

Inspection of St Francis Pre-School

Valentine Primary School, Valentine Avenue, Sholing, SOUTHAMPTON SO19 0EQ

Inspection date: 3 July 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's wishes and feelings are valued and respected at pre-school. Staff support children to understand the differences and similarities between themselves and others. They grow in confidence as they develop a great sense of self-worth, through consistently kind, caring and warm interactions with the staff team. Staff know their key children incredibly well and use this knowledge to support children at the setting. The providers curriculum is inclusive and ambitious for all children. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those learning English as an additional language. These children benefit from hearing keywords in their home language. This supports them to make connections, feel secure and learn English quicker.

Children behave very well, are keen to explore all areas of learning and enjoy spending time looking at books with staff. Staff have a clear focus on developing children's communication and language skills. They introduce new vocabulary to build on what children already know. For example, children talk about their visits to the garden centre where they go to buy seeds to plant in the soil. Staff help children to learn to keep themselves safe at pre-school. They teach children how to carry scissors correctly, sit well at the table when eating, and the importance of regular handwashing.

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

- The pre-school provides effective support for children with SEND. Staff make appropriate referrals to external agencies and work closely in partnership with parents. Children benefit from specialised strategies and activities. Staff quickly support children who struggle to manage their own behaviour and divert them to new play opportunities. For example, children are invited to use the 'stomping corner' as an outlet for their frustrations to avoid conflict.
- Staff act as excellent role models, which teaches children to be respectful and kind to each other as they play. Older children help others to open their lunchboxes when they struggle. Children show lovely manners, such as saying 'excuse me' when they try to move past their friends. Children are also seen giving each other a hug as they queue to wash their hands.
- Staff encourage children to sit together at mealtimes and develop their social skills. They enjoy talking about their likes and dislikes. This encourages communication and helps children learn the importance of healthy routines. However, children are not consistently provided with opportunities to practise their independence skills. For example, staff do too many things for children that they may be capable of doing for themselves, such as pouring their drinks or cutting up their snacks. This does not prepare them well enough for school.
- Overall, the highly qualified staff have many years of experience. They know

children very well and teach them with passion and enthusiasm. Staff attend training to develop their skills in supporting children with speech, language and communication. As a result, children make good progress with their communication and language.

- Children are starting to learn to understand group time activities. They are eager to follow simple instructions and work as part of a team. They listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to share their ideas and views. However, not all staff are able to effectively plan for their key children's next stage in learning. They do not benefit from targeted coaching and support to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders and managers prioritise staff well-being and monitor staff workload to ensure a healthy work-life balance. Staff receive regular feedback to support their ongoing development and personal effectiveness. Staff report to be happy and very well supported.
- Staff complete the required progress check for children aged between two and three years. They also work with local schools to produce transition reports to help children settle and get the support they need when they move on to primary school. Children feel excited to go to big school. They talk about meeting their new teachers and having to wear a uniform.
- Parents report that the pre-school provides exceptional support for their families. They value the help with referrals to outside agencies and are thankful for the daily verbal communication about their children's well-being, learning and development. They say that the manager has an open-door policy and that they feel that their children are safe and well cared for at the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of safeguarding. Including the ability to recognise the signs and indicators of a wide range of abuse. Staff are clear on the procedures for recording and reporting of concerns that a child may be at risk of harm and alert to any changes in behaviour. Staff are confident in escalating concerns, including managing allegations against adults that work with children. Leaders make effective use of risk assessments, staff deployment and safe recruitment checks to keep children safe and ensure the ongoing suitability of staff. Leaders work with a wide range of outside agencies. This helps to ensure that children and families receive a joined-up and well coordinated multi-agency response to any emerging needs.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to recognise when they need to encourage children to do things for

themselves

- develop further the systems for supporting individual staff to plan effectively for children's next stage in learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY404890
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10299936
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Street, Susan Anne
Registered person unique reference number	RP907969
Telephone number	07967724085
Date of previous inspection	9 September 2019

Information about this early years setting

St Francis Pre-School registered in 2009. It operates from Valentine Primary School, in the Sholing area of Southampton. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting is open from Monday to Friday during school term times from 7.45am to 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Leanne Merritt

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 setting.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk and explained the curriculum intentions and how these are implemented to the inspector.
- The inspector observed children's activities, play and interactions with staff indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact of this on their learning and progress.
- Discussions and meetings were held with leaders and staff during the inspection.
- The inspector and manager observed and evaluated a joint observation together.
- Parents shared their views and provided feedback about the pre-school.
- Children interacted with the inspector and talked about what they like to do and play with at the pre-school.
- A sample of relevant documentation was reviewed, including evidence of staff's suitability, such as paediatric first-aid certificates.

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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