

Inspection of Little Cherubs

St. Michaels Parish Hall, Ford Lane, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 3TN

Inspection date: 8 June 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	Not applicable
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

This pre-school prides itself on being an inclusive setting which welcomes children of all abilities. A high number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) attend this setting. The children respond positively to the clear routines, which help to give structure and predictability for those who find group care stressful.

Due to the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have found that many children have had limited opportunities to mix with children and adults outside of their immediate family. However, in the main, the children have adapted to group care and most play happily with their friends. Staff support those who are learning to interact and share toys with others. They help children safely negotiate with their friends and show how sand timers can be used to share out time playing with popular equipment fairly.

Staff organise a wide range of activities to provide a broad curriculum. Most children confidently select which activities they want to take part in during free play. Children have access to a range of sensory activities which staff have identified as particularly useful for some children's development. Children regularly take part in yoga sessions. This helps to help strengthen their bodies and gives them a chance to practise breathing techniques which they can use to manage situations they find stressful.

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

- The manager has a wealth of experience of working with children with SEND. She is an enthusiastic role model for staff and children. The setting has been recommended to many of the parents of children with additional needs. Staff work confidently with a range of professionals and implement the detailed education and health care plans that are drawn up by them for each child.
- The setting's curriculum focuses on children's social development, physical abilities and communication skills. Additionally, themes such as 'transport' are used to broaden children's knowledge of the world and introduce new facts to them. While staff know their key children well, some staff are less confident about the specific next steps in learning for children who are not their key children. This limits their ability to specifically build this learning into routines and activities provided as part of the wider curriculum.
- Staff see developing children's communication skills as extremely important. They play alongside children and engage them in conversations. They discourage the use of dummies and provide children with alternative comforting toys which will not inhibit children's speech. Children are introduced to a range of descriptive words as they feel the cereals in the sensory play. For children

who are unable to speak, staff use picture cards and gestures to reinforce the meaning of what they are saying. This helps to build children's understanding.

- Mealtimes are social occasions where all children come together to share food and conversation. Staff discuss the importance of a healthy diet and praise children when they try new vegetables. This is reinforced in the garden play kitchen as children talk about their favourite vegetables and discuss what raw cauliflower and broccoli smell like.
- Staff are aware that children's behaviour may link into their feelings. For example, fear may lead to children not joining in with activities. Children are introduced to a range of strategies which support their emotional well-being. Staff recognise and celebrate the small, but highly significant, successes of some children, as they start to relate to adults, respond to instructions from staff and take part in activities.
- Parents of children with SEND feel very well supported. Some report that their children have previously attended other settings which have been unable to meet their needs. They are delighted that their children are having their needs met at this setting. Staff complete the required assessments to ensure children have the correct support when they move on to school. The manager supports parents through the process of selecting the best type of school or specialist unit for their child to move on to.
- Staff receive regular feedback on their performance from the manager. They have completed a range of training courses which are applicable to their work. For example, training on autism and on working with babies has provided staff with a deeper understanding of non-verbal communication.
- Some parents, especially those of children with SEND, feel that they receive advice on how they can manage a range of issues at home to help their children's overall development. However, some other parents do not feel that they receive information which supports them in extending learning at home. This is something the manager acknowledges and has started to make plans to address. Also, parents' ideas on how the setting can further enhance its service have not been gathered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff recognise their individual responsibility to keep children safe and what would constitute a safeguarding concern. They understand the need to work as part of a multidisciplinary team if they have concerns about a child or a colleague. A staff member has recently undertaken a training course, and the setting has joined an alert scheme, aimed at supporting settings to identify and address issues of domestic violence, which families may experience. The management team deploys staff effectively to ensure appropriate child-to-adult ratios are maintained and staff do not have to work alone with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- heighten all staff's understanding of the learning intent for routine activities and how these can feed into all children's next steps in learning
- develop partnerships with parents to help them support their children's progress at home and gather their ideas on how the setting can further improve.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2520070
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10208018
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Wood, Ligia
Registered person unique reference number	2520069
Telephone number	07817232149
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Little Cherubs registered in 2019. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 6, three hold qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Rhodes

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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided. She assessed the impact these activities had on children's learning. She completed a learning walk with the manager to discuss how the curriculum is planned and implemented.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint observation of an adult-led learning activity.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the deputy manager. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- A number of parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection. The inspector took account of their views.
- Staff and children were spoken to by the inspector during the inspection. Staff explained why they were carrying out some activities and how they worked with individual children. Newly appointed staff explained about the recruitment and induction process.

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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