

# Inspection of Blossoms Preschool

Queen Elizabeth Way, Colchester, Essex CO2 8LT

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Inspection date:

3 December 2024

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## Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

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

### **The provision is inadequate**

The provider does not understand the importance of protecting the privacy of children in their care. The procedures for keeping children's and families' sensitive information safe are ineffective. The provider does not comply with legislation, such as the General Data Protection Regulation. This places vulnerable children at risk.

Leaders plan a curriculum to build on the skills they want children to learn next. For example, staff provide babies with opportunities to build on their core strength and leg muscles in preparation for walking. However, the quality of teaching and interactions across the setting vary and are not consistent enough to support all children effectively. For example, during mealtimes, some children receive very little interaction from adults that engages them in conversation and, as a result, some children become restless. This does not help children build on their social skills in readiness for the next stage in learning.

Despite these weaknesses, children are warmly welcomed into the setting by staff who greet them at the door. They readily separate from their parents and are keen to explore the range of activities and resources available. For instance, children enjoy sticking and gluing tissue paper shapes and pom-poms onto their Christmas wreaths. Staff use this opportunity to introduce mathematical language, such as 'centre' and 'outer edge', to build on their learning. Other children engage in imaginative play, creating pretend ice creams with glittery play dough. Children are happy and settled in the setting. They have formed good bonds with staff and other children, who are affectionate with each other. Children generally behave appropriately.

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

- The leadership team has statutory policies and procedures in place. However, it does not act in accordance with these. For example, the provider has not ensured that sensitive information is not shared with others who do not have a professional need to see it. Furthermore, the provider cannot demonstrate that appropriate reporting to the relevant agencies has been completed when there is a loss of data.
- The provider makes and distributes audio recordings of sensitive meetings without gaining consent from other professionals. This places vulnerable children and others at risk. Additionally, the provider shows a poor attitude to parent partnerships. For example, they use inappropriate language, in communications with staff, regarding parents of children at the setting.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Staff interactions are inconsistent across the nursery, leading to children's learning not being fully supported. Some activities motivate children to be engaged in their learning and staff recognise when

children need additional support and would benefit from activities to help them identify and manage their emotions. However, staff interactions are less effective at other times in helping children sustain their attention. Consequently, some children quickly move from one activity to another and do not make the best possible progress in their learning.

- At times, staff promote the communication and language development of children. For example, babies benefit from back-and-forth interactions and staff narrate their play. However, toddlers and pre-school children do not have the same rich experiences. Children who are quieter, less confident and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities spend large amounts of time playing alone without adult interactions. This does not help them build on their speaking and listening skills, despite these being identified as their next steps in learning.
- Children are becoming familiar with the routines of the day and know what is expected of them. For example, staff ring a bell to indicate that it is time to tidy up before moving on to the next activity. Children receive praise and encouragement at appropriate times. This helps to promote children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Parents express that their children enjoy coming to the setting. They appreciate the photos and feedback they receive through the online platform, which helps them recreate activities at home to support their children's learning. Children benefit from the book-lending library and home-learning packs they take home to share with their families.

## 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 confidential information and records about children are held securely and only accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them | 06/01/2025 |

|                                                                                                                                  |            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| make sure you meet your responsibilities under General Data Protection Regulation with regards to the reporting requirements     | 06/01/2025 |
| ensure that there are clear boundaries around information recording and sharing and these are understood and implemented by all. | 06/01/2025 |

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

|                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Due date</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| use effective coaching methods to enable staff to engage in high-quality interactions to meet children's learning and development needs, sustain their attention, and build on their speech and language. | 06/01/2025      |

## Setting details

|                                                    |                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                     | 2603455                                                                           |
| <b>Local authority</b>                             | Essex                                                                             |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                           | 10372887                                                                          |
| <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> | 0 to 4                                                                            |
| <b>Total number of places</b>                      | 60                                                                                |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>                  | 65                                                                                |
| <b>Name of registered person</b>                   | St Stephens Pre-School Community Interest Company                                 |
| <b>Registered person unique reference number</b>   | RP539935                                                                          |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 01206 648036                                                                      |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                 | 26 April 2022                                                                     |

## Information about this early years setting

Blossoms Preschool registered in 2020. It opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Sessions are from 8am to 4pm. The pre-school employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school provides funded early education.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspectors

Shelly McDougall  
Sarah Stephens

## Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager joined the inspectors on a learning walk and talked to the inspectors about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspectors spoke with the nominated individual about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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