

Inspection of St Wilfrid's Pre-School

Greenbank Lane, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 1JW

Inspection date: 11 October 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

Staff offer children and parents a friendly welcome when they arrive each morning. Children confidently wave goodbye to their parents and eagerly anticipate what exciting activities and tasks await them. Children are happy and reassured by the positive relationships they share with gentle and caring staff. Staff create a calm atmosphere throughout the pre-school, where children have fun. Children frequently laugh and staff use humour to engage them in their learning. For instance, children giggle as they play with dough and smile with excitement as they run outside. Children behave well and enjoy the company of peers. Friendships blossom and children are settled, happy and content.

Children develop good early literacy skills. They begin to recognise their name when they locate name-cards each morning at registration. Children practise writing their own names, to label artwork they create. They learn that print carries meaning as they decode story books, using images and illustrations. A love of literacy is further reinforced as children select books from the on-site library to read at home. Literacy is a core element of the curriculum and children learn this skill in age-appropriate, enjoyable ways. Older children count in sequence, while younger children recognise numbers. They develop good mathematical skills, practising their number work through hands-on play. For instance, children join in familiar number songs during carpet time. They use the rhythm and repetition of the song to learn and recite number sequences. Children have regular opportunities to be physically active. They practise balance, coordination and core strength during weekly physical education lessons. Furthermore, this helps to promote children's good physical health, through movement and exercise. Overall, children experience a varied and exciting curriculum. All children are well supported to make good progress.

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

- The curriculum is well sequenced and all new learning is based on a secure foundation of prior knowledge. Furthermore, children are provided with plenty of scope to practise what they already know and test and try new things. Children make good all-round progress.
- Staff have high expectations of children and frequently challenge them as they play. Activities progressively develop in complexity, which extends children's knowledge and skills. For instance, children are challenged to solve a complicated jigsaw puzzle. They are offered frequent praise and lots of encouragement until they eventually succeed.
- The pre-school is led by an experienced committee and dedicated manager. Leaders show aspiration and drive to continually improve. They know what they do well and take time to reflect, which helps to raise standards even more. Good

leadership in turn helps to promote good standards in the pre-school.

- Strong teamwork is a core strength of the pre-school. Staff share responsibilities, delegate tasks and work very well as a team. Collectively, staff maintain a respectful relationship. As a consequence of this excellent teamwork, children's needs are quickly met and good standards are consistently maintained.
- Staff recognise the value and importance of working in partnership with parents and other professionals. To illustrate, staff work hard to develop respectful relationships with teachers and senior staff from the host school. This helps to ensure that children make a smooth transition on to school when the time comes.
- Staff provide plenty of narration and ongoing dialogue as children play. They introduce new words to help to extend children's emerging vocabulary. Children make good progress in their communication skills. However, at times, staff interactions provide less-frequent opportunities for children to join in two-way discussion and practise their conversational skills.
- Children enjoy a good mix of adult-planned activities and self-chosen games. However, during group activities, staff do not always encourage less-confident children to express or explore their ideas.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff collectively prioritise children's safety and welfare. All adults working in the pre-school have received safeguarding training and know how to identify and respond to concerns of abuse should these arise. Staff maintain a safe and hygienic environment for children to play and learn. For instance, before children play outside, staff carefully check the space and equipment to ensure that it is safe for children to access. Detailed policies and procedures are well implemented to ensure children's welfare. For instance, when children move from one location in the school to another, staff regularly count the number of children present to ensure close supervision and accountability.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop staff's teaching skills to provide children with even more opportunities to engage in discussion and practise their conversational skills as they play
- improve the organisation of group activities to ensure that all children benefit fully from the quality teaching available.

Setting details

Unique reference number	305335
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10307842
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	22
Name of registered person	St Wilfrid's Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524931
Telephone number	01606 288022
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Wilfrid's Pre-School has been operating since 1987 and is managed by a voluntary committee. It is based in St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Hartford, Cheshire. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am to 3.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Jacques

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager had a learning walk with the inspector and discussed how the curriculum is designed and how this supports children's learning.
- A range of documentation was sampled by the inspector, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint evaluation of an activity and discussed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- Staff and children spoke with the inspector at appropriate times throughout the inspection. The inspector spoke with parents and reviewed their written comments. The views of staff, committee members, children and parents were considered by the inspector.

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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