

# Inspection of Southmead Saplings

Somerset house, Southmead Hospital, Southmead Road, Bristol BS10 5NB

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Inspection date: 16 February 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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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 eager and keen to learn. They separate well from parents, as staff welcome them warmly and settle them into the nursery. All children show high levels of involvement in activities. Staff working with the babies use different tones of voice to engage and encourage them to focus on toys. They talk excitedly with the children letting them hear lots of words and encouraging them to attempt to say them back. Toddlers have fun outdoors in the ball pit. Staff talk about the different-coloured balls and ask children to point them out. Children are considerate and know to check that their friends have moved out of the way before they jump into the pool. Pre-school children shout and laugh with each other and staff. They excitedly choose from the wide selection of different resources and activities.

The manager and staff use children's interests and the knowledge of what children know and can do, to provide activities that engage children well. They know what children need to learn next and quickly identify when they may need extra support. They make sure they provide an inclusive curriculum that is ambitious for all children in their care, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All children are making good progress in their learning and development.

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

- There is superb support for children with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works with key persons to monitor children's needs. Together, they liaise with parents and other professionals to put in place support to enable children to reach their full potential.
- Staff focus on children's language development, particularly those with SEND or those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. They talk with children, use gestures and signs to support understanding. Staff ask parents for and use keywords in children's home languages. They use picture cards as prompts and encourage children to repeat words. They share signs for rhymes with parents, so children can continue their learning at home.
- Staff build strong relationships with parents. They find out what children enjoy doing at home, and use this to provide experiences that capture children's curiosity in the nursery. Parents' feedback is very positive. They comment on the thorough feedback they get from key persons about their children's achievements. Parents value the flexibility of the staff to meet changing needs of them and their children. They feel that their children have gained confidence, develop well and are well prepared for their future learning, including the move into school.
- Children have free access to the toys and resources. However, staff do not

encourage children to think about putting toys away when they have finished playing with them. For example, children drop toys on the floor and leave them. Some younger children who are not as steady on their feet stumble and trip over. Older children walk over and tread on toys left on the floor, as they rush to get to the next activity. Staff are not helping children to care for their play spaces or keep themselves safe as well as they could.

- Managers monitor staff and make sure they build on their professional development to support children better. Recent training on helping children to accept and manage feelings and emotions helps children cope with changes well. Staff use consistent approaches to encourage children to think about how others feel when they try to snatch a toy from a friend. They talk with the children about what they can do to solve the problem, offering suggestions and praising them when they find solutions.
- Children show good imagination and curiosity. Outdoors, pre-school children search for insects. Staff remind them to be careful with the slug, as it curls up when they touch it roughly. Other children 'sell' ice creams using wooden blocks as the cones. Some children try to listen to the 'sea' in shells. However, at times, children become more excited and shout over each other and staff. The noise level rises. Staff do not encourage children to stop and listen so children can hear instructions and extend their learning.
- Children enjoy exploring and experimenting. Pre-school children make 'moon dough'. Staff encourage children to count how many spoonfuls of cornflour they need. When the dough is too sticky, they ask children what they can do, encouraging them to think, offer ideas and solve problems. Children suggest adding more water. They test this out smiling when it works, and receive praise from staff.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff update their safeguarding training regularly, so that they know what to do if they have any concerns about children's welfare or if any allegations are raised against staff. Managers have made recent changes to risk assessments to ensure children's safety when moving between the indoor and outdoor play spaces. These include checks on the names and the number of children, and making sure any gates or doors are shut. Managers have good systems for recruiting staff. They make sure staff are suitable to work with children, and check this regularly through supervision meetings once staff start working at the nursery.

## What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- build on the way staff support children to respect their environments and

- resources, to help them to better manage risks and keep themselves safe
- make sure staff provide clear messages and encourage children to listen, so children know what they need to do next and can further their learning and development.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY248911
<b>Local authority</b>	Bristol City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	10277006
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	91
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	149
<b>Name of registered person</b>	North Bristol NHS Trust
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP521097
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 414 2540
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 May 2018

## Information about this early years setting

Southmead Saplings registered in 2002. The setting operates from hospital buildings at Southmead Hospital in Bristol. The nursery is open from 7am to 6pm, Mondays to Fridays, all year round, excluding bank holidays. The trust employs 32 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 24 staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications, three at level 6, one at level 5, two at level 4 and 18 at level 3. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Anita McKelvey

## 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 setting.
- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at nursery.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a planned activity with the deputy manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and 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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