

Inspection of Thundersley Congregational Church

Congregational Church, Kenneth Road, BENFLEET, Essex SS7 3AL

Inspection date: 2 November 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 Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children have a positive start to their day. They arrive happily and are greeted warmly by a staff member. Children soon settle and engage in activities that capture their interests. They make marks in a variety of situations. For example, they stretch and reach to 'paint' a wall with water. Children copy patterns in sand with their fingers and various tools. They are beginning to develop their upper-body strength and the small hand muscles they need to support early writing.

Children learn to keep themselves safe. They take part in a fire drill and calmly walk outside to the assembly point. Children help to create the pre-school's rules, which contributes to a sense of ownership. Staff talk to them about the importance of following these rules. Children demonstrate their understanding. They respond by suggesting kind words and explain they must not use 'running feet' indoors. Children eagerly tidy toys away to keep the environment safe. They smile broadly when staff thank them and give 'high-fives', which helps boost their self-esteem. Children challenge themselves physically. They confidently manoeuvre balance scooters around the hall. They find out different ways to move their bodies. For example, children beam with pride as they expertly coordinate their hands and feet when they walk on stilts.

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

- The manager leads a strong team that knows the children well. They recognise that following the COVID-19 pandemic, some children need more support to close gaps in their development. As a result, staff introduced a tailored music group to focus on aspects, such as turn-taking and listening. Staff and parents have noticed a positive impact on children who take part.
- Staff kindly ask children who have attended the morning session to tell others what they have been doing. Children recall their experiences and staff are able to identify and assess what children have learned and remembered.
- Children are very familiar with the pre-school routine and what is expected from them. This helps them feel secure. For example, a member of staff shakes a tambourine to get children's attention when it is circle time. Children quickly react by standing still and wiggling their fingers. However, on occasions, these transitions interrupt children's deep engagement in their learning.
- Staff sensitively support children to manage their emotions. They help other children recognise that some of their friends have difficulty expressing themselves. This encourages children to be thoughtful and consider others. Staff work hard to meet children's individual needs. They make timely referrals and work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure all children make progress.
- Children show a keen interest in books. They independently select their

favourites and snuggle up with a member of staff to listen to a story. Staff make sure that displays have a purpose. For example, children begin to learn that print has meaning. They correctly identify shop logos on a poster and ask a member of staff which supermarket they prefer.

- Staff play alongside children and introduce important skills. For instance, they talk about taking turns when they throw a ball to each other. Staff count the number of squirts as children press the soap dispenser, building on children's mathematical knowledge.
- Staff support children to learn and understand more. For example, when children pretend there is a fire, they remember to call '999'. Staff ask them which service they are going to ask for. They introduce new vocabulary, such as 'emergency'. Staff listen intently when children tell them about the rescue. This encourages children to practise their storytelling and communication skills.
- The manager invites visitors to the setting to tell children about their jobs and cultures. This helps children value and learn about others. Children benefit from fresh air and exercise. They can play outside throughout the session. However, staff do not plan regular opportunities for children to experience the local community and the world around them.
- Parents praise the staff team. They say their children have progressed during their time at the pre-school. Parents receive detailed information in daily diaries. They also feel able to talk to their child's key person whenever they wish. The manager works in partnership with other settings children attend. This provides consistency in children's learning and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff confidently explain the actions to take to protect children. They know the procedures to follow in the case of an allegation against any adult who works with children. Although the pre-school is based on shared premises, the door is locked and secure. Therefore, unauthorised visitors cannot gain access. This helps keep children safe. Accidents and attendance records are monitored to identify patterns that may show a child's well-being is compromised. Managers carry out relevant checks to evidence staff suitability.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation of routines to minimise interruptions to children's engagement in their learning
- provide further opportunities for children to learn about the local community and the world around them.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY343931
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10235058
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	32
Number of children on roll	41
Name of registered person	Thundersley congregational Church Trust
Registered person unique reference number	RP906074
Telephone number	01268754731
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

Thundersley Congregational Church Pre-School registered in 2006. The pre-school employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including the manager who holds a level 6 qualification. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Fiona Sapler

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.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The manager carried out a joint observation of an activity with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate staff suitability.
- Parents spoke to the inspector about their views of the pre-school and their children's progress.

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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