

Inspection of Unity Childcare

The Apostolic Church, 433 Liverpool Road, Liverpool L36 8HT

Inspection date: 14 December 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 show high levels of engagement in this well-resourced environment. Children self-register on arrival and cheerfully sing the 'hello song', welcoming their peers. They have access to a wide range of activities where they can select their own materials and use their creative skills. For example, children select and mix paint independently for their art work. Babies explore their senses in a wintery, heavy-duty plastic tray with snow and arctic animals. The materials are edible so that they are safe for the babies. Children use 'calm spaces' throughout the day. Older children recognise when they need a little quiet time and access the space independently. They share books, complete jigsaws or just spend a few moments having cuddles with their key person. This greatly supports children's emotional well-being.

Staff and leaders have high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. Staff interact well with the children. They support and extend children's learning through discussion and questions. Staff offer praise and encouragement to help children feel safe and secure. They remind children of the rules, such as 'kind hands' and 'walking feet' when playing with others. Staff provide activities where children learn valuable social skills, such as turn-taking and sharing. For example, pre-school children take turns to find a number card when playing a mathematics game.

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

- Leaders have designed a curriculum that supports children's individual needs, which they review and amend to ensure it continues to benefit every child. Leaders offer a wealth of experiences and opportunities, and as a result, all children make progress in all areas.
- Leaders embed the curriculum throughout the setting. Activities support the seven areas of learning. Staff embed these through daily routines and play. Consequently, children have many opportunities to recall and repeat new skills, which helps them to retain knowledge and build on their learning.
- Children enjoy song, rhyme and story activities. They use small-world characters and materials to tell their own stories. Staff engage in conversation and narrate children's play. They use open-ended questions to challenge children to further their own learning. This helps children develop strong communication and language skills.
- Staff support children's developing physical skills. They practise yoga, where they learn to control and move their bodies. Children also take part in daily play dough activities, where they use a range of small-muscle skills. These activities greatly support children's mark-making and pencil control, preparing them for later formal writing.

- Staff encourage children to talk about their feelings. They use stories to engage children and provide them with the language they need to talk about how they feel. Through these activities, children learn about empathy and how to support their friends. As a result, staff provide children with ways to manage their feelings and promote their emotional well-being.
- Leaders encourage children to make healthy choices with their food. Staff offer a varied menu to ensure they eat a healthy, balanced diet. However, on occasion, hygiene practices are not effectively implemented. For example, children self-serve finger foods using their hands, and food is eaten off the table. Consequently, children do not always learn important hygiene practices.
- Leaders and staff identify gaps in children's learning. They refer to external agencies for support when required, such as speech therapy. Staff put detailed plans in place to provide interventions so that children make progress. However, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not always supported at times of transition. As a result, these children can struggle with movement between activities and routines.
- Staff are supported in their professional development by a highly experienced manager. Staff undergo regular supervisions, when leaders discuss training needs, staff's key children and staff well-being. Leaders acknowledge staff workloads and make provision to reduce unnecessary paperwork. These changes enable staff to spend more quality time engaging and interacting with children.
- Staff have many opportunities to attend training and further improve their knowledge and practice. For example, staff have recently attended training on early years environments. Following this, they have reviewed their provision and made it more accessible and inviting for children. For example, children explore mark making and mathematics in the new 'enchanted garden'. This good focus on professional development improves children's early learning experiences and encourages engagement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a strong commitment to safeguarding. Staff access annual training and know the signs of abuse to look out for. Leaders and staff know who to contact if they are concerned about a child. Staff work with social care and other agencies to ensure children are safe. Leaders follow clear safer recruitment practices to ensure only suitable people work with the children. External doors are locked and can only be opened from the outside by ringing the bell and a member of staff coming to open it. Visitors' identities are checked on arrival, and a log is kept of who is present on the premises. This means all persons on site can be accounted for in the event of an evacuation as well as a record of who has visited the setting and when.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- improve mealtime arrangements that better support children's awareness of good hygiene practices
- help staff to consider the impact of periods of transition during the routine on children's emotional well-being, particularly those with SEND.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY493970
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10267024
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	35
Number of children on roll	43
Name of registered person	The Apostolic Church Of Great Britain Trustees
Registered person unique reference number	RP534933
Telephone number	0151 480 2706
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Unity Childcare registered in 2016 and is based in the Huyton area of Liverpool. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds early years professional status, one holds early years teacher status and three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens from 7.45am to 5.45pm, Monday to Friday, all year round, except for a week at Christmas. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Michelle Highcock

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.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- A leadership discussion took place with the nominated individual.
- 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 group activities with the manager.
- Several parents were spoken to during the inspection and the inspector 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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