

Inspection of Sturminster Marshall Pre-School

Sturminster Marshall Pre School, Rear of 78a High Street, Sturminster Marshall,
WIMBORNE, Dorset BH21 4AY

Inspection date: 9 March 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 happy when they arrive at the pre-school. They adapt well to the changes made due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Older children understand that their parents and carers no longer come into the pre-school, although staff welcome parents in to help their children settle at their own pace. The warm and friendly staff greet the children. Most children leave their parents at the entrance gate and walk confidently into the pre-school.

Children benefit from meaningful learning experiences and are developing knowledge and skills to help them in their future lives. For example, they use a range of tools that support their hand-to-eye coordination and develop the muscles in their hands in preparation for early writing. Older children squeeze pipettes to pick up and drop water into containers. Younger children use rolling pins and cutters to manipulate malleable dough.

Children demonstrate that they feel comfortable and safe. They behave well and have positive relationships with staff and each other. Older children show kindness as they move their chairs around at snack times so that younger children can join them and sit next to their friends. Older children enjoy tasks, such as being 'special helper', and check the environment for any hazards before group time. This helps to give children a sense of responsibility.

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

- The curriculum is ambitious throughout the pre-school. All children enjoy learning and are keen to take part in a variety of activities. Staff plan activities that provide challenges for all children and are adapted to their interests. However, at times, staff do not focus on the key skills that children need to learn next. For example, during a large-group activity, staff do not encourage quieter children to gain confidence and participate alongside their friends.
- Overall, staff interact positively with children to support their communication and language development. They give clear instructions, ask questions, and allow children plenty of time to speak and talk about their thoughts and ideas. For example, children eagerly talk about the patterns on their socks. However, staff miss some chances to encourage children to expand their use of vocabulary, to enrich their language skills even further.
- Children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language, are well supported. For instance, staff model language and speak in shorter sentences. They praise children for their efforts and achievements, building their confidence to speak for themselves. Staff work closely with other professionals and parents to ensure that children receive the best help to aid their development.

- Staff support children well to develop the kinds of attitudes they need to become independent learners. They encourage children to complete age-appropriate tasks. For example, younger children wash their hands independently and older children put on their shoes and replace the paper on an easel confidently after they have finished painting. Children become increasingly independent in their self-care and during routines. They demonstrate pride in learning how to do things for themselves.
- Children are well prepared for their eventual move on to school. The provider and manager have close links with the host school. The manager works closely with the school's early years lead. Together, they identify areas of strength and areas for development to ensure that they maintain good outcomes for children. Children enjoy physical education sessions in the school hall and story times with older children. This helps them to become familiar with the school environment and supports their smooth transitions to the next stage of their education.
- Parents comment that their children have grown in confidence, particularly in social situations, and have learned to be independent. They say staff give them daily feedback about their children's day. However, not all parents know what staff are currently focusing on with their child's development so that they can continue to support their children's learning at home.
- The manager monitors staff performance, with an emphasis on helping their professional development and personal well-being. As a result, staff say they feel well supported, and staff turnover is very low. The manager encourages staff to take further training relevant to their role. Some staff have taken part in training to enable them to assess children's communication and language skills. They use this information to identify any emerging needs swiftly and provide intervention at the earliest opportunity.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, is clear about her role and responsibility to protect children from harm. All staff attend regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge up to date. They are aware of the correct procedure to follow should there be concerns about children in their care. The provider follows effective recruitment and vetting procedures to make sure that all staff are suitable. Staff carry out daily risk assessments of the premises before children arrive and they assess all activities. This helps them to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- ensure that all staff can successfully support what children need to learn next

through the planned activities and their interactions

- strengthen children's language development even further by incorporating rich and varied vocabulary during activities and conversations
- build on the good partnerships with parents further, to ensure that all parents are informed about their children's current learning needs so that they fully support children's learning at home.

Setting details

Unique reference number	144318
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10263921
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 5
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	24
Name of registered person	Sturminster Marshall Preschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905256
Telephone number	01258 858 395
Date of previous inspection	17 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Sturminster Marshall Pre-School was established in 1973 and registered in 1993. It has exclusive use of a classroom and outdoor area within the grounds of Sturminster Marshall First School, Dorset. The pre-school is open during school term times, Monday to Friday, from 8.45am to 3.15pm. Funding for free early years education is available for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs six staff to work directly with children. The manager is a qualified early years teacher, four staff hold early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a level 2 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Cornish

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 manager carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the inspector.
- Parents and staff discussed their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke with the provider and manager throughout the inspection to keep them updated as the inspection progressed.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023