

Inspection of Uttoxeter Pre-School

United Reform Church, Carter Street, UTTOXETER, Staffordshire ST14 8HB

Inspection date: 27 March 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children follow the daily routine well, showing that they feel comfortable within it. For example, they wash their hands independently, get their drink bottles and find their seats when it is time for lunch. They open their own lunch boxes and choose what they wish to eat. Staff support this process by encouraging children to remember the rules, such as eating their sandwiches first, promoting healthy eating habits. Children demonstrate enjoyment and enthusiasm in the activities available. For example, they say, 'This is so good' as they race each other on bicycles. When staff ask children if they would like to join an activity, they respond with excitement.

At different points during the day, staff split children into key groups, giving them the opportunity to learn and play in smaller groups. Staff interact purposefully with children, getting down to their level, modelling play and engaging them in conversations about their experiences. This promotes children's engagement. Children create representations of themselves and their family members using various mark-making tools. Staff support this by encouraging children to talk about their drawings. Notably, all the characters children draw have big smiles on their faces, representing their happiness.

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

- Leaders understand the school's expectations and incorporate these into the curriculum planning. For example, staff plan activities such as 'dough disco', painting and sand play to strengthen children's fine motor skills, which are essential for later tasks, such as writing. They support children in sitting and listening for extended periods, which is an important skill for school readiness.
- Staff are mindful of children's prior experiences and plan activities to build on their confidence. For example, they ensure children go outside every day, recognising that some children living in flats may not have easy access to outdoor spaces. They take children into the community to buy fresh fruit and vegetables from the local shop and invite visitors, such as wildlife experts, into the setting.
- Leaders are using early years pupil premium funding to improve resources in the garden. However, staff have not yet ensured that children have access to a variety of sensory play opportunities outdoors to better meet their personal needs.
- Staff help children to grow in independence. For example, they offer guidance and support to help children to zip up their coats by themselves. They identify areas where children need more practise, such as using a knife and fork. Early years pupil premium funding is used to purchase tools that support the development of these skills.

- Parents and carers feel well informed about the activities their children participate in. They attend parents' evenings and staff encourage them to share their views through parent surveys. However, staff do not always gather or share information effectively to promote children's learning. For example, they do not collect information from parents about children's development before they start or collaborate with other settings that children attend. As a result, valuable insights are missed.
- Staff recognise the negative impact dummies can have on children's speech and oral development. They send information home to parents to raise awareness about this. Staff engage children in oral exercises, such as bubble-blowing activities, to strengthen the muscles involved in speech and oral control. They share these activities with parents to continue at home.
- Staff take every opportunity to introduce numbers and counting. For example, they encourage children to sing number songs, such as 'Five Little Ducks', using their fingers to assist. Staff invite children to help with the head count and prompt them to think about what number comes next. These activities support and expand children's understanding of numbers effectively.
- Leaders and staff are proactive and attentive to children's health and well-being. They are not afraid to have difficult conversations with parents when concerns arise. This ensures that any issues are addressed promptly and collaboratively.
- Staff have a deep understanding of their role in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, they observe and assess children's progress to identify necessary interventions. They collaborate with external professionals, including family support services and the local authority SEND team, helping to improve children's development and well-being.
- Leaders and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement through regular staff meetings and supervisions. They participate in training and conduct their own research to develop their skills, which are all focused on enhancing the quality of practice.

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:

- support staff in providing children with more opportunities to engage in appropriate sensory play outdoors, helping to better meet their personal needs
- enhance partnerships with parents and other settings that children attend to promote consistency in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	218268
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10388436
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	31
Name of registered person	Uttoxeter Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP520146
Telephone number	07989 314762
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2019

Information about this early years setting

Uttoxeter Pre-School registered in 1968 and is situated in Uttoxeter, Staffordshire. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Mikaela Stallard

Inspection activities

- The manager spoke to the inspector about their intentions for children's learning.
- The inspector and manager carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector engaged in discussions with the manager and staff regarding safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children throughout the day and assessed the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, chair of the committee, staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- Relevant documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including evidence of the suitability of those working with children.

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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