary, adding in new words as they speak. For instance, when the children were playing with cars, staff added the word 'big' to the children's discussion about a blue car.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff recognise the need for children to relax and take time to be calm. They have introduced daily mindfulness sessions to promote emotional well-being for children and staff. For example, at the end of the session, children and staff lie quietly together and listen to music. As a result, children cope well with the transitions that follow, either going home or mealtimes.
- Parents say that they are happy with the pre-school. They comment on the good progress children have made, especially with their speech and social skills. Parents explain that staff communicate well with them. Staff share information about children's learning either verbally or through an online platform.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They receive training to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff can accurately identify the possible signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Staff know about a wide range of safeguarding issues, including children who may be exposed to extreme views or beliefs. Staff complete regular risk assessments of the environment, to ensure children's well-being and safety. The manager and committee follow effective recruitment and supervision procedures to ensure staff working 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 recognise and use opportunities to challenge and extend children's knowledge and emerging interests, in order to maximise learning
- extend staff's teaching practice to ensure children consistently benefit from quality learning experiences that support their good progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	133687
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10208815
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	24
Number of children on roll	16
Name of registered person	Sacred Heart Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518036
Telephone number	01491 413892
Date of previous inspection	2 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Sacred Heart Pre-School registered in 1977. It operates from separate premises located in the grounds of the Sacred Heart RC Primary School, in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. The pre-school is committee run. The pre-school opens on weekdays during school term times, from 8.30am to 3.15pm. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The pre-school employs four members of staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds a level 5 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Clare Perry

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 joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a planned activity.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector relevant documentation and they reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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