

# Inspection of St Matthews Nursery and Pre-school

St. Matthews Preparatory School, 100 Park Avenue North, NORTHAMPTON NN3  
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Inspection date: 17 October 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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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 clearly show that they feel safe and have a sense of well-being at this welcoming nursery. Relationships in the nursery are positive. When children arrive, staff greet them warmly and children are excited to enter the nursery and play. Children show a strong attachment to staff and make friends with the other children. Staff actively support children to be confident at nursery. They encourage children to make choices about what they do. For example, children know that they can look for extra dinosaur figures from a box to add to their play.

Staff know the children well. They plan an effective curriculum that is based on individual children's interests and offers suitably challenging activities. Children behave very well. They are curious about the activities, and they are motivated to join in. Pre-school children play well together, they use their imagination and develop confidence to play independently. Children pretend they are in a coffee shop and work together to count the cups ready for the customers' drinks. Toddlers enjoy being outside. They use the ride-on toys and show their awareness of space as they steer around corners. Toddlers show interest in what is going on around them. They exclaim 'bubbles' and 'aeroplane' when they look up and see them.

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

- Since the last inspection, the manager has taken positive steps to address the actions raised. All staff have the required Disclosure and Barring Service Checks in place. Staff have completed refresher training to ensure their knowledge about how to keep children safe and protect their welfare remains up to date. The manager works closely with the deputy. They continually reflect on staff practice through observations and discussions with staff to improve their interactions with children.
- Staff are effective in supporting and promoting children's developing language skills. They use descriptive words to enhance children's vocabulary. For example, during a story, children listen intently. They talk enthusiastically about dinosaurs and learn words, such as 'extinct' and 'volcano'.
- Staff provide a range of brushes and rollers for children to make marks with paint and children excitedly talk about what they are doing. For example, they talk about what they are painting. However, occasionally, staff interrupt children's conversations with questions about colours and numbers. Consequently, the natural flow of children's conversation stops, children become quiet, and this does not fully promote their developing conversational skills.
- Staff help children learn how to be independent. Toddlers learn to hang their own coat on their peg, and they select their own cutlery at lunchtime. Pre-school children put their own coat on. They manage to serve themselves the second

helpings of their lunch well with large spoons. All children know the routines for washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

- Staff help to develop children's mathematical knowledge, particularly about numbers and quantity. For example, children count out the number of plates, so everyone has one. Staff ask how many biscuits they need and when children say different numbers the staff encourage them to count as the biscuits are put on the plates. This helps children to learn that the number of items counted needs to be the same.
- Staff extend children's interests as they add different resources to children's play. For example, children who are interested in cars enjoy exploring constriction toys that have wheels. They sit with staff and decide what they want to create. However, instead of supporting children to follow their own creative ideas, sometimes staff take the lead and create models for the children, and do not take account of the children's ideas.
- Effective working partnerships with children's parents help to ensure children's needs are met. Parents speak very positively about the nursery. They comment on how well the staff help their children to develop confidence to leave them when they first start attending. Parents like the detailed feedback they receive from staff every day when they collect their children.
- Staff find out about the experiences children have at home and plan for the children to widen their experiences. For example, there is a book lending library. Children who have less access to books can choose books to read at home with their parents. Staff send out activity packs regularly with a range of seasonal or cultural activities that children can do at home with their parents. This contributes to children's knowing about the wider world and other cultures.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff speak confidently about how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and they know how to report any safeguarding concerns to the relevant agencies. They take part in training courses and discussions as a team to ensure that safeguarding knowledge is shared and kept up to date. The manager implements robust procedures for checking staff's suitability at the point of employment and existing staff are required to make declarations to confirm their ongoing suitability. Effective risk assessments contribute to children's safety at nursery. The main door is kept locked, and all parents, children and visitors are greeted on arrival. Staff are vigilant when supervising children during play, both indoors and outside.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve staff's knowledge about how to promote and encourage children's

conversational skills

- develop staff's understanding of how to provide support for children to build on their own creative ideas.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY349315
<b>Local authority</b>	West Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10243511
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	1 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	65
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Patterson, Rachel
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP909572
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 712647
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 April 2022

## Information about this early years setting

St Matthews Nursery and Pre-school registered in 2007. It is managed privately and is located in Northampton. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.45am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Melanie Eastwell

## Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed two joint observations, one with the manager and one with the deputy.
- The manager, administrator and the inspector completed a learning walk together.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the deputy. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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