

# Inspection of Southern Cross Pre-school

103 Trafalgar Road, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex BN41 1GU

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Inspection date: 27 March 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 show that they feel happy and safe at the pre-school by exploring the environment with confidence. For example, they ask adults for help with tape and scissors as they construct with large cardboard boxes. Children demonstrate some understanding of the rules of the pre-school. For example, when talking about the rule 'to be helpful', one child explains how he helps his friend by supporting him to put his shoes on.

Children's independence is promoted at every opportunity. For example, staff use strategies, such as visual instructions, that children follow to help them wash their hands ready for snack. Children are encouraged to use tools, such as tongs, to serve themselves, and they excitedly read the displayed numbers to guide them on how many pieces of fruit to choose.

Children develop their literacy and mathematical skills during outdoor activities. For example, they complete bug hunts, learning to record how many of each bug they find. Children delight in finding caterpillar eggs on plants. They recognise these and happily talk about the 'Hungry Caterpillar' story that they are familiar with. This shows that children are able to link their previous learning to activities within the environment.

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

- The manager understands the community she serves very well. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and say that their whole family feel supported as well as their child. Parents praise how flexible the pre-school has been during the settling process. This has a positive impact on their child's personal, social and emotional development, as well as the parents' own anxieties following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Staff understand and know the children well. Staff carefully build on children's interests to meet their needs and promote their development in a stimulating way. For example, messy-play experiences with foods, such as baked beans and porridge, has had a positive effect on the children who are eager to explore with their hands.
- The manager works well with outside agencies. This means that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported to do well. Staff understand strategies to use with their key children to support their language and help them to regulate their emotions.
- Children are well prepared for their next stage of learning. This is because the manager works well with local schools. For instance, the manager has regular meetings with the teachers to ensure that the children are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need when they get to school. The manager has

adapted the curriculum based on these discussions.

- The manager sequences the curriculum in a logical way to help children build on their skills and increase their confidence. For example, staff adapt the environment to provide a bigger space for children to build their large-muscle skills. They provide appropriate challenge by encouraging children to first develop their confidence climbing on low-level equipment before trying more challenging options. This supports the development of children's physical skills well.
- Overall, staff support children to understand expectations of behaviour at all times. However, on occasion, some staff give inconsistent messages about what children are expected to do, which can sometimes leave children confused.
- The manager has adapted the pre-school routine to provide more flexibility to minimise interruptions to children's learning. However, there is further work to do on this. There are still times when learning time is lost due to transitions between activities taking too long, which impacts on children's engagement.
- The manager carefully plans trips and visitors to expand children's cultural understanding of the world beyond the pre-school. For instance, children regularly visit a retirement home, a local farm, local parks and a garden centre. The staff then use these experiences to support the children's development further. For example, the children buy seeds from the garden centre and learn about how plants grow.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know their responsibilities to keep children safe from harm. There are systems in place to ensure that the premises are checked daily to minimise any risks to children. The manager and staff complete training to keep their awareness of child protection issues up to date. The manager and staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues, including domestic abuse, radicalisation and extremism. The manager carries out checks on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children. The manager understands her roles and responsibilities as the designated safeguarding lead. She knows the process to make a referral in line with local procedures if there is a concern that a child may be at risk.

## **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 implement consistent expectations for behaviour to help children understand the rules
- organise planned transitions between activities more effectively, to help minimise interruptions to children's learning.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130772
<b>Local authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	10263304
<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>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	23
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Southern Cross Community Playgroup Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP908414
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 567876
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 April 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Southern Cross Pre-School registered in 1992. It operates in the rear halls of Southern Cross Evangelical Church, Portslade. The setting is independent and only hires the halls from the Church. The pre-school is open between 8am and 3.30pm on Monday to Thursday and between 8am and 12.30pm on Friday, during school term time. The provider employs seven staff, of whom six hold relevant qualifications at level 2 and 3. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Astrella Chapman

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 inspector looked at and discussed documentation in relation to safeguarding, recruitment, records of attendance and first aid.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The manager and the inspector took part in a joint observation. The inspector asked staff questions about their work and interacted with children during the inspection.
- Parents shared their views on the pre-school with the inspector.

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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