

Inspection of St Michael's Pre-school

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

Inspection date: 12 July 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are eager to start playing when they arrive at pre-school. They are lively and sometimes boisterous. However, children settle quickly into the phonics session and are captivated by the way that staff use alliteration to call each child to their carpet spot. Children thoroughly enjoy water play. They are independent and practise getting themselves changed into their swimsuits ready for the pool. Children demonstrate their ability to work together as they lay their towels out ready to dry themselves.

Children have good relationships with their key person and other staff. They confidently speak to staff, answering questions and talking about their family and home life. Children enjoy the social snack time where they learn to pour their drink from a jug into their beaker. Children are imaginative. They pretend to make a cake for a party using 'the recipe' for their mud cake. Staff provide a recipe card for children to read. Children gather items from the garden, starting with pine cones, ready to make the cake. They develop the activity, inviting more children to join them. Children explain how to play the party games and others continue to make more food.

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

- The committee have taken steps to ensure that requirements are met. Since the last inspection, all of the required references for staff working at the pre-school are in place. They have worked with local authority advisers to help ensure that improvements are sustained. The record for complaints shows the nature of the concern and what has been done to resolve issues. The committee now provide staff with supervision meetings to help them reflect on their work and to better understand their responsibilities.
- The staff team plan a varied curriculum for the children. They have high expectations of what the children can achieve. Helping children to prepare for the move to school Reception class is the focus for the oldest children during the summer term. Children benefit from the frequent visits to the school where they meet their teachers and see their new classroom. Staff frequently challenge children to show what they know by asking questions that require them to recall information and use their knowledge. For example, children work out the age of an older sibling who recently had a birthday. They recall number sequences and use simple addition and subtraction.
- Staff assess children's abilities effectively. They understand what children know and can do and generally help children to build on this well. Staff place emphasis on helping children to develop their speaking and listening skills and many children correctly identify letters sounds. Staff help children to build and use a wide vocabulary, such as 'braeburn' when they talk about the variety of an

apple. However, staff do not consistently support the communication skills of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- Staff frequently support children to behave well. They have clear boundaries that help children to behave sensibly and with respect when getting ready for whole-group activities and visits to the school. At these times, children's behaviour is exemplary. However, there are times when staff do not explain the expectations for behaviour clearly to children, and this sometimes leads to poor behaviour.
- Staff know their key children well. They know about each child's learning needs and how they can help them to build on what they know and can do, particularly through planned activities. However, staff do not always make the best use of resources to support children's individual next steps in learning. Staff now complete the required assessment of children's development between the age of two and three years. This helps to ensure an accurate picture of children's abilities and to identify gaps in their learning.
- Parents are well informed about their children's time at pre-school. They compliment staff for the kind and caring attention that their children receive. Although parents no longer enter the pre-school building, staff regularly take time to speak to parents about their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the safeguarding policies and procedures. They attend training to keep up to date with practice and to make sure they know about wider safeguarding concerns, such as the 'Prevent' duty. Staff recognise the possible signs that children may be suffering harm. They know how to report this, with the support of the designated safeguarding lead, to the local safeguarding partnership. Staff work with families and other agencies to help ensure everyone's safety.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- increase staff's understanding of how to consistently support all children's communication skills
- help staff to explain the rules for appropriate behaviour so that children are clear about their expectations
- support staff to effectively plan and provide exciting activities and opportunities that build on children's learning and development, to ensure they all make maximum progress in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY272315
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10237739
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	30
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	St Michael's Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP902071
Telephone number	01438815003
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2022

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 five staff members who work directly with the children. Of these, four hold relevant childcare qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alison Reeves

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The deputy manager and the inspector discussed how the provision for children's learning is organised. The inspector observed interaction between staff and children indoors and outside.
- The deputy manager and the inspector discussed planned activities and the impact these had on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents who use the pre-school and considered their views. The inspector spoke with children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed evidence of qualifications and suitability of staff working at 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022