

Inspection of St Columb Minor Preschool

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

Inspection date: 22 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Requires improvementRequires
improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Previous weaknesses in the implementation of the curriculum identified at the last inspection have not been resolved and further breaches of requirements have occurred. The decline in standards puts children's safety at risk. The provider and staff do not take the necessary steps to report safeguarding concerns to the relevant agencies. The policy and procedures for managing allegations are not in line with the local safeguarding partnership (LSP) guidance and information about children's welfare is not recorded effectively. Staff do not recognise risks or manage them effectively to keep children safe. For example, staff who carry trays of dirty dishes from lunchtime back to the kitchen area step over the babies who are asleep on floor mats, placing babies at risk of items being dropped on them. Staff do not always notice when children put toys and small items in their mouths. When staff do realise, they do not always take sufficient action to remove the risk of choking.

The provider is clear about what she wants children to learn. However, she does not work with staff to ensure the planning and delivery of the curriculum aligns with her vision and meets the needs of children. Staff are not always aware what the intentions are for children's learning. Weaknesses in the key-person system mean that staff do not know how to meet children's individual needs. Consequently, children do not receive the support they need to help them make good progress in their learning. For example, when older children choose to use the colouring pencils and pens, staff do not encourage them to use the correct hand grip and to give meaning to their marks. The children scribble and dab the pens excitedly on the paper but receive little challenge or encouragement to extend their knowledge and skills. Children demonstrate poor attitudes towards their learning because staff do not give them the attention and interaction they need. The children lose interest in the activities that staff lead and generally play alone. When staff do interact with children, they are kind, remind children to use good manners and praise them for their efforts.

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

- The designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) have completed relevant safeguarding training. However, they do not have sufficient knowledge of how to recognise or manage allegations against staff, such as by sharing information with each other and reporting concerns to other agencies. This compromises children's welfare.
- The safeguarding policy does not contain sufficient information to inform staff of the action to take in the event of an allegation. Staff and DSLs do not record safeguarding matters effectively.
- The provider and staff do not identify all hazards or take sufficient steps to

minimise risks to children. At times, children are left unsupervised when eating, meaning staff are not nearby to support them should they choke. The entrance to one of the playrooms is via a fire door, which is kept locked throughout the day and requires a key to open. This has been identified by the staff and the provider as a risk, as this could delay children and staff from leaving the premises swiftly in an emergency. However, no action has been taken to address the matter. Furthermore, staff do not always update the records of children's attendance, so do not have a correct account of who is on the premises in the event of an emergency.

- Staff are not deployed effectively to ensure children are supervised appropriately at all times and kept safe. For example, babies and children walk around eating play dough and put small toys in their mouths, and pour water on the floor, which staff do not always notice or address. Staff prioritise tasks such as cleaning and tidying up over supervising and supporting the children sufficiently. Without staff's attention, babies and children sometimes become over excited and, as a result, their behaviour deteriorates and they hurt each other, meaning staff have to try to comfort multiple children who are upset.
- Children develop positive relationships with the friendly staff. They arrive happy and confidently approach staff for cuddles and reassurance. Some children help their younger friends, such as kindly assisting them to put their shoes on when they get ready to play outside.
- Although the provider and some staff assess children's development accurately, they do not use what they know about children to plan an ambitious curriculum that challenges children and meets their individual learning needs. Children find the activities enjoyable to begin with, but soon become bored and wander away to play with something else.
- Staff fail to provide high-quality support to help children develop their communication and language. Staff identify children who have delayed speech but do not interact with them often enough throughout the day. At times, staff do not build children's confidence to express themselves. For example, when staff read to them and the children eagerly try to share their thoughts, they are asked not to interrupt the story.
- The key-person system is ineffective. Some staff do not know their children well. New staff acting as key persons are not given sufficient information about the children they are responsible for. When key persons do know the children well, they do not share enough information with other staff about what the children need to learn next and what support they need to meet the children's individual needs.
- Children benefit from plenty of time to play and be active in the large garden. They climb and balance on the stacks of tyres, laugh as they roll the tyres down the slopes and use their imagination to make sand 'cakes'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff do not know how to assess risks or supervise children well enough to ensure

their safety. Staff show suitable knowledge about signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm and know how to report any concerns to senior staff. However, the lack of policy regarding procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of staff means the DSLs do not recognise when a concern indicates that staff may pose a risk to children. They do not share information with other agencies. Information about children's welfare is not always recorded in sufficient detail, which means the provider and staff do not have an accurate record of potential concerns about children and staff, to be able to inform other agencies when needed. The provider implements appropriate recruitment arrangements to check the suitability of new staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
ensure safeguarding concerns are recorded in line with the local safeguarding partnership (LSP) policy and procedures	24/05/2023
ensure that staff know how to recognise hazards and that they take swift action to minimise risks to children's safety	24/05/2023
maintain an accurate record of the times that children attend the setting	24/05/2023
ensure the designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) have a secure knowledge and understanding of what to do in the event of concerns about children and staff, and follow the LSP procedures, including sharing information with the relevant agencies	12/06/2023
ensure the policy for managing allegations is in line with the LSP procedures and report any concerns about staff to the local authority designated officer (LADO)	12/06/2023

improve the deployment of staff and the supervision of children to meet the children's needs, engage them in learning and ensure their safety	12/06/2023
implement an effective key-person system and ensure staff know the children well and are able to meet their individual needs.	12/06/2023

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

	Due date
plan and deliver a broad and challenging curriculum that builds on every child's knowledge and skills, and helps them make good progress in their learning	23/06/2023
improve staff's interactions with children to ensure all children receive support and encouragement from staff to develop their speaking skills.	23/06/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY538029
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10293331
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 8
Total number of places	65
Number of children on roll	119
Name of registered person	St Columb Minor Preschool Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP538028
Telephone number	01637 879358
Date of previous inspection	20 March 202320 March 2023

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 19 members of staff, of whom, 14 hold relevant qualifications at level 2 or above. The setting opens from 7am to 6pm on Monday to Friday, all year round. Out-of-school care and a holiday club for primary school-aged children is also provided. The setting is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Sarah Madge
Samantha Powis

Inspection activities

- An inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- This inspection was carried out as a result of a risk assessment, following information received about the provider.
- The inspectors viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises with the provider.
- The inspectors observed children and spoke with them throughout the day.
- The provider carried out a joint observation with an inspector to reflect on the quality of education.
- Staff had discussions with the inspectors to share their knowledge of the setting and their feedback.
- Parents shared their positive feedback about the setting with an inspector.
- The provider met with the inspectors to discuss their knowledge and implementation of the policies and procedures.

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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