

# Inspection of Abbey Centre Pre-School

Overslade Close, East Hunsbury, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN4 0RZ

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Inspection date:

21 March 2023

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## **Overall effectiveness**

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## **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**

Children happily arrive at the pre-school. They know the daily routine as they hang up their coats and put their water bottles on the table. Children show an interest in the activities on offer, such as the bricks and pieces of wood provided for them to build large models with.

Sometimes, staff use limited strategies to support children's language and communication skills. The indoor environment is noisy. When younger children play, staff do not encourage meaningful conversations or help children to learn new words. During small group activities, staff sit with children as they follow cards using counters to match the pattern. However, staff do not challenge children to extend their thinking or encourage them to explore new ideas. Consequently, children lose interest and move away from the activity.

The manager provides staff with some support, but staff are not always consistent with their teaching. Staff do not always share information with parents to help them to support their children's progress at home.

Children behave well, learn to make friends and share resources. They sit together outside, where it is quieter, in the sandpit and take turns to scoop sand to fill containers. Staff support children to practise their early writing skills as they encourage them to make marks with chalk on the floor outside. Children smile and say 'there's treasure there' as they draw an X on the ground.

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

- Staff's support for children to develop their communication and language skills is inconsistent. They sometimes do not provide opportunities for children to hear and practise new words. Noise levels inside the pre-school are often extremely high and, at times, children have some difficulty hearing or having quality conversations. Children and staff raise their voices to make themselves heard as some children loudly play musical instruments. Younger children play for extended periods without spoken interactions from the staff.
- At times, staff do not support children to share ideas or help them to extend and challenge their thinking. For example, during an activity to make play dough, staff add the ingredients into children's mixing bowls and make the dough for them as children watch patiently. Staff do not interact well with children during the activity, such as by counting with the children, responding to questions or talking about how the dough is made.
- The staff support the children with physical development outside in the fresh air. For example, as children reach the top of the climbing wall, staff teach them how to turn around and come down backwards. Staff join in with children as

they pedal tricycles, saying 'amber, green, ready to go'.

- Staff support children to understand the pre-school rules and how to behave. For example, staff remind children to use walking feet inside and help them to learn good manners, such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Children listen to staff's instructions as they line up to go outside, and staff sing, 'everybody line up, just like me'.
- Staff support children to be healthy and independent. They help children to wash their hands before a snack of toasted bagels and bananas. Staff teach children how to spread using a knife safely. They talk about oranges and say 'it's good to try new things'. Staff support children to pour milk from a jug into an open cup. Children know to scrape food from their plate into the bin and clear it away to the kitchen hatch once they have finished eating.
- Overall, parents say that they are happy with how the caring staff help their children to settle at pre-school. Staff provide information online to parents. The manager assigns each child a key person to help new children to settle, and work closely with them and their parents. However, not all parents know who their child's key person is. Staff do not share children's next steps or what they are learning at the pre-school so that parents can further support their children's learning at home.
- The manager recognises children who need extra support and seeks help from other professionals. She arranges for visitors to come to the pre-school, such as children's future school teachers and the librarian from the nearby library. She arranges for children to sing with the local elderly group.
- The manager is enthusiastic. She looks for ways to improve, and has attended courses, such as forest-school training. However, she does not always implement effective systems for coaching staff, to support them to consistently promote a good quality of education.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a sound knowledge of safeguarding and understand the signs of abuse to look for. They are aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe, including the safe use of mobile phones when in the pre-school. Staff speak about local safeguarding concerns, such as the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation. They are confident in recording and reporting any concerns to the relevant professionals. Staff carry out risk assessments and are highly vigilant to ensure that children are safe. They are quick to respond to any minor incidents. The setting is kept clean, hygienic and secure. Children are well supervised, and all staff have the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

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

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

	Due date
implement an effective curriculum, with particular regard to promoting younger children's language and communication development	02/05/2023
implement effective systems for supervision and coaching to support staff in their ongoing professional development to promote consistently good teaching and learning	02/05/2023
work more closely with parents to share children's progress and their next steps in learning, and help them to further support their children's progress at home	02/05/2023
improve the quality of teaching so that staff's interactions consistently respond to the rich and spontaneous opportunities that arise during children's play to challenge their thinking and learning.	02/05/2023

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	220151
<b>Local authority</b>	West Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10264348
<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>	36
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	24
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Abbey Centre Pre-School Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP901755
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 767568 or 07980 092175
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 June 2017

## Information about this early years setting

Abbey Centre Pre-School registered in 1987 and is located in East Hunsbury, Northampton. The pre-school employs three members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Caroline Winterton

## 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 managers and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The inspector viewed the pre-school and the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The managers joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to them about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the managers about the leadership and management of the pre-school.
- 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 inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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.

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