

# Inspection of St Michael's Pre School

St. Michaels C of E Primary School, Ashford Road, St. Michaels, TENTERDEN TN30 6PU

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Inspection date: 25 January 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Children happily walk up the path to this family focused pre-school. They talk excitedly about their day and settle immediately to explore the activities set out for them. Staff promote children's interests well. They plan experiences based on children's individual needs. Staff ensure the curriculum is well designed to support gaps in learning and promote children's mathematical skills effectively. For example, children ask for 'half' or a 'quarter' of milk at snack time. They hold up number cards to show their friends how many spaces there are available at the table. Staff encourage children to tell the time. Children call out excitedly that there are only 'three minutes' until they get ready for lunch.

Staff promote children's health and hygiene successfully. Children enjoy listening to stories about brushing their teeth and exploring resources to help keep their gums healthy. This supports children's developing self-care skills well. Staff promote children's literacy skills effectively. They use sign language to help children to communicate. Children enjoy matching letters to sounds in their names. Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They provide additional sessions to help support children's physical skills. Children who needed support to walk are now confident movers.

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

- Children benefit from interactions with staff, who encourage them to be unique. Staff provide mirrors for children to celebrate what makes them special and to be proud of themselves. Staff invite parents in to share different cultures and traditions. This helps to develop children's positive self-image and confidence.
- Staff encourage children to be kind. 'Special Helpers' help their friends to find their name cards. Everyone joins in to clap and cheer when celebrating achievements. However, on occasion, staff do not make the most of opportunities to talk to children about the impact their behaviour has on others.
- Staff plan a meaningful and motivating curriculum based on children's interests. For example, children spend a long time playing 'hairdressers'. Staff skilfully extend this interest to support children to practise their scissor skills, cutting different hairstyles into play dough models. This supports children's imaginations well.
- Staff promote children's language skills effectively. They successfully build on the excellent support they offered parents during the national lockdown, to help parents support reading at home. Children regularly visit the local library, sharing books with their families and friends. Staff read engaging stories to children to help develop a love of reading. Older children learn letter sounds to promote their literacy.
- Children benefit from opportunities to learn together. For example, when asked

what they all need to wear when playing outside in the rain, they eagerly call out, 'waterproofs'. However, at times, younger children are not as fully engaged in larger group activities. Staff do not always recognise when they could support younger children more fully during these times.

- Children with SEND benefit from the attention of passionate staff, who are proactive in supporting their needs. Staff have developed a sensory space to ensure children have somewhere quiet and calm to which to retreat. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is instrumental in forging positive relationships with the local community and pre-schools, to support staff's practice. Children with SEND make very good progress.
- Leaders and managers are enthusiastic and committed to ensuring they offer high-quality provision for children and families. They actively seek out additional funding to develop the environment. For example, children enjoy exploring the 'super-hero' den outside, created after receiving a community grant. Leaders and managers access very good support from the wider organisation to support ongoing practice. Staff appreciate the strong focus on their well-being.
- Communication with parents is strong. Parents talk incredibly highly of the warm and welcoming staff. They appreciate the opportunities they have to join in. They report that their children have made very strong attachments to staff and that their children have made excellent progress in their confidence, communication and social skills.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- encourage staff to support children to understand how their behaviour and actions can impact upon others
- strengthen support for staff to identify when the youngest children need more support to be fully engaged in large group learning times.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2632469
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10305528
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	24
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	41
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Home Farm Childrens Nursery Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP910169
<b>Telephone number</b>	01580239510
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

St Michael's Pre School registered in 2021 and is situated in St Michaels, Tenterden, Kent. It is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9am until 3pm, and Tuesday and Friday, 9am until midday. It is run by Home Farm Nurseries Ltd, which also owns a further setting in Tenterden. It is also affiliated with Tenterden Schools Trust. It is located on the site of St Michael's Primary School. The setting receives funding for the provision of early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are nine members of staff, of whom eight hold early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Victoria Salisbury

## 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 deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed their early years curriculum.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector spoke to children, to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The SENCo spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity with the manager.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with 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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