

Inspection of St Dominic's Pre-school Playgroup

St. Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School, Western Avenue, Woodley, Berkshire
RG5 3BH

Inspection date: 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are settled and show high levels of emotional well-being. They happily separate from parents as they are welcomed by warm and friendly staff. Children behave well and show confidence around visitors. For instance, they eagerly show them things they have made and engage them in their play.

Staff support children to develop across all areas of the curriculum. They use a topic-based learning to help build on children's existing knowledge and skills. For instance, staff teach children about wild animals through stories, songs and activities. Staff use effective teaching methods, such as questioning children about stories, to establish what they know and remember from previous experiences. Children recall that the crocodile in the story could not eat sweet things as these were bad for his teeth. Other children comment that, 'Tigers don't eat grass, as they are meat eaters'.

Children demonstrate a positive attitude to learning, including developing a can-do attitude when faced with challenge. For example, they adapt their approach when the brick towers they build repeatedly fall. When they finally succeed, they celebrate their own achievements. This helps children to develop confidence in their own abilities and shows a willingness to learn through trial and error.

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

- The manager is aware of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children's learning and development. She has identified that some children need support to develop their social and communication skills. Therefore, staff have implemented targeted support to help children to catch up. For instance, children benefit from many opportunities to develop their speech and language skills. Throughout activities, staff repeat words and phrases and encourage younger children to repeat these. Older children happily engage in two-way conversations with staff.
- Leaders and managers are committed to supporting staff's ongoing professional development. Staff benefit from regular training and supervision sessions to help develop their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, staff with lead responsibility for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have completed specific training to enable them to provide appropriate support. This helps to ensure that all children make good progress from their starting points.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff work closely with them to ensure they are kept fully informed on the children's development and learning. All parents express how much their children love attending the pre-school.
- Staff place a good focus on encouraging children to develop a love of books. Children listen with interest to familiar stories and talk about what they can see.

Children identify the animals they see in the stories, including a toucan and other animals that live in the jungle. These positive interactions help to develop children's listening and attention skills and extend their vocabulary.

- Staff know the children well and can identify their individual learning needs. They regularly observe and assess children to quickly identify any gaps in their progress. This enables them to provide targeted support when needed, including using additional funding appropriately and ensuring timely referrals are made to other professionals.
- Generally, children's behaviour is good. There are set rules and boundaries in place to support children to understand the expectations for their behaviour. However, staff do not always consistently interact with children and plan how they deploy themselves effectively during daily transitions. For example, occasionally, they are preoccupied with other tasks, such as tidying up resources and getting ready for mealtimes. As a result, some children forget the rules, run around and the noise levels rise.
- Overall, teaching is good. However, sometimes, staff are slow to respond when children need support to become deeply involved in activities. This is more noticeable for younger and less confident children who are less independent in their play. This means that, occasionally, some children flit between activities, with reduced focus or concentration.
- Children have a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Staff encourage them to follow good hygiene routines, such as regularly washing their hands. Children are encouraged to make healthy food choices, such as choosing from a range of fresh fruits for snack.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of how to safeguard the children in their care. Leaders and managers ensure that all staff complete regular training to help them to recognise the signs of abuse and/or neglect. Staff have a clear understanding of what they must do if they have any concerns about the well-being of a child. Robust recruitments are in place to help ensure that all adults that have regular contact with children are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff deployment further to support daily routine transitions and enable children to remain highly focused
- support staff to respond to younger and less confident children quickly and consistently when children need support to join in with activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	153554
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10295213
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	St. Dominics Pre School Playgroup
Registered person unique reference number	RP518203
Telephone number	0118 927 2460
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

St Dominic's Pre-school Playgroup registered in 1986. It is situated in the grounds of St Dominic's Savio Catholic School in Woodley, Berkshire. The pre-school is open each weekday, during term time, from 9am to 3.15pm. The setting receives funding to provide free early education to children aged two, three and four years. There are eight staff; seven of whom work directly with the children. Of these, one member of staff holds qualified teacher status and seven staff hold a relevant qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Ingrid Howell

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 her evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager and discussed the quality of teaching.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and the children, and considered the impact on their learning.
- The views of the parents were gathered through face-to-face discussion and through written feedback.
- The inspector asked staff questions throughout the inspection, to establish their understanding of how to safeguard children.

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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