

Inspection of St John's Playtime Pre-School

St. Johns United Reformed Church, 1 Cowper Street, IPSWICH IP4 5JD

Inspection date: 22 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Leaders and managers do not take appropriate action to safeguard children. This compromises children's safety and well-being. Although staff have completed the relevant training, the provider has failed to ensure that they understand how to report all concerns.

Staff are not consistent with managing children's behaviour. While some staff intervene to stop children running around indoors, others do not. Children climb on tables and chairs at various points throughout the day. Staff do not consistently address this in a timely manner or help to redirect them to the indoor climbing frame where they can learn to climb safely. This compromises children's safety and means that they are not learning the rules and boundaries that help to keep them safe.

Despite this, children are warmly greeted by staff when they arrive. They are happy to leave their parents and settle well into the session. Children are learning how to look after themselves. Staff have set up a nose-blowing station, which children use on their own. This allows them to develop independent self-care skills.

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

- There is a lack of supervision during mealtimes. Staff are not aware that children are wandering around while eating. This is a choking hazard and puts children's safety at risk. Through discussions with staff, it is clear that they understand the associated risks, but this knowledge is not implemented in practice to keep children safe.
- The quality of teaching is not consistent, and children are not adequately supported in their learning and development. For example, during large-group activities, such as yoga, some children are quick to disengage. They struggle to follow instructions as they are unable to see the computer screen that it is playing on. Younger children climb onto the bench in front of the screen and obstruct the view of others. Staff struggle to maintain the focus of all the children and deliver the intended learning outcomes.
- Staff do not sufficiently adapt their teaching to match the understanding and abilities of the youngest children and those who may need further support. For example, children do not understand what staff are trying to teach them as they try to cut a slice of carrot with scissors. Staff do not demonstrate how to use a knife to cut with. Instead, they place it next to children, who disengage from the activity as they do not know what to do with it. This has an impact on children's confidence to have a go and learn new skills.
- Children do not have consistent rules and boundaries to learn from. They are not learning how their behaviour has an impact on others. Children's frequent

climbing distracts other children from focusing on activities that staff are trying to teach. For example, children enjoy singing nursery rhymes with the staff, but children climbing and jumping off the sleeping mats repeatedly distracts the other children. The time it takes for staff to respond and how they respond varies.

- Staff do not always meet the needs of the very youngest children, meaning that they can be exposed to unnecessary risk. There is a lack of understanding that these children may require more supervision and monitoring than the slightly older children, as it is often the younger children who are climbing and exploring.
- Parents speak positively about the setting, noting that staff know their children well and that their children enjoy attending. Positive partnerships exist between the pre-school and parents. Leaders seek parental opinions to assess and improve the services provided.
- Support is in place to help children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make progress. Staff work closely with the special educational needs coordinator and parents to ensure that children have consistent routines and experiences. This supports their well-being and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Breaches of the requirements compromise children's safety and well-being. Leaders and staff do not have a secure knowledge of how to safeguard children effectively. Leaders fail to work with other agencies to safeguard children. Allegations against members of staff are not referred to the relevant agencies. Instead, leaders investigate the allegation internally. There are gaps in the safeguarding knowledge of staff. They are not clear about how to report concerns about adults working with children. This issue is further compounded by ambiguity in their written policies.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
ensure that leaders and managers have a secure knowledge of how to appropriately manage allegations made against individuals and refer these to agencies with statutory responsibilities	01/12/2023

improve staff's understanding of child protection issues, including who to report concerns to in line with local procedures	01/12/2023
ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times, including mealtimes	01/12/2023
review safeguarding policies to ensure that they reflect the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage	01/12/2023
provide staff with support and coaching to implement appropriate and consistent strategies for managing children's behaviour	22/12/2023
help staff to develop a clear understanding of how to implement the curriculum to improve teaching practice.	22/12/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	251650
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10305010
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	1 to 4
Total number of places	
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	St John's Playtime Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905397
Telephone number	07895003974 / 01473 716831
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

St John's Playtime Pre-School registered in 1992 and is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens from 8.15am to 4.15pm, Monday to Thursday, and 8.15am to 4pm on Friday, during term time. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Hopson

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 viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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