

Inspection of Abbey Pre-school

St. Peter & St. Pauls Church, Minnis Lane, DOVER, Kent CT17 0RG

Inspection date: 18 July 2024

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive at this extremely welcoming, inclusive and supportive setting. The staff provide a variety of high-quality learning experiences and demonstrate the utmost care and respect for children at all times. Children form strong bonds with staff and their friends, which helps them feel secure and safe at the setting. As a result, children settle quickly and with ease.

Children flourish and make exceptional progress as a result of a thoughtfully planned and superbly delivered curriculum. The precisely designed curriculum provides children with a wealth of experiences, and a robust foundation in the knowledge and skills essential for their future education. Children consistently demonstrate they are emotionally safe and secure, and show incredible enthusiasm for learning. They smile, giggle and engage with their friends as they involve themselves in the inspiring activities. For instance, during creative activities, children are given the autonomy to explore, experiment and create, using their imagination. They show great determination to see through their ideas, with staff on hand to model and support when needed.

Children's ability to deal with setbacks and manage their own feelings is excellent. Staff rarely need to intervene because they have taught the children how to regulate their own behaviour so well. All staff know and understand the needs of all children who attend. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are provided with consistent support from the staff team. As a result, all children are making excellent progress from their starting points.

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

- Staff's interactions with children are highly effective. The quality interactions between staff and children, along with the regular reading of books, enables children to build their communication skills. Staff make reference to well loved books as children play. For instance, as children investigate objects in the sand tray, staff members draw connections to 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' story, to assist children in linking their learning experiences.
- Children with SEND are supported extremely well. The passionate and knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), who is also the manager, builds close and professional relationships with parents, carers and other agencies. Individualised plans for children with SEND are regularly reviewed and discussed with parents. Staff communicate well about all children, ensuring the environment and activities provided are inclusive for everyone.
- Children at the pre-school enthusiastically join in activities that help them learn about diverse cultures and religions, reflecting those represented by their friends and staff. This helps embed a deep and meaningful respect for the diversity of

people. This is further reinforced by regular trips that enhance children's learning and understanding of their local community and the broader world they live in. For example, children often visit the church and the local fruit and vegetable shop. During Christmas, they learn about how people around the world celebrate. They perform carols for the local community and distribute Christmas cards.

- Children's independence in all aspects of their learning and self-care is superb. Children show that they feel confident in their environment. For example, they effortlessly pour their own drinks from coolers when needed, and see to their own care needs. Furthermore, snack time is seamlessly included in the routine without interrupting children's learning. Children show confidence to continue their play, knowing they can join snack when they are ready.
- Partnerships with parents are a real strength of the setting. Staff take time to get to know each child and their extended family through effective settling routines. Furthermore, each term parents are invited into the setting for 'stay and play' sessions. This enables parents to be able to see the opportunities on offer to their children, and build relationships with their child's key person. For example, during term one, the pre-school invites parents in to meet the staff team, and speak to key-people about how their children have settled. Children's development is regularly shared with parents along with next steps in learning. This encourages learning to continue at home.
- Transitions to school are planned exceptionally well. The pre-school have excellent links with their feeder school. During the last few terms, children along with their key-person visit their new school. This enables children to become emotionally prepared, and become familiar with their new teachers and the school environment.
- Free-flow play enables children to access the well-equipped outdoor area. Staff provide activities to challenge children's physical development and build their large-muscle skills. They recognise the significance of nurturing children's fine motor skills as a foundation for writing. Children show an interest in the marks they make, and often request that staff demonstrate writing for them to copy. For example, outdoors, they offer large-scale painting opportunities and supply water and brushes to facilitate mark-making activities.
- The passionate and knowledgeable manager knows her staff very well. All staff take part in termly supervisions to help develop their practice and ensure the needs of all children are being met. Staff are incredibly happy and settled in their roles. They feel valued and are keen to undertake further qualifications to support their own professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Setting details

Unique reference number	126948
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10350844
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 11
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	55
Name of registered person	Abbey Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524289
Telephone number	07702453234
Date of previous inspection	5 September 2018

Information about this early years setting

Abbey Pre-school registered in 1992. It is situated in Dover, Kent. The pre-school is open during term time only, It is closed Tuesdays but open every other weekday from 8am to 5.45pm. It employs eight staff, six of whom have appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 6. The provider receives funding to provide free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kelly Southern

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 pre-school.
- 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 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.
- 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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