

Inspection of Thurton & Ashby St. Mary Pre-School

Thurton Village Hall, Ashby Road, Thurton, Norwich NR14 6AX

Inspection date:

2 December 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

Children settle and begin exploring the activities and resources set up for their play immediately on arrival. They form solid relationships with staff and demonstrate that they feel safe in their care. Children move between indoor and outdoor spaces freely and confidently. They generally behave positively; at times, however, they require more guidance from staff to support them to be kind or gentle towards their friends.

Children are curious and readily experiment with materials. They examine a tray of Christmas-themed items and talk about their home experiences of decorations and family traditions. Children stack coloured cotton reels in towers and help their friends to 'fix it' if their tower falls. They develop mathematical skills and practise these during play. For example, they count how many reels they have and identify their favourite colours. Older children begin to compare the sizes of objects, make predictions about what will happen if they drop or roll them, then test out their ideas. Staff listen carefully and praise children's contributions with warmth and enthusiasm. They plan activities that cater for a range of needs and interests.

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

- The new manager has made use of parent and staff feedback to evaluate the service and identify changes, such as plans to extend operating hours. However, some of the setting's policies and procedures have not been reviewed or updated recently in line with statutory requirements. For instance, the manager is not fully aware of her responsibilities regarding data protection and the secure storage and use of personal information. The committee has also failed to manage the active status of individuals on the committee with Ofsted. However, this does not have a direct impact on children's welfare.
- Children choose what they would like to eat from a range of healthy snack options and serve themselves confidently with large spoons. Although staff talk to children about healthy lifestyles, including eating a varied diet and being active, they do not always model or teach children effective hygiene practices. For instance, staff do not always wash their hands after helping children blow their noses. Children share water when washing their hands and touch toys and food on serving trays during snack times. These all pose a risk of cross-contamination.
- Children are social and like playing with their friends. However, staff are not always consistent when explaining behavioural expectations to children. For example, when children play too roughly, staff manage this in different ways. This is confusing for children in their understanding of the expectations and the impact of their behaviour on others. As a result, sometimes, children continue to behave in ways that upset or hurt others.

- Staff promote children's vocabulary and language skills well. They use descriptive language and commentary as children explore interesting resources. For instance, they talk about the size, texture and colour of baubles and encourage children to make predictions about whether their baubles will fit through different-sized tubes. At times, staff do not provide enough time and explanation of complex concepts, such as three-dimensional shapes or evergreen plants, to help children to explore and grasp them fully.
- Children learn to take supervised risks in the garden and woodland areas. For instance, children delight in running up and down small hills and climbing up onto logs that they pretend are 'steam engines'. They collect water to use as 'diesel' to fuel their imaginary train. Staff and volunteers join children in their play and ask questions relevant to their pretend scenarios.
- The well-qualified staff team know children well. They use observations and information they gather from parents and other professionals to plan activities and provide resources to promote children's next steps in learning. Staff access training in specific areas to help them better support children's individual needs.
- Parents speak positively about the setting. They talk about the way that staff involve them in their child's learning and achievements. Parents comment on the variety of activities their children enjoy, particularly the woodland play sessions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They know the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff understand how to identify and report concerns, including those regarding adults who work with children. Staff carry out regular checks of the outdoor environments, including the separate woodland area. The manager ensures staff keep their knowledge up to date with regular training. When appointing new staff or volunteers, the manager follows thorough recruitment processes to assure herself that staff are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

| | Due date |
|--|------------|
| develop more robust arrangements for managing changes to the committee, including the process for notifying Ofsted | 30/12/2022 |
| improve hygiene practices to limit the risk of cross-contamination and teach children about habits that help them to stay healthy. | 30/12/2022 |

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

- ensure that data protection requirements, including appropriate storage and use of personal information, are understood and implemented
- strengthen staff's skills in promoting children's exploration and understanding of more complex concepts
- support staff to provide a more consistent approach when managing children's behaviour, to help children to develop skills to regulate their behaviour and understand the impact it has on others.

Setting details

| | |
|--|---|
| Unique reference number | 257946 |
| Local authority | Norfolk |
| Inspection number | 10263140 |
| Type of provision | Childcare on non-domestic premises |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Day care type | Sessional day care |
| Age range of children at time of inspection | 2 to 4 |
| Total number of places | 24 |
| Number of children on roll | 26 |
| Name of registered person | Thurton & Ashby St. Mary Pre-School Committee |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP517378 |
| Telephone number | |
| Date of previous inspection | 21 April 2017 |

Information about this early years setting

Thurton & Ashby St. Mary Pre-school registered in 1992. The setting employs six members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The setting operates Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, during term time only. Sessions run from 9am until 12pm on Mondays and Thursdays, and from 9am until 1.30pm on Tuesdays and Fridays. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Kate Oakley

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk across all areas of the premises to explain how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of interactions during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact these have on children's learning.
- The manager completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff, committee members and parents at appropriate times during the inspection. She also looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all persons working on the premises.

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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Piccadilly Gate
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