

Inspection of St Columb Minor Preschool

St Columb Minor Parish Church, Parkenbutts, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 3HE

Inspection date:

20 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The quality of children's experiences varies throughout the setting. The owner, who is also the manager, demonstrates a secure understanding of the setting's curriculum. She knows what she wants children to learn. However, some staff do not deliver the curriculum effectively. Many activities and experiences provided for toddlers and pre-school children are limited and do not inspire them to develop their potential. At times, toddlers and pre-school children sit for lengthy periods of time without any interaction from staff. The daily routines mean that children often spend time waiting passively for their food, to go to the toilet or when lining up to go outside. This hinders children's ability to make the most of their time at the setting.

However, babies spend their time in a calm environment with staff who know them well and meet their needs. Staff working with babies talk about what they are doing and teach them new skills. For example, babies show delight as they repeatedly practise using the new climbing steps and slide safely.

There are good opportunities for children to enjoy outdoor activities to benefit from fresh air and a broader range of learning opportunities. For example, toddler and pre-school children have great fun digging in the large sandpit. Children generally behave well. They develop warm friendships with each other and with staff.

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

- Regular staff supervisions identify appropriate training. However, these discussions do not focus on professional development to show how staff can continuously improve the quality of education. The manager is aware of some of the improvements needed. However, changes such as monitoring of staff's teaching, alterations to the environment and how children could be grouped are yet to be fully implemented. As a result, children's learning experiences are variable.
- Overall, children explore activities that engage and excite them. For example, pre-school children are keen to make their own play dough, showing great skill as they measure and mix the ingredients. However, some activities are not designed with children's next steps in mind. This means that learning is incidental rather than purposefully planned to build on children's skills and knowledge over time.
- Pre-school children show confidence as they talk with their friends to act out their imagined stories using small-world people and toy vehicles. However, children who speak English as an additional language do not always receive support to help them to join in with activities. As a result, they do not make expected progress in their communication and language development.

- The menu includes a healthy range of snacks and meals. However, staff spend time preparing and cooking food and clearing up afterwards, which results in them not directly caring for and teaching children. This prevents children from fully experiencing the learning opportunities on offer during their session.
- Toddlers are learning to share resources and take turns in games with their friends. For example, they enjoy tapping balloons and are excited to see them float away. However, there are limited interactions from staff. Some children are not encouraged to play without dummies in their mouths. This limits the opportunities children have to make good progress in their communication and language skills.
- The quality of teaching when all pre-school children are together in a group sometimes lacks challenge and is mundane. Children are kept waiting for too long for their turn. As a result, they become restless, are easily distracted and minor disputes occur.
- Children and parents receive a warm welcome on arrival. Children who are upset when their parents leave are reassured by caring staff. Parents report that they are happy with the care and education provided. There is good information sharing between the setting and parents and/or carers.
- Some aspects of the daily routine are not planned well. For example, the delay in taking hot cooked lunches and cutlery to the outdoor area results in toddlers and pre-school children sitting on wet outdoor picnic tables and eating cold food. Some children become distressed due to feeling cold and hungry.
- Children enjoy listening to stories with a small group of their friends. They are keen to draw and paint pictures. Children receive praise and encouragement, which helps to support their emotional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures that those working with children are suitable to do so. She implements safer recruitment procedures effectively. Staff's knowledge of safeguarding is secure. They are clear about the types of abuse and common signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. Staff understand who they need to report concerns to and their responsibility to ensure that these are followed up. They undertake regular safeguarding training. Staff arrange mealtimes to ensure that children's food allergies are managed well. Staff teach children how to keep themselves and their friends safe as they play together.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
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improve the monitoring of staff's teaching to ensure that the curriculum's intent and implementation are embedded securely across the provision, in particular for toddlers and pre-school children	26/05/2023
ensure that staff's interactions with children are of a high quality and contribute well to supporting children's communication and language skills	26/05/2023
improve the management of daily routines and group activities to reduce children's waiting time and provide more learning opportunities.	26/05/2023

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

- review the strategies for supporting children who speak English as an additional language to help them to join in with activities and improve their communication and language skills
- continue to develop the curriculum to ensure that it is ambitious, coherently planned and sequenced, and focused on individual children's learning needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY538029
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10282325
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	1 to 7
Total number of places	48
Number of children on roll	123
Name of registered person	St Columb Minor Preschool Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP538028
Telephone number	01637 879358
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Columb Minor Preschool registered in 2016. It operates from St Columb Minor parish church hall, near Newquay, Cornwall. There are 11 members of staff, of whom nine hold relevant qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 6pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. Out-of-school care and a holiday club for primary school aged children are also provided.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Linda Williamson

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector completed a learning walk with the manager and discussed how they organise the provision and curriculum intent.
- The inspector and manager completed a joint observation of a teaching activity to review the quality of education.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents.
- The inspector spoke to parents to get their views about the setting.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.

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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