

# Inspection of Duchy Preschool And Playgroup

Millway, Bradninch, Exeter EX5 4NL

---

Inspection date: 24 April 2025

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

---

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

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

### **The provision is good**

Staff warmly welcome children. They provide carefully planned learning activities for children to play with and explore. Staff know children well, and children are happy and settled. The curriculum children experience builds effectively on what they already know and can do. For example, children show a real interest in bugs and insects. Staff build children's interests and knowledge as they provide opportunities for children to plant seeds in new flower beds and care for growing seedlings. As children water the plants, they delight in watching small worms and ants moving in the soil. Staff speak with children about features of the bugs. Children eagerly share observations, saying, 'They are thin and wiggly and covered in lines.' Staff use the opportunity well to promote care for living things.

Throughout the pre-school, staff form strong bonds with children, and children's personal, social and emotional skills flourish. Children are confident and eager to interact with visitors, asking them questions and inviting them to play. Children show respect and kindness towards each other as they play, and staff teach children strategies to promote sharing skills. Children's behaviour is good. Staff have high expectations of children in their learning and behaviour, and children make choices they feel proud of.

Children experience rich and varied learning experiences that include visiting the local church, taking part in seasonal village events, working with children at the local school and visiting residents at the local care home. These help children develop a real understanding of the community they live in.

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

- As staff speak with children about learning activities for the day, children confidently share their thoughts and ideas and listen to their friends when they share too. They are able communicators and excitedly discuss their choices and decide where they will play first. Staff provide clear instructions for children and, as a result, children engage with chosen activities with high levels of focus.
- Story times and singing are regular activities. Staff model language well for children. Children eagerly listen as they read animal stories. As staff animatedly share stories, children excitedly join in with familiar parts and giggle at the different animal voices their friends make.
- Staff encourage children to develop independence as they play and learn. Children superbly negotiate ideas in their play. For example, they thoroughly enjoy constructing a road network and travelling around in ride-on vehicles. Children take turns being road workers, where they delight in directing traffic using road signs that indicate stop and no entry. Children in their 'cars' excitedly follow diversions and tell staff they are busy. They exclaim, 'We must reverse

slowly, in a straight line, so we don't bump other cars.'

- Leaders provide regular support to staff to engage in training opportunities and develop their skills, confidence and knowledge to meet the learning and development needs of the children they care for. All staff have taken part in British sign language training to support communication and language skills and use this as they interact with children.
- Leaders are reflective and continually develop the curriculum experiences for children. They know that many of the children they care for enjoy being physically active so have developed large-scale physical play opportunities for children. Children excitedly climb and balance on apparatus and show care and respect for each other as they encourage friends to follow the route. Children share each other's joy as they develop new skills and try new things.
- As children play and learn, staff challenge children's thinking and ask many questions to strengthen children's understanding or assess current knowledge. Children listen well to questions posed. Staff do not, however, provide children with adequate time to process and respond to questions asked. This limits children's opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge or explain their thinking.
- Staff well-being is good. Staff value the levels of support and encouragement they receive from leaders. They feel their efforts and dedication to their roles are genuinely appreciated and feel confident seeking guidance when they need to.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have suitable plans in place that meet their needs. Staff monitor and assess progress regularly and swiftly identify children who may benefit from early help services. Staff ensure children receive targeted teaching to promote progress. For example, many children take part in regular sessions to support communication and language skills. Staff work well with outside agencies to best support the learning and development needs of all children.
- Parents speak with such enthusiasm about the hardworking, caring staff. They value the range of experiences their children enjoy at pre-school and feel it really is at the heart of the community.

## **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:**

- provide children with adequate thinking time to process and respond to questions.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY536236
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10394740
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 10
<b>Total number of places</b>	30
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	59
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Duchy Preschool And Playgroup CIO
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP536235
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392881975
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 September 2019

## Information about this early years setting

Duchy Preschool and Playgroup re-registered in 2016 and is managed by a group of volunteer trustees. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 7.45am until 6pm, during term time. The pre-school offers government funded places for childcare and receives specific funding for disadvantaged children. There are six members of staff working directly with children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. There is also an early years level 2 apprentice.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Shirley Evel

## Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children told the inspector about their friends and what they like to do when they are at pre-school.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- 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 observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2025