

Inspection of Seedlings Pre School

Seedlings Pre School, 40 Hooe Road, Plymouth PL9 9RG

Inspection date: 18 June 2025 - 26 June 2025

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Leaders with designated safeguarding roles do not demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding to fulfil their responsibilities and implement the local safeguarding partnership's (LSP) procedures. As a result, they do not take appropriate action to protect children's welfare. Some staff do not supervise children sufficiently and do not recognise potential hazards in the environment, such as unhygienic and unsuitable items that children may place in their mouth. Leaders do not monitor staff's practice effectively enough. This means they do not have an accurate oversight of the setting and do not ensure that any improvements are sustained.

Leaders do not plan and provide a curriculum that helps children to make good progress in their learning, including for their communication and language development. Although the curriculum has been reviewed recently, staff do not build on children's knowledge and skills. Inconsistencies in staff's support for children's speech mean that some children do not receive encouragement to share their thoughts. Staff do not provide effective support for all children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). At times, these children wander around alone and staff do not provide any purposeful engagement to extend their learning. Some staff do not know the babies well, so the younger children are unsettled and upset.

Partnerships with parents and other settings that children attend are not effective. Leaders and staff do not implement a consistent two-way approach to children's learning and development.

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

- Leaders do not identify significant weaknesses in the setting or take sufficient action to make improvements when breaches of requirements are identified by inspectors. For example, those with lead safeguarding roles do not understand the threshold for when to take further action when concerns arise about children. Additionally, they do not follow the organisation's procedures to share all safeguarding concerns about children with the relevant individuals and agencies in a timely manner. Despite this being raised by inspectors, those with lead safeguarding roles continued to delay the sharing of information with safeguarding partners. This is because they prioritised other tasks, such as covering for staff who are unwell. This places children at risk of harm.
- Those with lead safeguarding roles do not know when to refer concerns about staff conduct to the local authority designated officer. This means they do not follow the organisation's and the LSP's procedures to protect children and keep them safe.

- Despite actions being previously raised to improve staff's supervision of children, staff still do not supervise children well. They are unaware of what the children are doing around them and what hazards are in the environment that may pose a risk to children. For example, two-year-old and pre-school children drink soapy water and pour jugs of water over their peers' head, which the staff supporting the water activities do not notice. Leaders have provided some training regarding staff deployment, but it has not been sufficient to drive and sustain improvements in staff's practice.
- Overall, staff form positive relationships with children. Toddlers and older children approach staff for cuddles and enjoy sitting on their lap to listen to a story. However, staff do not always provide babies with sensitive and nurturing interactions. For instance, staff do not communicate with babies when they remove them from their play to have their care needs met, which causes some babies to become upset and distressed. Babies' emotional development is not well supported.
- Leaders and staff plan some strategies to support children with SEND. For example, they take children to the sensory room where they can relax in a calm environment. However, there are long periods when some pre-school children with SEND go unnoticed and wander around without support or attention from staff. Staff do not provide them with consistent interactions to meet their individual needs and support their learning.
- Due to the high staff turnover, parents do not know who their child's key person is and do not receive sufficient information from staff about their child's experiences at the setting. Furthermore, where children attend more than one setting, staff do not exchange information with every setting about the children. This does not provide a consistent approach to children's education and means that staff do not work with parents and other professionals to extend children's learning.
- Leaders are clear about what they want children to learn at the setting. However, staff do not implement the curriculum effectively or consistently, so children do not receive sufficient challenge to extend their learning. For example, while learning about animals, staff ask pre-school children questions that they already know the answers to and do not teach them anything new. Staff plan an activity to help toddlers learn about emotions but do not talk to the children about feelings. Weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum mean that staff do not build on children's prior learning.
- The setting provides children with nutritious snacks and meals to benefit children's health. Staff are aware of children with allergies and intolerances. Following a recent incident relating to children's dietary needs, leaders took action to put this right and to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence.
- Staff use signing with young children to help them to communicate their needs before they learn to talk. For example, babies learn how to move their hands to sign 'more'. However, the two-year-old and pre-school room is excessively loud and chaotic. Staff shout over the noise to make themselves heard, and children find it difficult to hear staff and one another. Additionally, staff do not engage children in two-way discussions that support children's speech development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
ensure any concerns about children's welfare are reported promptly to local safeguarding agencies to ensure their safety	20/06/2025
ensure all those with lead safeguarding roles understand the LSP's thresholds and know how and when to take action when safeguarding concerns are identified	09/07/2025
ensure all those with lead safeguarding roles understand their responsibilities to prioritise safeguarding matters	09/07/2025
improve the knowledge and understanding of all those with lead safeguarding roles to ensure they follow the organisation's and LSP's procedures for reporting any concerns about staff to the relevant agencies	09/07/2025
ensure staff are supported, coached and mentored to help them supervise children effectively to meet their individual needs	20/06/2025
ensure all adults working with children understand how to identify hazards within the environment and are alert to the risks they may pose to children	09/07/2025

ensure relationships with babies are sensitive and nurturing and meet their individual needs to help them feel settled and secure	20/06/2025
ensure there are effective strategies in place to meet the needs of children with SEND	09/07/2025
improve the sharing of information with parents and other settings that children attend to provide a consistent two-way approach to benefit children's development	09/07/2025

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
improve the implementation of the curriculum to ensure it provides children with appropriate challenge that builds on what children already know and can do and what they need to learn next	16/07/2025
improve the planning and delivery of the communication and language programme in the two-year-old and pre-school rooms, including the quality of staff's interactions with children, to ensure children can hear staff and one another to develop their speech and thinking skills.	16/07/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	2655479
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10408686
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	99
Number of children on roll	176
Name of registered person	Seedlings Pre-School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP523467
Telephone number	01752971780
Date of previous inspection	18 March 2025

Information about this early years setting

Seedlings Pre School registered at the present site in 2022 and is located in Hooe, Plymouth, Devon. It is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, for 52 weeks of the year, excluding the Christmas holidays. There are 35 staff members. One staff member holds a level 7 qualification, nine staff hold a level 6 qualification and 10 members of staff have level 3 qualifications. Three staff are qualified at level 2 and nine staff are unqualified. There are also two housekeepers and one chef. The setting offers government-funded childcare places.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Joanne Steward
Sarah Madge

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspection started on 18 June 2025. An inspector returned on 26 June 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.
- The deputy manager, manager and the lead inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspectors engaged with and spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspectors spoke with leaders about how they manage the setting.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors carried out joint observations of group activities with leaders.
- Parents, grandparents and carers shared their views of the setting with the inspectors.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in 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.

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