

Inspection of St Christopher's Pre-school

St Christophers Church Centre, Pepys Avenue, Thornhill, Southampton, Hampshire
SO19 6PJ

Inspection date: 20 May 2024

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happily and staff greet them warmly using their names and direct them to the carpet. They join in the 'welcome' song, singing along with their friends. Staff explain the choice of activities available and the routine for the day. This helps children to become confident and independent as they explore.

Children spend much of their time outside, and staff plan a curriculum that builds on children's experiences and interests. Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. This includes access to tricycles and water play, to enhance their small motor skills. Children enjoy making 'ice creams' in the sand tray and talk excitedly about the different flavours they have available. They squeal with delight as they watch their bubbles disappear up into the sky.

Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. On occasion, when children struggle to share, staff sensitively step in to support them in their play. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress from their starting points.

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

- Since the last inspection, the leadership team has made changes to the pre-school. Staff, including the manager, have embarked on further training to increase their knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They have also received help from the local authority to support them in their progression. This has had a positive impact on the provision and the children benefit from a range of child-centred activities, based around their needs and development. The manager and staff report that their well-being is good and they feel supported in their roles.
- The manager supports children who are in receipt of additional funding well. This includes effective use of money to support children's individual needs. They engage well with other professionals to ensure they meet the the needs of all children, including those with SEND.
- Overall, teaching is strong. Staff plan and deliver a range of activities that are based on what children know and can do. They successfully create opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the world. Staff read to children and introduce songs and rhymes to increase their communication skills. However, there are sometimes inconsistencies in the quality of staff interactions. For example, on occasion, staff ask questions but do not allow children the time they need to respond. In addition, staff do not always use effective methods to help children to learn how to pronounce individual words.
- Staff provide a variety of opportunities to develop children's imagination. Children work together transporting the bricks in the wheelbarrow and mix

cement in the mixer. They persevere as they build their walls and create space for windows. Children stand back to view their creations. They are proud of their accomplishments and excitedly show them to staff. Staff ensure children understand the rules to wear hard hats and high visibility jackets on their 'building site'. This helps children to link their play to real-life experiences and also supports them to consider their personal safety.

- Staff promote children's understanding of mathematics well. They use every opportunity to include numbers in their play. For example, they encourage children to count the farm animals in the tray. They sing songs which involve counting forwards and backwards to help reinforce children's knowledge.
- Staff promote children's understanding of healthy lifestyles well. Children independently wash their hands and choose from a selection of fresh fruit at snack time. Staff encourage children to peel their own fruit and to pour drinks from the small jugs. This helps to further develop their independence and confidence.
- Partnerships with parents are good. The manager and staff support parents well. They gain relevant information about the children when they start and provide feedback on the children's progress. The manager and staff provide regular communication to the parents in the termly newsletters. They give information and ideas for parents to further support their children's learning and development at home.

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:

- enhance the monitoring of teaching practices to identify and address minor inconsistencies in the support for children's language skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	131564
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10306023
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	26
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	St. Christopher's Playgroup Thornhill Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP903916
Telephone number	07748226933
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2023

Information about this early years setting

St Christopher's Pre-school registered in 2001. It is located in the Thornhill area of Southampton. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday, from 9am until 3.30pm and from 9am to midday on Fridays during term time only. There are five staff, of whom, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lindsay Osman

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- 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 with 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 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024