

Inspection of Buttons@St Michaels

St. Michaels C of E Combined School, Chapel Square, Stewkley, LEIGHTON
BUZZARD LU7 0HA

Inspection date: 6 June 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish at this exceptional setting. They arrive excited, happy and ready to learn. Staff encourage children to quickly become engrossed in a wealth of captivating and highly challenging activities and experiences. For instance, they approach the planting and growing areas with excitement and anticipation as they look to see what has grown. Children of all ages are curious and move freely between activities, selecting things that interest them and joining activities with their peers and staff. They are highly engaged in what they are doing and are supported by staff to guide their own play and learning. For example, children sit around a table and talk about the dinosaurs they are holding. They explain that a 'tyrannosaurus is fierce' and has 'very sharp teeth'. Children dig in the soil and fill wheelbarrows so that they can plant flowers. Staff skilfully support children's ideas and use a variety of strategies such as modelling language and questioning to extend their learning.

Children behave extremely well. Staff are wonderful role models for them. They show children how to be kind and to respect others. As a result, children show exceptionally high levels of concentration and they persevere with tasks until they get them right. They feel safe and quickly learn the importance of sharing and taking turns.

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

- The leadership team and dedicated staff work extremely hard to maintain the high-quality provision. They are passionate that all children and families receive the best care that they can provide. Staff observe and assess children's progress very effectively. They show a comprehensive knowledge of children's individual learning and development needs.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), as well as families who may sometimes benefit from additional support, are extremely well supported by staff. Leaders offer skilled guidance to staff, who are highly proactive in identifying and supporting children with SEND. For instance, staff use strategies, such as visual picture aids and signing, to aid communication. As a result, all children make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are excellent. Senior leaders at the host school are exceedingly complimentary of the pre-school, highlighting how well the children are prepared for their transition to school. Communication between the pre-school and parents is very effective. Staff share a wealth of information with parents from the outset to establish a highly consistent approach. Parents feel listened to and valued and trust the staff completely.
- Staff interactions with children are exceptional. They place a strong emphasis on developing children's communication and language. Staff model key vocabulary

to a high standard so that children talk confidently about their activities. For example, children explain how they are going to the garden to find mint and that they are adding red, yellow and blue colouring to their play dough to 'make a rainbow'.

- There is an abundance of opportunities for children to learn about the natural world. Children excitedly explore the vibrant woodland area. Staff enable children to build on and extend their understanding of their surroundings. For example, during a forest school activity, they learn about woodlice and articulately describe what they see. This leads children to ask staff intriguing questions, such as 'Why does it curl up in a ball?' and 'How many legs has it got?' Staff use the readily available store of books to enable children to find answers to their questions.
- Opportunities for physical development are numerous. Staff use their spacious outdoor area expertly well to provide activities that have a positive impact on children's physical health. Children are able to measure their own risks as they play. They jump from the climbing block and scramble through tubes enthusiastically. Even the youngest children skilfully navigate ride-on toys through obstacles confidently.
- Leaders are extremely effective at reflecting on their practice and supporting their staff team. Staff say that they feel valued and appreciated by the leadership team. Leaders are passionate in ensuring that all staff have the training they need to continue to be highly effective in their roles. For example, recent training in Makaton has improved children's communication and language skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2731322
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10398263
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	39
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	Buttons Preschools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901723
Telephone number	07973158368
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Buttons @ St Michaels registered in 2023 and is situated in Stewkley, Buckinghamshire. It operates from St Michael's Church of England Combined School. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3pm, during term time only. The pre-school offers care before and after school, from 8am to 9am and from 3pm to 5pm. The provider employs eight members of staff, seven of whom are qualified at level 3 and above. The pre-school provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Robertson

Inspection activities

- The inspector and manager completed a learning walk throughout the pre-school. They discussed how the early years provision is organised and how the curriculum offered supports children's learning.
- The inspector observed the quality of education indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact of this on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of practice with the manager.
- The inspector read feedback and spoke to parents and carers during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector held discussions with staff at appropriate times during the inspection and talked to children during activities.
- The inspector held meetings with the leadership team. She looked at a sample of policies and procedures, staff qualifications and evidence of the suitability of staff working in 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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