Inspection of S4YC @ Upton Heath Nursery & OOSC

Upton Heath Primary School, Upton Lane, Upton Heath, Chester CH2 1ED

Inspection date:	10 September 2025 - 4 December 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	Met

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. They have developed positive relationships with staff, who are caring and recognise when children need further support, reassurance or a cuddle. This helps children feel safe and secure. The new, purpose-built baby room offers an environment which is suitably focused on the needs of the younger children, and babies enjoy exploring. Older children develop independence as they are supported to attend to their own needs. These positive attitudes to learning contribute to children developing skills needed for the next stage of their learning.

Leaders plan an effective curriculum and staff understand what they want children to learn next. They thoughtfully prioritise children's communication, language and physical development, understanding that these create some of the foundations needed for future learning. Staff recognise when some children need additional support with their speaking and listening. They adapt activities appropriately. For instance, children are split into small, age- and stage-appropriate groups for circle time, which helps them to engage more purposefully. This also allows staff to target children's next steps precisely and offer bespoke support.

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

- Leaders have a good understanding of the different ways that children learn. They plan a well-sequenced curriculum and ensure staff consider what children already know and can do to provide opportunities for them to build on this. For instance, staff provide dough activities to strengthen children's finger muscles. They build on this further by introducing scissors; first, helping children to cut the dough, before progressing on to cutting paper. This approach helps children to develop new skills over time.
- Staff provide books for children to access independently. Young children smile as they look at the pictures, while older children turn pages and confidently talk about what they see. Staff support this learning further by reading stories to children and pointing out more detail of what they can see in the pictures. Staff support children to develop an enjoyment of reading to benefit their literacy skills.
- Overall, there are clear procedures in place for supervision, coaching and mentoring. Staff have supervision meetings every half term and are provided with ongoing professional development opportunities. They access training that is specific to the nursery's context, for instance how to support the needs of children whose families are in the military. However, at times, staff do not receive feedback on their practice that is specific to their individual needs. Consequently, there are some occasional inconsistencies in the quality of education.

- Staff develop close relationships with children. Babies benefit from caring interactions with their key person in nursery. Staff ensure they know the children well and what helps them to feel secure. This helps children to feel settled in the care of staff.
- Overall, staff promote children's personal development well. However, staff do not promote wanted behaviour consistently well. Children continue to play during tidy-up time and at snack time, and some children do not know that to have a snack they need to go and get it from their lunch box. Children are not consistently learning to understand the routines and what is expected of them during key parts of the day.
- Leaders and staff work closely with parents to share information about healthy and safe foods for lunch boxes. They provide written information outlining the importance of cutting foods safely. Staff work in partnership with the parents of new babies to establish their current stage of weaning and review this information as it changes over time. This provides continuity in children's care between home and nursery.
- Children benefit from daily experiences of playing outdoors in the fresh air. They develop strength and coordination as they climb, run and play. Pre-school children demonstrate a keen and eager attitude to learning as they take part in a hunt around the garden. They identify items they find, such as 'pine cones', 'leaves' and 'twigs' in preparation for making puppets. Staff recognise the importance of outdoors and the role it plays in all children's overall good health and wellbeing.

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 staff with more accurate feedback on their practice to strengthen their skills and knowledge
- implement clear routines and consistently support children to understand what is expected of them.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415296
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10399103
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 11
Total number of places	34
Number of children on roll	126
Name of registered person	S4YC Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900701
Telephone number	01244 972 970
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

S4YC Out of School Club - Upton Heath registered in 2010 and is situated in Chester. The nursery operates Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 6pm, all year round. The setting also operates an out-of-school club Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 8.45am and 3.10pm to 6pm, during term time. It also offers a holiday club from 8am to 6pm during school holidays. The club employs four members of staff; all hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery provides government-funded places for childcare.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors
Deborah Magee
Kayte Farrell

Inspection activities

- The inspection started on 10 September 2025. An inspector gathered additional evidence on 4 December 2025, in line with Ofsted inspection and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.
- Children spoke with the inspectors during the inspection.
- 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 an activity with the manager.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and reviewed their written testimonials during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.
- The manager joined an inspector on a learning walk and talked to them about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.

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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