

Inspection of Whittington Pre-School

Chester Road, Whittington Barracks, LICHFIELD, Staffordshire WS14 9PY

Inspection date: 27 June 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	Good
--	------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children demonstrate a sense of belonging in this warm and welcoming setting. Staff are considerate and sensitive of children's feelings, and they place a high level of importance on supporting children's emotional well-being. For example, staff are considerate that pre-school children have a range of feelings as they prepare to transition to school. Staff use stories so children learn about their emotions through colours. For example, children confidently share that they feel 'yellow' because they are happy, or 'black' because they feel scared. Warm and trusting relationships help children to feel safe and secure, enabling them to share and explore their emotions.

The setting provides a varied and stimulating learning environment. Staff carefully consider the needs and interests of the children that attend. Learning opportunities enhance children's curiosity and ignite their imagination. Staff support imaginative play wonderfully. For example, during water play, toddlers spot a shark and decide they need to hide. Staff encourage them to consider what they would need to make their hiding place a safe one. Children hand over imaginary money to buy an imaginary key to lock the imaginary door in their imaginary room. Through imaginative play, children develop a wide range of essential skills.

Staff have a consistent approach to behaviour management. From a very early age, they support children to think about the consequences of their behaviours. Children are encouraged to make positive decisions. As a result, behaviour throughout the setting is very good.

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

- The setting has a strong ethos that is understood and valued by leaders and staff. The ethos is deeply rooted in the setting's curriculum and aims to build children's confidence, inspire creativity and engage their curiosity. Staff pay close attention to the physical learning environment. They aim to maintain a calm and relaxing atmosphere where children have access to a varied range of open-ended resources. This allows children to guide their own play.
- Overall, staff support children's communication and language development well. Children benefit from a language-rich environment that supports children to broaden their vocabulary. There are times, however, where staff working with the youngest children ask questions in quick succession and do not give them time to process their thoughts and answer.
- Children enjoy many opportunities to practise their physical skills. Toddlers run, crawl, climb and balance on the outdoor equipment. Pre-school children demonstrate high levels of confidence as they explore their woodland area. Children are encouraged to take risks and have a go. Staff are always close by to

offer help if needed. This fosters a sense of resilience in children.

- The positive impact of stories and books within the setting is evident. Babies turn the pages of books with care. Pre-school children read to their friends, recalling parts of the story they know. Books are accessible throughout the setting. Children read at tables, in tents and even on the woodland floor. Children show a love of early literacy.
- Staff know the children they care for very well. They make use of observation and assessment to determine what children know and can do. Staff confidently discuss how they plan a range of positive and engaging learning activities to support their learning. However, there are inconsistencies across the setting with regard to the opportunities that staff provide to support children to make progress towards their targets.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to make good progress. Staff work in partnership with parents and other professionals to implement targeted strategies to support children's development. The setting has good links with external professional agencies to ensure that children receive timely support.
- Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents speak very highly of this setting. They describe it as caring, compassionate and family orientated. They talk positively about the 'devoted' staff that care for their children. They value the termly reports and regular updates regarding their children's development. They are supported to extend learning into the home environment. They feel that staff know their children extremely well.
- Leaders have a positive approach to self-evaluation. They are constantly reviewing their provision and physical environment to ensure they meet the needs of children. Leaders observe staff practice and provide targeted professional development opportunities to further enhance their knowledge and skills. Staff report high levels of well-being.

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 working with the youngest children to develop children's communication skills even further by giving them time to process and answer questions
- ensure all staff support children to consistently work towards their identified development targets to enable them to make rapid progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY384325
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10392527
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	56
Number of children on roll	52
Name of registered person	Whittington Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP528594
Telephone number	01543 434 371
Date of previous inspection	30 August 2019

Information about this early years setting

Whittington Pre-School registered in 2009 and is situated at Whittington Barracks in Lichfield, Staffordshire. It is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays. The pre-school employs 16 members of staff. Of these, one holds an early years qualification at level 6, five hold a qualification at level 5 and eight hold qualifications at level 3. The pre-school provides early education funding for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Roxanne Mason

Inspection activities

- The deputy manager, manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector spoke with the manager and deputy manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025