

Inspection of St Leonards Preschool

Palace Gate Centre, 3 Palace Gate, Exeter, Devon EX1 1JA

Inspection date: 16 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	Inadequate
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children feel happy and secure at this pre-school. They thrive from close attachments with kind staff. Children receive cuddles when they feel tired or in need of reassurance. Staff work well together to create a welcoming environment in the large hall and additional rooms. Staff know what they want children to learn, the activities they will provide and how they can support children's learning. For example, staff show children how to use a hammer and nails safely. Children concentrate as they make their wooden plane or helicopter and show great delight as they paint it different colours of their choice.

Staff talk to parents and carers to find out about children's interests. They use this knowledge to decide how best to engage children in the curriculum, choosing the right activity and/or environment. This helps to meet the needs of children, including those who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All children make good progress.

Children behave very well, play cooperatively and are learning to share. For example, children thoroughly enjoy different games with a colourful recreational play parachute. This helps to teach teamwork and cooperation and increases children's strength, agility, coordination and endurance. Staff have high expectations of the children and are committed to provide the best possible support to children and their families within the community.

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

- Staff recognise the impact that the COVID-19 restrictions have had on children's early childhood experiences. Staff provide good support for children's personal, social and emotional development. Children learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. They are beginning to make good friendships and play well together. There is lots of laughter and happy faces.
- Staff have good knowledge of what children know, can do and need to learn next. The curriculum has been carefully considered and developed to give children the skills, knowledge and understanding that they need for their future learning. However, at times, the teaching of mathematics does not support children to develop and apply their understanding of numbers, the relationships between them and the patterns within numbers. Children show signs of boredom and lack engagement during some adult-led activities. For example, children show little interest in counting and calculating the number of spots on a picture of a dice.
- Staff support children's communication and language development well. Many children speak English as an additional language. Staff respond well to children's pointing and gestures to provide additional help. Staff read stories with

enthusiasm, and children listen attentively. Staff introduce new words to extend children's vocabulary. They give children time to think and respond to the questions they ask.

- Children enjoy using the outdoor play space. However, at times, the action of users of the community area has an impact on children's learning. For example, children are kept waiting in the small, fenced area following the arrival of an unexpected visit by refuse collectors. Staff do not consider how to use make best use of the time. As a result, children do not experience physical outdoor play as planned and show signs of frustration and sadness.
- There are positive partnerships with parents and carers. They speak highly of the supportive and friendly staff. Most parents make good use of the online learning journal. They value the regular updates and ideas on how to support their children's learning at home.
- Staff provide enjoyable experiences to promote children's physical skills. For example, children particularly enjoy using the indoor climbing frame and develop their ideas further by using cushions on the slide. Staff show children how to keep a balloon up in the air and praise them for their success.
- Staff encourage children to be independent in their self-help skills. For example, children find their own lunch bag, make good progress in toilet training, and know when to wash their hands. This helps children to prepare for their move to school.
- The trustees provide good support to the manager and staff team. There are regular meetings to discuss staff's personal development as well as children's progress. Staff morale is high, creating a positive atmosphere and strong team ethos.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Since the last inspection, the manager and staff have received support and training from the local authority. All staff and trustees have completed safeguarding training. As a result, there are improvements to policies and practice. Staff have a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms that could indicate a child is more vulnerable or at risk of abuse. They understand the procedures to follow should they have any child protection concerns. Staff, together with posters on display, remind parents and carers not to use their mobile phones in the pre-school. Staff complete risk assessments and identify the hazards in the shared outdoor play area. They are vigilant to reduce the risks.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide more frequent and varied opportunities for children to develop and apply

their understanding of numbers, the relationships between them and the patterns within numbers

- support staff to identify when to adjust teaching to build on and extend children's learning, in particular when facing an unexpected situation.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2541429
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10218728
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	St Leonards Pre-School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP547224
Telephone number	07773656751
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2021

Information about this early years setting

St Leonards Preschool re-registered at its current premises in 2019. It operates in the Palace Gate Centre in Exeter, Devon. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday, from 8.30am to 2.30pm, term time only. The pre-school provides free early education funding for children aged three and four years old. There are six members of staff who all hold relevant childcare qualifications. The manager has early years professional status, the deputy manager is qualified at level 4, two staff hold qualified teacher status, and two members of staff are qualified at level 2 and level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Linda Williamson

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at pre-school.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the chair of trustees and the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- 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 inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents and carers during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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