

Inspection of St Christopher's Pre-school

St Christophers Church Centre, Pepys Avenue, Thornhill, Southampton, Hampshire
SO19 6PJ

Inspection date: 11 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The expectations for the curriculum and children's learning are well known but are not always achieved by all staff. Children are not progressing as quickly as they could. Not all staff consistently challenge children during activities to help them reach their full developmental potential.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive lots of individual support that enables them to settle and feel safe. However, they are not consistently supported by all staff to be included in activities and make the best possible progress.

Despite the weaknesses in the implementation of the curriculum, children are happy, active, enthusiastic learners who enjoy being at the pre-school. They often choose to play outdoors and are motivated to explore and use the resources independently. Children concentrate well and persist with activities that interest them. For instance, they work together cooperatively as a group to build a long bridge using large play bricks. They develop their balancing skills as they hold their friends hands and walk carefully along the length of the bridge.

Staff are positive role models for children. They support children to behave well and they focus strongly on their physical and emotional well-being. Staff encourage children to identify and manage their feelings and behaviour, for instance, by talking about pictures that reflect different emotions.

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

- Since the last inspection, the manager has improved curriculum planning so that children are provided with a wider variety of activities. However, she does not coach and support staff well enough to ensure the curriculum is implemented effectively by all staff. Consequently, children do not benefit from consistently high-quality learning and development opportunities.
- Although there are some inconsistencies in how staff deliver the curriculum, children who start behind in their speech and language and social development make steady progress and quickly catch up. Staff talk with children and successfully develop their vocabulary. For instance, while taking about a planned outing to a zoo, staff explain that animals who eat leaves are 'herbivores'.
- Overall, staff support children well to develop the skills they need for their future learning. They provide resources such as paintbrushes and water, which children use independently to make marks on a large blackboard outdoors. Children develop strength in their hands, ready for learning to write, for instance as they use inflated balloons and paint to make patterns on paper.
- The manager, who is the special educational needs coordinator, fully

understands her roles and responsibilities. She works closely with staff, parents and other agencies to provide early support for children with SEND and reduce gaps in their development. However, staff do not always work together well as a team to further support children with SEND so they are fully included in activities and make the best possible progress.

- The manager works hard to ensure statutory requirements are met. However, the nominated individual has not notified Ofsted of current changes to committee members, as required. However, this does not have an impact on children's safety, as committee members do not have unsupervised contact with children.
- Staff form positive relationships with children. They know all the children well, meet their individual care needs and gain their cooperation.
- Staff encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves to develop their independence. For instance, at lunchtime they provide them with scissors to use to open food packaging in their lunch boxes. They support children well to look after their belongings and to develop the confidence to choose and use the accessible resources.
- Staff work well in partnership with parents to meet children's individual needs. Managers provide parents with information that enables them to access support that benefits the whole family.
- Staff have improved how they support children who are learning English as an additional language to get involved in other children's play and widen their friendships. They have also improved how they help children learn to use technology. For instance, they show them how to use tablet computers and remote-controlled cars, and how to use magnifying glasses and understand their purpose.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager has a good knowledge and understanding of her roles and responsibilities to safeguard children's welfare. She communicates well with other agencies involved with children and their families to ensure their well-being. The manager ensures that all staff understand safeguarding procedures, including those relating to allegations. All staff complete child protection training and know what to do if they are concerned about a child's safety. The manager completes regular checks to ensure that staff continue to be suitable to work with children. Staff use risk assessment effectively in the pre-school and on outings to keep all children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
provide more support for staff to understand and implement the early years curriculum and consistently offer good-quality learning and development experiences.	26/09/2023

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

- strengthen how staff work as a team to incorporate the individual needs of children with SEND into the planning of activities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	131564
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10300215
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	3 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	St. Christopher's Playgroup Thornhill Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP903916
Telephone number	07748226933
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Christopher's Pre-school registered in 2001. It is located in the Thornhill area of Southampton. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, from 9am until 3.30pm, during term time. There are four staff, who all hold appropriate early years qualifications to level 3. The setting receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Cathy Greenwood

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 inspector observed how staff support children during indoor and outdoor activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with parents, managers, staff and children during the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk and a joint observation together.

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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