

Inspection of St Paul's Playgroup

Church Hall, Mill Road, Northumberland Heath, Erith, Kent DA8 1HN

Inspection date: 19 March 2024

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

The pre-school is a community that has children's well-being at the heart of everything it does. Children are greeted warmly. They happily separate from parents, find their name on the self-registration board, and happily enter the pre-school to begin their day. Children settle quickly at a chosen activity. They show focus and concentration. For example, some children help measure out ingredients to make play dough.

Staff have high expectations of children. Children developing good levels of independence. They wash their hands, wipe their own noses and are beginning to put on their own coats. Staff are positive and offer children lots of encouragement. They allow them to problem solve while letting them know they are nearby for support.

The behaviour of children is good. Children are beginning to develop friendships. Staff support children to share resources and take turns, often using timers as a visual aid. Where children struggle to regulate their behaviour, staff are very quick to intervene and provide support.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported. The curriculum is ambitious and adaptations are made to ensure all children are included in all activities. Staff work in partnership with other agencies involved in children's care, learning and development.

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

- Staff at the pre-school know the children well. They understand what they know and can do and what it is they want them to learn next. All children, including those with SEND and who speak English as an additional language, are making good progress from their starting points. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- The curriculum for communication and language is well designed. Staff role model language well, using repetition and simple phrases with younger children. Older children use their widening vocabulary to share ideas and build on their play. Staff ask effective questions allowing children to recall and reflect on what they have learned.
- Opportunities for outside learning are excellent. Children work together to make a little bench so they can collaboratively mark make on a large chalkboard. Children count and identify numbers as they hop along the number mat. Experiments take place as children mix sand and water and talk about the results. Obstacle courses are made to help children begin to assess risk and

further develop their skills in balancing and climbing.

- Healthy eating is promoted. Staff continue to work together with parents to ensure children lunches are nutritionally balanced. A fresh fruit snack is provided, and a 'fruit of the week' exposes children to more exotic tastes, such as pineapple and mango. Children use real vegetables within their home corner, cutting broccoli, courgette and potato, allowing them to feel and smell the different produce.
- The inside environment for older children has different opportunities across the areas of learning for children to access. However, staff do not plan the learning environment well enough to support all children's learning. Not all areas are set out in a way that are inviting or promote children to make independent choices. For example, the literacy table, which only has a pot with 4 pencils, does not grab children's attention, therefore does not get used across the morning.
- The pre-school is an inclusive environment. Children develop a positive sense of self and high self-esteem as they share with others what is important to them. Children are respectful and listen to each other with empathy and kindness.
- Partnership with parents is good. Parents speak extremely highly of the pre-school. They describe the staff as warm and friendly. They speak positively about the levels of communication they receive. Parents feel very well informed of all aspects of their children's learning and development.
- The manager is reflective in her practice. Parent and staff feedback is regularly sought. There is a suggestion box in the reception area for parents to use. Staff report feeling supported within their roles. Weekly staff meetings give staff time to come together, discuss any concerns they may have and share what they have learned from recent training. Staff are encouraged to continue their own professional development further, to extend their skills and knowledge.

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:

- plan the learning environment more effectively to support children and enable them to chose resources and direct their own play and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	115376
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10307955
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	29
Name of registered person	Parochial Church Council of St Paul's Church
Registered person unique reference number	RP523910
Telephone number	07752776226
Date of previous inspection	29 March 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Paul's Playgroup registered in 1992 and is located in Erith. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm. The playgroup employs five members of childcare staff who hold appropriate early years qualifications at level two, three and five. The playgroup offers early education funding for eligible two, three and four year olds.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Natalie OLeary

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 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 talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the pre-school.
- The special educational needs coordinator 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 pre-school with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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