

Inspection of St Philips Preschool

St Philips Church Hall, Beechcroft Road, Swindon SN2 7RE

Inspection date: 13 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive and thoroughly enjoy attending this friendly and welcoming pre-school. They form strong bonds with the exceptionally caring staff. Children settle quickly and feel secure. They grow in confidence and are proud to be able to do things for themselves. Children, including the younger ones, confidently ask for help if they need it. Staff know the children well and provide activities that interest and excite them. For example, children play with model dinosaurs, making forests with fake plants and a mirror lake. They have interesting conversations with staff as they wonder which dinosaurs might swim, and why some have long necks. Children are curious and eager to explore. For example, they break open teabags into the water tray and notice the smell of fruit tea, and they open a spray bottle to find out how it works.

Children behave very well. They learn to share and quickly fetch a sand timer to decide when it is their turn for a favourite toy. Children follow the excellent example of staff, as they treat others with kindness and respect. When children find following boundaries difficult, staff collaborate closely with parents and other carers to ensure a consistent approach, so children understand what behaviour is expected.

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

- The owner is caring, dedicated and aspirational. She has children's well-being at the heart of all she does. The owner plans a broad and ambitious curriculum to help all children progress as well as they can. She monitors staff performance effectively and supports them in their professional development.
- Staff build on what children already know and can do so they practise and consolidate their learning. Staff assess children's progress accurately and use this to plan suitably challenging activities to meet each child's needs.
- Staff work in close partnership with parents. They regularly share information about children's progress. Staff help parents to support their children's learning at home. For example, they lend books and encourage parents to read to children every day. Parents speak very highly of the pre-school and the 'warm support' of the staff.
- Overall, staff support children's speech development very well. They speak clearly and listen attentively to children. Staff introduce unfamiliar words, such as 'graduate' and 'jubilee', and provide opportunities for children to use them in their play. For children with language difficulties, they give targeted support, including securing specialist help if needed. Children develop wide vocabularies and communicate confidently. Occasionally, some staff, in their enthusiasm, talk too much and do not give children enough time to express their own ideas.
- Children develop a love of books, which are everywhere, inside and in the

garden. They are often linked to activities. Children find bugs in the log pile and use magnifying lenses to identify them from a book. They love listening to stories because staff excite and involve them in the text. Staff use props, which children later use to retell the stories. This encourages children to explore new language and ideas.

- Children develop the skills they need in readiness for learning to read and write at school. Playful activities help them hear sounds and older children begin to link these to letters in familiar words. They make marks in diverse ways and gradually give meaning to these. For example, children 'write' long shopping lists and record how many bricks they need for their building.
- Staff help children learn about healthy choices. They advise parents on how to provide healthy snacks and lunches. Mealtimes are relaxed and sociable, which encourages children to eat well. They learn more about healthy foods as they grow and cook vegetables. Children regularly help themselves to their own water bottles. They learn to use the toilet independently but are confident to ask staff if they need help.
- Children are active and choose to play outside for lengthy periods. Once a week, they visit a nearby play park, which benefits some children. However, not all children have sufficient opportunities to climb, balance, pedal and move in different and challenging ways.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager, through training, quizzes and discussions, makes sure that staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities in helping to keep children safe. They confidently describe how to recognise, record and report concerns they may have for a child's welfare. The manager follows robust recruitment procedures and carries out ongoing checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are vigilant about safety. They supervise children closely and maintain a safe environment. Staff use age-appropriate resources to help children understand that their body belongs to them. The manager and staff form trusting relationships with parents, and they are highly supportive towards families who experience challenging circumstances.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- develop staff skills so they consistently give children enough time to think and express their own ideas
- provide wider opportunities for children to move in different and challenging ways to enhance support for their developing gross motor skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2541451
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10215361
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Sawyer, Deborah
Registered person unique reference number	2541450
Telephone number	01793 705769
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St. Philips Preschool registered under the current ownership in 2019. It operates from St Philip's Church Hall adjacent to St Philip's Church in Upper Stratton, Wiltshire. The owner/manager and four members of staff care for the children. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds level 2. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday from 8am to 2.45pm, and on Friday from 8am to 11.45am, during term time only. It receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachel Edwards

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum. They held a meeting and discussed the management of the pre-school.
- Children played with the inspector and spoke to her about what they enjoy doing at the pre-school.
- The inspector observed and discussed a planned activity with the manager.
- The inspector observed the quality of care and education both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's well-being and learning. She spoke with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including evidence staff's suitability and children's records.
- The inspector spoke to parents and read their testimonials to obtain their views of 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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