

Inspection of Rathlee Nursery School

Rathlee Nursery School, 14 Grosvenor Road, ST. HELENS, Merseyside WA10 3HX

Inspection date: 12 January 2023

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 arrive happy and eager to start their day. They are welcomed with hugs and reassurance from caring staff. This helps children to feel safe and secure in the warm and nurturing nursery.

Children are well behaved. Staff praise younger children for their acts of kindness towards babies as they retrieve bottles. They celebrate children's achievements as they persist in challenging activities. Older children eagerly respond as they are given clear instructions to place items back in their correct place. As a result, children are respectful of others and are developing their confidence.

Children enjoy a wide variety of exciting activities and experiences that provide them with endless opportunities for learning. Younger children enjoy activities that stimulate their senses as they touch and explore different textures. They show fascination and an eagerness to learn more. Staff set up activities that capture children's attention and reflect their current interests, such as dinosaurs. Older children strengthen their hand and finger muscles as they use a range of tools in the sand. They enjoy dressing up as different characters, such as doctors and pirates. This helps to support their early writing skills and extends their imagination.

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

- The manager has a clear and accurate view of the quality of the nursery. He speaks with staff and parents to capture their views of what is working well and to identify any areas for development. This ensures that a high level of service is offered to children and their families.
- Staff have regular meetings to discuss their practice and further training needs. This helps staff to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of how best to support children's development. Staff well-being is sensitively supported. Weekly sessions have been set up for staff to talk confidentially about any issues. As a result, staff say they appreciate the level of support that they receive in order to carry out their role effectively.
- Overall, children are making good progress. An ambitious curriculum is in place. Staff plan activities that are based on children's interests, abilities and what they need to learn next. They deploy themselves well and engage in children's play. However, occasionally, some staff are too quick to interrupt and provide ideas, particularly when younger children carry out pretend play. Consequently, sometimes, children are not always able to explore and experiment with their own thoughts, ideas and experiences.
- Children have a great understanding of the world around them as they enjoy walks in the nearby park. Furthermore, older children independently carry out

the daily tasks of looking after the nursery animals. For example, they change the rabbit's hay and feed the ducks. Children are learning about responsibility, compassion and kindness while also investigating the animals' lives and natural habitats. These unique experiences equip children with the skills they will need in their future learning, such as at school.

- Generally, children's communication and language skills are supported well. They sing songs and rhymes throughout the day. Staff read lots of books with children from a young age. In turn, older children display great understanding and speak about the names of the author and illustrator. Staff provide lots of language and model new words for children. However, on occasion, staff do not give children enough time to think things through and reply to the questions that staff ask them.
- Children are learning the importance of being healthy and active. They help to devise nutritious meals and have a great awareness of food that is good for them. Children carry out daily exercises where they run, jump and move their bodies. Furthermore, external companies attend the nursery and provide extra-curricular sport activities. Children's physical skills are supported well.
- Communication with parents is good. Relevant information is shared when a child first starts. Parents receive continual updates of children's progress, and ideas are provided on how to extend children's learning at home. Parents say their children have 'truly blossomed' at the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and the staff team have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in keeping children safe. They carry out regular risk assessments, and the premises are safe and secure at all times. Staff attend safeguarding training and carry out independent research to keep themselves abreast of any additional safeguarding information. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are aware of the policies and procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children's welfare. The recruitment process is robust. Relevant checks are carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to identify when to step back during child-led activities so that children can explore and experiment with their own ideas, particularly in young children's pretend play
- provide children with more time to think about and respond to the questions that staff ask them.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY363684
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10265261
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	38
Number of children on roll	59
Name of registered person	Hughes, Kerry Joanna Maria
Registered person unique reference number	RP906704
Telephone number	01744 613 427
Date of previous inspection	31 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Rathlee Nursery School registered in 2007. It is situated in St Helens, Merseyside. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm, 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

Kellie Lever

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 managers and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery 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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