

Inspection of Southgate Pre School

Hardwick Childrens Centre, Steward Road, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, Suffolk IP33 2PW

Inspection date:

29 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Not all children receive the quality of education that they deserve. Aspects of the curriculum are not ambitious enough to ensure all children, particularly some disadvantaged children, build the skills and knowledge they need to be ready for the next stage in education and life. Although children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff, some children struggle to regulate their emotions and demonstrate age-appropriate levels of self-control. This is because staff do not always help children understand the impact of their actions on others.

Children are happy and enjoy attending pre-school. They show that they feel safe and secure. For example, children greet friendly staff and confidently seek their help when needed. Children learn to do things for themselves. For instance, they learn to put on their coats. They show good levels of hygiene as they independently wash their hands after using tissues to wipe their nose. Children choose their activity and especially enjoy playing outside. They enjoy playing games, such as What's the time Mr Wolf. This helps to embed mathematical skills as they count steps and remember the sequence of numbers. However, when they become excited to run and evade being caught, this causes disruption to other children's play and some children become unsettled.

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

- The leadership team is new and have worked effectively, seeking support from the local authority, to address weaknesses identified during a recent visit from Ofsted. However, the curriculum is not yet sufficiently ambitious to ensure all children receive good quality learning experiences. This means that not all children, including some disadvantaged children, benefit from good quality interactions with staff that help them to catch up with their peers.
- Staff talk to children as they play, however, the interactions tend to be mundane and do not help children to build a wide vocabulary. For example, when making play dough with children, staff do not introduce words that describe the changing texture or children's actions as they manipulate the dough. When children race toy cars through lengths of guttering, staff build anticipation, saying 'ready, steady, go'. However, they do not introduce words that describe speed or compare the features of the toys to help children understand why one is faster than the other.
- Children eagerly join in with activities with staff. When making play dough, children listen to instructions and staff ensure each child has a turn. However, sometimes, staff do too much themselves, reducing opportunities for children to have a go. When the mixture becomes stiff, staff take the bowl back and mix it together. When the mixture is found to be too sticky, staff present solutions to children. This means children do not build deeper thinking skills to help them

solve problems and test out their ideas.

- Overall, children behave well and listen to staff. However, when children struggle to take turns and share or start to push each other, staff tend to rely on reminders of the pre-school rules and tell children 'kind hands' or 'share nicely'. This approach does not help children to recognise and control their emotions or understand the impact of their actions on others. Children tend to rely on staff to resolve such incidents of conflict for them. They do not receive the support to equip them with the skills to manage this independently and build resilience to setbacks.
- Staff build good working relationships with parents and other professionals. They share information regularly with parents about their child's day and what they are focusing on next to support their next steps in learning. Parents are positive about the pre-school and the staff. They believe their children are well cared for and that they enjoy attending the pre-school.
- Staff show children respect and consideration, particularly when they help children with intimate care routines. They seek children's consent before walking with them to the bathroom. Staff are kind and reassuring as they change children's nappies and then walk with them back to where they were playing. This helps to minimise disruption to children's play and supports children's self-esteem.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and committee members receive training about child protection and safeguarding issues. Staff know the possible indicators of abuse and neglect. They know what to do should they have a concern about a child's welfare. Revised recruitment processes for new committee members and appropriate recruitment procedures for staff help to assure that they are suitable for their roles. Staff and committee members know what to do should they have any concerns about an adult working with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve the curriculum to ensure all children, particularly disadvantaged children, receive consistently good quality interactions from staff that help them to build the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life
- improve staff understanding of how to help children develop a wide vocabulary
- improve staff understanding of how to enable children to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- build on behaviour management strategies to help all children learn how to manage their emotions and understand the impact of their actions on others.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415474
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10265558
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	45
Number of children on roll	51
Name of registered person	Southgate Pre-school Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523520
Telephone number	01284 703 181
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2019

Information about this early years setting

Southgate Pre School registered in 2010 and is run by a voluntary committee. The committee employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 8.45am until 3.30pm. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Gail Warnes

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 to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual 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 joint observations of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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