

Inspection of St John's Pre-School

St John's Centre, Greenway Road, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 6HA

Inspection date: 14 September 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 are greeted warmly on arrival and settle well into this welcoming pre-school. The new staff team is building positive relationships with the children and families. Children's emotional well-being is high, and they show that they feel safe and secure. For example, they are confident to speak to the inspector and explain what they are doing. Children have access to an outdoor area where they enjoy using larger equipment and bikes. Children are increasingly confident to carry out self-care tasks, such as putting on painting aprons and washing their hands before snacks.

The setting provides a wide range of opportunities for children to explore, create and be curious. Children are motivated to learn, with older children keen to share what they know with other children. For example, explaining how to cut and curl a member of staff's hair in the 'hairdressers'. Children are well behaved; they understand the ebb and flow of the day, which helps them to feel safe. Children are polite and kind to one another.

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

- Staff use what they know about children's interests to plan for their learning. Although, on occasions, staff do not adapt their teaching to take into account the changing needs of children and group dynamics. This means learning intentions are not always fully met to support children's learning to the highest level at all times.
- Children receive high levels of praise and encouragement from staff. They beam in delight when they receive a 'high 5'. This successfully fosters the children's confidence and self-esteem.
- The manager is very aware of the setting's strengths and areas of development. She is in the process of agreeing the final plans for a new outdoor area, and additional training for staff to support their acquisition of new knowledge and skills. For example, to enhance the mathematics curriculum. Staff's well-being is a key priority for the setting.
- Children enjoy exploring the outdoor area. They gain climbing skills as they clamber over large equipment; they learn to balance as they walk along benches and stepping stones, and learn to ride bikes. Outdoor play, on occasion, lacks direction and does not take into consideration the needs of those children who learn best outdoors.
- Staff are skilled communicators who model the correct use of language. For example, when a child refers to a dinosaur as a 'stegga', staff sensitively remind them that it is a 'stegosaurus'. Staff use effective questioning techniques which encourage children to predict what will happen next. Staff also act out words such as 'time' to extend the children's vocabulary.

- Staff are supportive of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work with other agencies to ensure children receive the right support. Staff build on children's interests and create activities around this to help them gain new skills and knowledge.
- Children thoroughly enjoy sensory and messy activities. Toddlers happily play with dough, moulding it into different shapes, and draw patterns in rice and pasta. Older children attempt to make marks and sound out letters, which helps them to develop pre-reading skills. Children are becoming adept at using a range of tools, such as pincers, to pick up the pasta; they use various beakers to pour and fill containers.
- Children learn about the world through life events, such as: The Queen's Platinum Jubilee; holidays, and the birth of siblings. Staff help children to learn about the different cultures of children attending the setting. For example, learning key words in their home language. This helps prepare the children for life in modern Britain.
- Children learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and good oral health. Staff work with parents to promote healthy packed lunches, drinks, and snacks.
- Parents are complimentary about the staff. They comment on their commitment to the children and the positive progress that their children are making because of being here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff are knowledgeable about child protection. Staff are aware of the potential signs of abuse and the reporting systems in place. They are aware of the whistle-blowing procedures if they are concerned about a colleague. Staff attend regular training so that they can support the children and families in their care. The manager works in partnership with other agencies to further support children and families. Sound, safer recruitment practices mean children are cared for by suitable adults. Risk management strategies are sound and result in staff minimising perceived hazards in the environment effectively to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to consider the impact of group sizes and changes in children's needs during activities, and adapt their teaching to ensure learning intentions are fully met
- support staff in ensuring that those children who prefer to learn outdoors have daily opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in their preferred learning environment.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY245131
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10254041
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 4
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	St Johns PCC
Registered person unique reference number	RP520953
Telephone number	0151 420 2942
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

St. John's Pre-School registered in 2002. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications, ranging from level 2 to level 5. The pre-school is open term time only, Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3.30pm; sessions held are at 9am until midday, and 12.30pm to 3.30pm. A lunchtime session is held midday to 12.30pm for children who stay all day. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Chris Scully

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.
- Ofsted carried out the inspection because of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector and manager carried out a joint observation of a group activity during circle time.
- Children spoke to/communicated with the inspector during the visit.
- Staff were spoken to throughout the visit.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.

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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