

Inspection of Margaret McMillan Nursery School

Margaret MacMillan Nursery, 24 Hoe Street, PLYMOUTH PL1 2JA

Inspection date: 20 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive in this welcoming and nurturing nursery. Parents especially value the affectionate relationships their children form with all staff, particularly their key persons. Staff are very attentive and give regular cuddles, reassurance and praise. As a result, children develop high levels of emotional security and confidence. For example, older children confidently find the resources they need for successfully completing activities. They help each other, become able learners and show pride in their many achievements.

Staff prioritise children's social development. They have high expectations for children to be kind to each other and behave well. Staff regularly model excellent manners, for example, and even the younger children say 'excuse me' without being prompted. Children are eager to take responsibility and relish having a special job to do. Their independence grows as they move confidently through the nursery.

The manager and staff organise the curriculum effectively to sequence children's learning and development. They build on what children can already do to support their ongoing progress. For example, babies become engrossed in sensory activities and enjoy scooping and pouring coloured rice. They strengthen the small muscles in their hands and develop the skills they need for using a spoon to independently feed themselves, for example.

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

- The manager and staff work together as a committed team and regularly evaluate the service they provide for families. This helps them to make positive changes and improvements. For example, a review of the outdoor area led staff to provide new opportunities for children to develop their imaginative play and extend their physical skills.
- Strong partnerships with parents provide children with continuity in their care and support home learning. Staff follow children's home routines and preferences from the start. There is then a continuous two-way flow of information that reassures parents and keeps staff informed of what children enjoy at home. For example, staff and parents use similar approaches to celebrating children's progress and successes.
- Staff are experienced in childcare and know their key children well. They monitor children's development diligently and promptly notice when children need extra support. The manager and the special educational needs coordinator work effectively to ensure that children receive the help they need. For example, following the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a focus on improving children's speech and language development. The use of additional funding to

provide staff training and resources was very effective. As a result, children are confident communicators and speak clearly and fluently.

- Children make good progress in their mathematical development. For example, older children recognise and use numbers competently and begin to recognise three-dimensional shapes. Younger children thoroughly enjoy finding out about capacity through inspiring activities that encourage them to explore. Staff expertly model mathematical language as children experiment in the water tray. Staff skilfully add interesting resources that spark children's imaginations so that they remain absorbed and lead their own learning.
- The manager and staff are very proactive in supporting children to become ready for their future learning. They share information about children's achievements with local primary school staff, for example. Staff introduce book bags so that children get used to the routines and expectations of school life.
- Children benefit greatly from rich experiences that promote their understanding of the wider world. For example, children enjoy exploring a world map and use blocks to construct landmarks such as Stonehenge. People from the local community regularly visit the nursery, such as police officers and dentists. Children become familiar with how different people help them in their daily lives.
- The manager provides good support for the dedicated team of staff, and they feel valued and encouraged in their work. For example, the manager ensures that staff attend training to develop their expertise with the particular children they care for. Throughout the nursery, staff demonstrate their impressive teaching skills, and some teaching is of an outstanding quality. However, this is not fully consistent in all areas of the nursery to enable children to make progress at the highest level.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and the designated safeguarding lead know their responsibilities for keeping children safe. They ensure that all staff receive regular training in child protection matters so that they keep up to date with any changes in legislation. Staff are vigilant and know the signs that might lead to a concern about a child's welfare. They are clear about local safeguarding procedures and understand how to keep children safe from harm. The manager and staff ensure that the premises are safe and secure. For example, there are keypad locks on all doors throughout the nursery, and any visitors need to confirm their identity when they arrive. Staff teach children to play safely. For example, they take care not to steer too close to others when they use wheeled toys outside.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- focus staff development even more precisely to ensure that all teaching is of the highest quality, for example by sharing outstanding practice throughout the nursery.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY461348
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10236146
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	90
Name of registered person	Margaret McMillan Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP908051
Telephone number	01752 664 884
Date of previous inspection	10 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

Margaret McMillan Nursery School first opened in 1935 and re-registered in 2013 due to a change in management status. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday all year round, except for a week at Christmas and a week during August. Sessions are from 8.15am to 6pm. The nursery employs 19 members of staff, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. One member of staff has early years professional status.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Margaret Baird

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 nursery.
- The deputy manager, the manager and the inspector had a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery 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 and the manager observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and discussed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and looked at written comments to take account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector talked to children and staff 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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