

Inspection of Tilehouse Street Pre-School and Nursery

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church, Upper Tilehouse Street, HITCHIN, Hertfordshire
SG5 2EE

Inspection date: 30 April 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

Children enjoy their time at this lively pre-school filled with laughter and excitement. They share playful interactions with staff and form meaningful relationships. Children take part in a wide range of activities that spark their curiosity, such as making ice cream. They show their enjoyment as they enthusiastically express, 'It's so fun here.' The caring nature of staff helps children to feel settled and content.

Staff support children's personal development, helping them develop self-belief and confidence. Children set their own goals, focusing on skills they want to develop, such as doing up their zip. Shared celebrations help children to feel pride in their achievements as they adopt a 'can-do' attitude. Staff encourage children to discuss their feelings. This helps children to begin to understand emotions and how to express themselves.

Staff set high expectations for behaviour. They emphasise kindness and the importance of following the rules. Children resolve their own conflicts with the support of staff. Careful questioning encourages children to think of solutions. With guidance from staff, children put their ideas into practice. For example, children use a timer to help them take turns. As a result, children's behaviour is good. They develop problem-solving skills and learn to manage disputes fairly.

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

- The manager, who is passionate about her role, leads a team of friendly, skilled staff who put children at the heart of everything they do. The committee is very supportive and prioritises the well-being of staff, children and their families. This results in a welcoming pre-school where children are well cared for and make good progress in their learning.
- Staff create a language-rich environment that promotes children's communication skills. Stories and singing help children hear and develop new language. A lending library encourages children to take books home, helping them develop an interest in reading. Personal photo books spark meaningful conversations about children's lives and experiences.
- Strong partnerships with parents contribute to children's development. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and describe staff as 'nurturing'. Home visits, induction sessions and regular updates on children's development ensure that parents stay well informed. Activity packs help parents to continue their children's learning at home. The joint effort between the staff and parents encourages children to have a love for learning and make good progress.
- Staff promote mathematical learning during play and everyday routines. Children build towers and estimate how many more bricks they need to make it taller

than themselves. Children develop an interest in mathematics and make good progress in this area of their learning.

- Staff expand children's knowledge and introduce them to new concepts. For example, they explain how salt acts as a catalyst to make reactions faster. Staff introduce topics, such as 'people who help us', to broaden children's understanding of the world. Visits from different professionals provide valuable insights and expand children's knowledge. For example, a visit from a dentist educates children about oral health. Children visit local shops and enjoy weekly cooking sessions to gain practical skills and real-life experiences.
- The knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with parents and professionals to offer continuous support and guidance to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Weekly staff meetings ensure that all staff understand each child's needs well. Children make good progress from their starting points. Parents praise the SENCo for the support they receive. They describe her as 'amazing' and comment, 'I feel like we're in this together.'
- Staff speak positively about how leaders support their well-being. Leaders regularly observe staff practice and use supervisions to discuss training opportunities. However, supervisions do not always focus sharply enough on what individual staff need to do to build on their skills and knowledge further.
- Staff complete accurate assessments of children's development. They have a clear understanding about what it is they want children to learn next. Children access a broad curriculum that fosters their interests. However, sometimes, staff do not focus activities sharply enough on the learning intentions of the curriculum. As a result, activities do not always focus on children's next steps in learning.

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:

- strengthen supervision systems so that staff receive focused feedback, providing them with specific targets to develop their skills and knowledge further
- support staff to plan activities with clear learning intentions that focus on children's next steps in learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY274596
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10335779
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	25
Number of children on roll	28
Name of registered person	Tilehouse Street Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP909209
Telephone number	01462 441440
Date of previous inspection	27 June 2018

Information about this early years setting

Tilehouse Street Pre-School and Nursery is based in Hitchin. The pre-school registered in 2003 and is committee run. The committee employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2. The pre-school opens Monday to Thursday, from 9am to 3pm, and Friday from 9am to midday, term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jody Taylor

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 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 the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke to, or communicated with, the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- Parents 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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