

Inspection of St Gabriel's Pre-School

St Gabriel's C of E Primary School, 2 Landhayes Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 2BY

Inspection date: 18 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children feel safe in this warm and welcoming pre-school. Friendly staff build positive relationships with children to help them settle quickly. Children show curiosity as they explore the range of activities available. They show increasing confidence and physical skill as they find their way to the top of the climbing frame. Children have good opportunities to develop their finger muscles in preparation for early writing. They play with dough and kinetic sand, moulding it to their desired shapes.

Staff help children to reach their full potential. The effective use of funding has helped the pre-school to employ a special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) and a full team of staff to provide children with additional support where needed. Together, this helps all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language, to make strong progress in their development.

Children receive plenty of opportunities to develop their literacy skills. Books and story sacks are integral to the pre-school curriculum. Children independently select books to view at their leisure. Designated story-sharing times, snuggled up with staff on the sofa, help children to foster a love of reading.

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

- Children relish the opportunity to explore new experiences, such as snowfall. They squeal with delight as they lift their heads towards the sky and let the snowflakes fall on their face. Staff pick up pieces of snow and ice, showing these to the children. They encourage children to explore it and talk about how it feels using age-appropriate vocabulary, such as 'cold' and 'wet'.
- All parents speak highly of the pre-school. They comment on how supportive staff have been in providing advice and strategies to them as a family. Parents talk of how their children have progressed in 'leaps and bounds' since starting, and how effectively staff work in conjunction with outside agencies, providing a consistent approach.
- Staff support children's communication skills effectively. They use specific strategies through both adult-led and child-initiated play, such as through stories and card games. While children play a shopping list game together, staff model language to help children to identify items in the picture. Children copy key words and use their knowledge to make connections, such as how oranges can make orange juice.
- Children enjoy activities that staff plan to encourage their listening and attention skills and to develop their love of music. Children learn how to make quiet and loud sounds using musical instruments and try hard to tap out the correct

number of beats. However, the implementation of whole-group activities does not consistently help all children to meet the learning intentions to support their overall development. Some children find it difficult to understand what they need to do and lose focus.

- Staff encourage children to develop good mathematical skills. They model language to help children understand number concepts, saying, for example, 'I am making two sandcastles.' Staff then show children the correct numeral to represent the quantity. Children are keen to have a go themselves and show pride in their achievements.
- The manager and staff monitor children's progress effectively. They work together to plan what they would like children to learn and then personalise activities to meet children's individual needs. Staff work collaboratively with local professionals, including the on-site school. Children become familiar with the teaching staff and the school environment to aid their move on to formal education.
- Children demonstrate perseverance and independence during activities. For example, they try hard to place chopped fruit onto cocktail sticks to make a 'fruit skewer'. Staff support younger children when required and provide praise to all children for having a go.
- Care practices are effective. Staff help younger children understand the routines when managing their personal hygiene through verbal and visual support. Older children understand the need to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before eating.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff talk to children about how the ground is becoming slippery as the snow melts and encourage them to tread carefully to ensure their safety. They discuss with children how cocktail sticks are sharp and how some resources are not edible, such as sand. The manager and staff can identify when a child might be at risk of harm and know to contact the relevant agencies to ensure children's welfare. Staff attend cybersecurity training to ensure that they remain vigilant of online risks and know how to protect children from these if necessary.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to further develop how they implement activities to help all children meet the learning intentions, supporting their overall development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2614891
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10264305
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	30
Name of registered person	Ace Enhanced Services Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2543891
Telephone number	01392 255555
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St. Gabriel's Pre-School re-registered in 2020 as part of Ace Enhanced Services Ltd. It is open Monday to Friday, from 8.40am to 3pm, term time only. The pre-school receives free early education funding for two, three and four year olds. There are seven members of staff, six of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications from levels 2 to 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Joanne Steward

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 and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The SENDCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views of the pre-school with the inspector via telephone.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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