

Inspection of St Paul's Playgroup

Barne Lane, St Budeaux, PLYMOUTH PL5 1NE

Inspection date: 22 June 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 Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children have strong and secure relationships with the staff at this pre-school. Managers create a nurturing and inviting home-from-home environment for children, who arrive with joy and confidence. Children independently store their lunch bags before accessing the many age-appropriate activities available. Older children concentrate well as they explore puzzles in the mathematics area and look at books in the cosy reading area. Older children are good role models for the younger children and like to help them. For example, when it is time to tidy the toys away, they support younger children to stack the wooden blocks correctly.

Staff help children to build their small-hand muscles. For example, they help children to create happy and sad facial expressions with salt dough. Young children concentrate well during this activity. Staff support children's understanding of emotions. They discuss with children the different ways to express emotion, including what makes them feel happy or sad. Staff speak in kind and gentle voices and create a calm atmosphere. Children of all ages are curious learners and confident communicators. Staff have high expectations for children and give children time to think and respond to questions. Children know the routine of the pre-school and readily respond to staff requests.

The curriculum is ambitious for all children and prepares them for the next stage of learning. For example, staff support children to develop confidence and knowledge in their physical development. Older children build core skills and balance as they confidently climb up ladders and walk on stepping stones in the outdoor play area.

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

- The pre-school managers and staff create secure relationships with parents. They go above and beyond to support the individual needs of parents. For example, they provide families with lots of guidance on helping children to develop healthy eating and dental hygiene habits at home. As a result, children enjoy nutritious, healthy and varied packed lunches. Parents recommend the pre-school to others. However, although key persons share daily information with parents about their child's personal care, they are not always forthcoming in updating parents about children's individual learning and developmental progress.
- The curriculum has a strong emphasis on developing children's ability to share and to help others. At snack time, older children take turns to count the plates and then put them on the tables. They serve the snack to the rest of the group, who wait patiently. During group moments, like story time, staff enable children to decide if they will take part. Although staff listen to children's ideas and respect their views, at times they do not consider younger children's individual

preferences when managing nappy changing. This does not always create a positive experience for them.

- Managers have established a team of staff who enjoy working at the pre-school and who feel supported by their peers and manager. The manager provides high-quality continued professional development opportunities, ensuring that staff's knowledge and skills are kept up to date. Many staff are highly qualified, and this positively impacts on children's learning and development. For example, staff have recently completed training on providing environments that promote sensory development and independence. They have since adapted the layout of the room and introduced new activities to support children further. For example, they have changed the height and location of the coat hooks so children hang coats independently, In addition, parents are encouraged to come into the pre-school to participate in children's learning experience even more.
- Managers have created an ambitious curriculum, which supports all children to develop and progress to the next stage of learning. For example, they support children's creative development and imaginations with role-play games. Staff play with children in the home kitchen area. They cook pretend food and then evolve the play for children to become policemen, wearing police hats and using a telephone to speak to people who need help. There is a strong focus on literacy, especially on reading books. Staff read in an exciting way, and children enjoy listening and joining in. Staff provide children with prior learning to enhance their experience on trips out. For example, they read a story about trains in advance of a railway trip across the Tamar Bridge to Cornwall.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress in their learning and development. The special educational needs coordinator supports staff to know and use effective strategies, such as visual cues, which enables children with SEND to thrive. Managers have effective links with outside agencies to ensure that children receive additional professional support when needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers follow thorough recruitment procedures and conduct regular appraisals to gather information to confirm that staff are suitable to work with children. They ensure that staff are fully aware of their duty to protect the children in their care and implement robust safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff keep their knowledge of safeguarding matters up to date with regular training. They are confident in recognising the signs of possible abuse, how to record their concerns and who to contact should they need to refer the situation to others. Managers and staff conduct regular risk assessments of the premises and equipment to identify and minimise hazards.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- extend opportunities for parents to receive up-to-date information about their children's daily learning and overall progress, to further strengthen parent partnership
- review and adapt children's intimate care routines to reflect their individual preferences and to improve their overall experience.

Setting details

Unique reference number	117231
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10298811
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	St Paul's Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP902188
Telephone number	01752 517 473
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Paul's Playgroup registered in 1992 and is managed by a committee of parent trustees. It is located in St Budeaux, a residential area of Plymouth, in Devon. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, from 8.30am until 3pm, during school term time. It receives funding for children aged two, three and four years. A team of eight staff members is employed to work with the children. All staff have appropriate childcare qualifications. The manager holds a level 8 early years qualification, two staff are qualified at level 7, one member of staff is qualified at level 4 and four staff hold level 3 early years qualifications.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Victoria Jones

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 curriculum lead took the inspector on a learning walk and discussed how she delivers the curriculum.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the curriculum lead.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the setting.

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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