

Inspection of Play Pals Childcare

St John's Church of England Primary School, Simpkin Street, Abram, Wigan WN2 5QE

Inspection date: 12 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 beaming smiles show they are happy in this small and welcoming setting. They arrive cheerfully, full of enthusiasm to play and learn. Children notice letters in their name and form some recognisable words. They have good fine motor control. Children use a pincer grasp to hold a pencil and artistically sketch a still life bunch of flowers. Younger children make marks in coloured sand using the wheels of toy vehicles. They develop small finger muscles through activities such as threading beads onto laces. Early writing development is well supported by staff.

Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. Children understand the nursery rules and know what is expected of them. They eagerly ask staff for a 'rainbow challenge' to complete their rainbow chart. Once accomplished, children are awarded with a colour of the rainbow for their efforts. Children wait patiently for a free place at the snack table. They require no prompting to wash their hands, prior to sitting down for a bite to eat. Children stop and listen for the next instruction when they hear the tambourine cymbals. They helpfully tidy away the toys before lining up to go out to play. Children behave very well.

Children are keen problem-solvers who have a can-do attitude. Staff allow time for children to find solutions if faced with challenges. For example, a wall-mounted waterpipe is out of reach, so children consider if standing on a crate will make them tall enough. After careful deliberation, they recognise that a taller child can reach the pipe by standing on their tiptoes. Children watch triumphantly as water is poured down the guttering.

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

- Leaders failed to notify Ofsted of a change to the nursery manager. However, the manager was subjected to robust safe recruitment procedures to evidence her suitability for the role. There was no impact on children from this breach in the notification requirements.
- Boys enjoy preparing pretend food together in the role-play area. They take turns to build tall towers from coloured blocks and measure these against the height of their friends. Girls help each other to carry a heavy basket that they have filled with toys. This helps to keep the play area tidy. Children talk about how they feel and others listen attentively to them. They use assorted coloured crayons to create 'Monster' pictures from a recent book about feelings and emotions. Relationships between children are strong and respectful.
- Leaders adopt an ethos to explore, experience and educate. The new manager has devised a curriculum that, overall, helps children to make good progress. Staff plan activities to enthuse children and base activities on children's interests. However, some staff do not build on children's prior skills and knowledge. Staff

sometimes plan activities without taking account of what children know and can do. Activities are tailored very well for some children but sometimes lack focus for others. This has an impact on what they are learning.

- Excellent relationships are established with the host school. Together, they ensure consistency, for example by adopting an identical rainbow behaviour chart system. Children eat a school meal or a packed lunch in the school hall. This helps them to become familiar with school routines. Highly effective transition arrangements help children to settle well when the time comes for them to move on to the next stage in their education.
- Staff listen to children with interest and ask some thought-provoking questions. Staff reinforce the correct letter sounds and provide activities to promote phonological awareness. Children demonstrate good speaking and listening skills. They are confident and competent communicators who use a wide range of vocabulary. Older children are beginning to use this phonological awareness to decode, blend and segment words in readiness for school.
- Parents are extremely complimentary about the nursery. They are updated with their children's learning needs and individual targets. Parents particularly like that staff share a video of them reading a weekly story to children. This helps parents to continue to promote the book of the week when at home. A consistent approach towards children's development is adopted, which helps children to make good progress.
- Staff provide healthy snacks and drinks for children. They plan activities to teach awareness of oral health, such as toothbrushing activities. Staff and children discuss healthy and unhealthy foods. However, the drinks and some of the foods that children and staff bring into the setting are, in the main, high in sugar and contradict the healthy eating policy. This does not promote children's understanding about the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Staff work with parents and external professionals to ensure that help is provided in a timely manner. Funding is used to pay for additional staff to ensure that children get the meaningful and tailored care that they require. Children are able to adopt their preferred styles of play, and staff welcome and respect this. This helps children to make progress in their development.
- All staff are proud of their roles and say they feel appreciated. Staff receive supervision meetings and attend training provided through the company learning platform. Staff benefit from incisive feedback on their practice, which helps to continue to raise the quality of education. However, supply staff who are on long-term placement and make up a large proportion of the staff team do not benefit from this rich and tailored support. Therefore, some staff do not have the precise skills or knowledge about each child to help children to make the best progress possible. That said, the manager works alongside staff to oversee practice and has a good overview of the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are confident in child protection procedures and know how to safeguard children. This includes knowing how to raise the alarm should they ever be concerned about inappropriate actions, behaviour or the conduct of a colleague. Safety checks are carried out by staff on arrival each day. This helps to ensure the areas for childcare are left safe and suitable by others who use the school premises. The premises are very secure. The identification of visitors is verified before they gain entry into the childcare areas. Once inside, visitors are supervised at all times. In addition, staff supervise children well. This means children are safe and well protected.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help all staff to focus more precisely on the sequential skills that individual children need to learn
- provide more consistent messages around healthy lifestyles.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY541803
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10302430
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	3 to 11
Total number of places	43
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Play Pals Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP541800
Telephone number	01942 703465
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2019

Information about this early years setting

Play Pals Childcare registered in 2017 and is located in Wigan. The nursery opens all year round, Monday to Friday. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery employs three members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a relevant childcare qualification at level 6 and one holds a level 3 qualification. One member of staff is unqualified. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Layla Davies

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 joined the inspector on a learning walk. They told the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children were spoken to.
- The inspector spoke with leaders about the leadership and management of the nursery.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

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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