

# Inspection of St Michael's Pre-School Nursery

Recreation Centre, Recreation Field, The Green, Dalston, CARLISLE CA5 7QB

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Inspection date:

21 February 2024

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Outstanding

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

### **The provision is outstanding**

Providing children with the highest emotional security is at the very heart of St Michael's Pre-School. All staff show an unwavering passion and commitment to enriching children's character and to ensuring they form strong and secure attachments. As a result, children are brimming with confidence and self-assurance. They are curious, motivated and resilient learners. The firm priority that leaders place on promoting close bonds between children and staff, impacts significantly on children's personal, social and emotional development. Children show an exceptional ability to understand their own feelings and those of others, in addition to making respectful and caring friendships with their peers. Staff are superb role models. Their consistently polite, respectful and considerate interactions with children and other staff members, help children to understand the expectations of their own behaviour.

All children benefit from a precisely planned and exceptionally well-delivered curriculum. Children are supported to continually build on their prior skills and knowledge and to embed and deepen their learning. Children consistently demonstrate their new learning and abilities. They make tremendous progress from their starting points and are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- The curriculum for children's learning is sequenced exceptionally well. Staff carefully consider and expertly map out each precise skill and individual piece of knowledge children need, to help them reach intended learning goals. In this way, children are greatly supported to continuously consolidate and then build on their knowledge and skills.
- Intentions for children's learning are extremely well informed and firmly understood by all staff. Planned and spontaneous interactions from staff, as well as the resources, activities and experiences, precisely contribute to the delivery of the curriculum intentions. Children make excellent progress in their learning.
- Children are supported to develop superb physical skills. Clear curriculum planning greatly promotes children's ability to refine their physical movement and gain increasing control over the way their bodies move. Children are expert climbers. They can competently and safely manoeuvre over the large fences during their many long walks out in the community. As a result of the strong curriculum for physical development, from a young age, children develop excellent core strength and show firm stability, coordination and agility.
- Staff go above and beyond to develop children's interests as part of their personal development. They bring learning to life as they expand on children's deep interest in dinosaurs with an array of inspiring experiences. Children learn

about the anatomy of dinosaurs as they explore a large-scale dinosaur skeleton. Staff embed learning further, providing real animal skeletons for children to explore and compare. This approach significantly helps children to feel valued and skilled in their own life experiences.

- Staff successfully ignite a passion for learning in children. They deliver the curriculum with huge enthusiasm, creating a window into a world of awe and wonder. Children are bursting with ideas as a result. They independently begin building their own theatre. Children neatly set up chairs for the audience and scour the environment for props to bring their vision to life. They are very eager to join in, share their ideas and cooperate with each other.
- The manager and staff are entirely devoted to the continued growth and improvement of the pre-school. They are acutely aware of the areas of practice that they must remain focused on. For example, ongoing professional development is at the centre of the vision for the leadership and management team. This is linked to new areas of research and always carefully and thoughtfully implemented into practice. As a result, staff are highly skilled and confident teachers and the quality of education is continually enriching.
- Staff receive highly effective and meaningful engagements with the manager. Timely supervision sessions are based on sharply focused evaluations of staff practice, as well as a strong emphasis on staff well-being. The manager is passionate about providing support for her staff and ensuring their welfare. The strong team spirit leads to a highly positive environment where children feel happy and secure.
- Staff ensure that children who require additional support receive swift and highly effective interventions which are tailored to each child's individual needs. Key persons demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the agreed strategies for children's learning and implement these with integrity. As a result, gaps in children's development rapidly narrow.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

## Setting details

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | EY361016                             |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | Cumberland                           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10305501                             |
| <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 4                               |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 26                                   |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 23                                   |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | Dalston Pre School Nursery Committee |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP518396                             |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 07564335641                          |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 23 February 2018                     |

## Information about this early years setting

St Michael's Pre-School Nursery registered in 2007 and is located in Dalston, Cumbria. The setting employs four members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, including the manager who holds an early years qualification at level 6. The setting opens Monday, Wednesday and Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.30am to 3.30pm. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Katie Sparrow

## 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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- 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.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection and talked about their learning.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents and grandparents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

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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