

Inspection of St Helen's Preschool Little Stars

St. Helens C Of E Primary School, Greenhill, Alveston, Bristol BS35 2QX

Inspection date: 3 May 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	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children engage in a broad range of experiences, which helps them practise skills and be confident learners. For example, the curriculum is well planned to help children build their physical skills and coordination in preparation for them to write successfully. Children use a range of tools, such as rolling pins and cutters, while playing with dough. They pat and stretch the dough to manipulate it into their desired shapes. Children receive positive interactions from staff to challenge them even further, for example, to handle scissors safely.

Children thoroughly enjoy reading books and storytelling, showing good imagination. They recall familiar phrases well and predict what might happen next. Children remember hearing a woodpecker in the wooded area previously and are keen to use books to research more. Staff help parents continue children's interests at home, for example sharing story sacks.

Children develop strong bonds with staff, who are genuinely interested in their well-being. Those children who find it difficult to settle receive cuddles and reassurance. Children develop high levels of self-esteem and make decisions about their play, selecting resources that interest them. They show pride in their achievements and confidently ask staff if they can keep their model to continue their play later.

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

- The curriculum is well planned and staff use their training and skills successfully to provide a range of experiences across all areas of learning. Staff have a good understanding of what they want children to learn next, based on accurate observations and assessments.
- The knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with parents, key persons and other professionals to enable children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make progress in their learning and development. The SENCo uses funding efficiently to ensure that children are included, whether through providing one-to-one support, additional resources or adapting the environment.
- Staff work closely with parents when children start to gather useful information to help children settle and plan their initial experiences. Parents value the home visits and feel staff know their children well. Staff invite parents into the setting, for example, to share their cultures and traditions.
- At times, group activities do not meet the needs of all children participating. For example, staff do not consider the acoustics so quieter children can share their ideas and ensure that activities support younger children at their level of understanding and capabilities.

- Staff do not always use the resources, such as visual cues, available to them to ensure that all children understand the routines of the day and their expectations so they can engage fully in the learning. This includes children who speak English as an additional language.
- Children behave well. Staff support children effectively to resolve conflicts when they arise, such as how to ask a friend to stop swinging their legs under the table. Children learn good manners and are polite and kind to each other. Staff support children to talk about how they feel and guide them to think about what would make them feel better.
- Staff meet children's care needs efficiently. They follow good hygiene practice, such as when changing nappies, and provide consistent support to help children progress to toilet training.
- Children gain good independence. They wipe their noses, choose a plate and cup for their snack and pour their own drinks. Children understand their own needs. For example, they know to remove clothing when they become hot after exercise and the importance of having a drink of water.
- The manager provides effective support to help staff improve their professional skills and access relevant training. Staff reflect well on their practice and work well together to raise the quality of children's learning experiences. Staff encourage parents to provide feedback on the provision and act accordingly, such as by providing opportunities for children to bake, using the school facilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff use their risk assessments well to continuously monitor the premises and equipment to keep children safe. Children are supervised closely by those staff who have completed robust suitability checks. Staff understand the importance of following procedures to ensure that known and authorised adults collect children. Staff have good knowledge of the possible signs and/or symptoms that a child is at potential risk and report these promptly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL has good knowledge of their procedures should a concern arise and works effectively with other agencies to keep children safe from harm.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- organise group times to ensure that younger and less-confident children are able to engage in their learning at their level of understanding
- support staff to consistently use resources available to them to help children understand the routines of the day and expectations to better engage in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2645522
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10285238
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	St Helen's Preschool Little Stars CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2645519
Telephone number	07717216762
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St Helen's Preschool Little Stars re-registered in 2021. The committee-run pre-school is based on a school site in Alveston, South Gloucestershire. The pre-school is open daily from 8.50am until 3.30pm, term time only. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including two at level 6. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachael Williams

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.
- The manager and the inspector had a learning walk to discuss the early years curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The manager joined the inspector on a joint observation.
- The inspector spoke with parents and children during the inspection and considered their views.
- The inspector conducted professional discussions with the manager, the DSL, the SENCo and staff during the inspection.
- A sample of documentation was discussed and observed.

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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