

Inspection of Saxon Pre-school

3 High Street, Earls Barton, Northampton NN6 0JG

Inspection date: 11 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 are welcomed by the kind nurturing staff. They are beginning to learn independence as they happily follow the morning routine. Children hang their coats and bags, and self-register before beginning their day. They demonstrate that they feel safe and secure as they confidently move around the pre-school, engaging well with staff and greeting their friends.

Children show positive attitudes to learning and eagerly gather round to join in activities. For example, as children make play dough with staff, they listen well and follow instructions. Children are introduced to mathematical concepts. They count out the number of scoops and recognise quantities, saying when the cup is 'full'. Children wait patiently as they take turns, add ingredients, mix in water and discuss textures such as 'sticky' and 'smooth'.

Children behave well, play cooperatively, and show an understanding of the pre-school rules, such as helping to tidy away. Staff are good role models and have high expectations of children's behaviour. They help children to understand why certain actions are not acceptable, as they gently explain in a clear and age-appropriate manner. Staff also use these opportunities to discuss emotions and help children to understand how their actions can make others feel. This supports children's emotional well-being.

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

- Overall, the manager and staff provide a curriculum that is sequenced to cover all areas of learning. Staff assess children's learning regularly. As a result, they know what children know and can do. Overall, staff are aware of what they want children to learn next. However, the intent of activities can sometimes be lost, due to large numbers of children accessing the same activity. This results in some children's developmental needs not being consistently supported.
- Staff naturally hold meaningful conversations with children. They become involved in children's imaginary play and encourage them to think about new concepts and to use new vocabulary. For example, as children pretend to make pasta in the sand pit, staff encourage them to talk about the ingredients they will need to make dinner.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Staff recognise when a child may need additional support. They work well with parents and other professionals.
- Staff develop strong partnerships with other settings children attend, as well as the school's children will move on to. This supports children with smooth transitions. With parental consent, staff share information with these settings to help promote continuity in children's care and learning.

- The pre-school has a good connection to the local community. Children and staff often take part in village activities. For example, they visit the local retirement home and fire station and take part in the annual village carnival. However, staff do not always plan a wide enough range of activities to help children learn about people, families and communities beyond their own.
- Staff provide children with opportunities to develop their understanding of living a healthy lifestyle. Children wash their hands on arrival, before eating, and after using the toilet. They have daily opportunities to be energetic and explore the outdoors in the pre-school garden. Staff provide children with healthy snacks. Children are encouraged to peel their fruit and pour their own drinks. They brush their teeth, join in discussions and read books to widen their understanding of oral health.
- Parents are very complimentary of the pre-school. They talk about the good communication they have with staff and enjoy using the online application to view photos of their children. Parents know their children's next steps of learning and appreciate the suggestions they receive from staff to continue learning at home. Parents welcome the additional support they receive particularly advice on how to support their children's toilet training.
- Managers and staff work very well as a team. They take part in weekly meetings to discuss any concerns and share new ideas and activities. Each member of staff states that they feel valued and enjoy working at the pre-school. Managers mentor and support staff to identify gaps in their professional development and teaching skills. However, they do not consistently use this information to offer targeted training and support to extend children's learning further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding and can identify the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They know the procedure for reporting concerns about a child. Staff are confident in how to report an allegation made about themselves or another member of staff, should this be required. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to check the suitability of staff and committee members. All staff undergo annual checks to ensure they continue to be suitable to work with children. Staff complete regular risk assessments of the environment and children's activities to make sure risks are identified and managed.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the arrangements for group activities to ensure all children can take part, and their development needs are consistently supported
- extend opportunities for children to understand and respect people, families and

communities beyond their own

- strengthen the arrangements to coach and mentor staff to continually enhance the outcomes for children even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	220201
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10263107
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	36
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Saxon Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP522114
Telephone number	01604 813789
Date of previous inspection	20 April 2017

Information about this early years setting

Saxon Pre-school registered in 2000 and is situated in Earls Barton, Northampton. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Thursday during term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 12.45pm on Monday and Wednesday, and from 8.45am until 11.45am and 2.15pm until 3.15pm on Tuesday and Thursday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Charmaine Cayton

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 the curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- 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 observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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