

Inspection of St John's Pre-School

Ripley Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 5NQ

Inspection date: 3 March 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

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Staff provide a highly ambitious curriculum that incorporates the setting's core values of 'create, achieve and nurture'. They provide rich activities to promote curiosity and encourage children to investigate and be inquisitive. For example, children concentrate as they grate play dough and focus intently on their task. They persevere and use the tools with care. During play, children engage in meaningful conversations with staff and talk about making cheesecake and cheese pie. Staff skilfully build on children's learning and extend their play. They introduce weighing scales and support children to explore weights and measures. As a result, children receive quality interactions to develop high-level thinking skills.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff are excellent role models and promote good behaviour and manners. For example, staff thank children for helping and gently remind them to say 'please' and 'thank you' at snack time. As a result, children follow their lead as they spontaneously repeat the language and learn to be polite. Staff praise children for being kind, which helps to boost their confidence and self-esteem. For example, children enthusiastically welcome their friends with affectionate hugs and big smiles. This helps children to feel secure and build strong bonds with their peers.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive high levels of support to ensure they are fully included and make the very best progress. For example, staff complete specialist training, such as learning to sign, to support quality interactions with all children. They work closely with other professionals and use additional funding to help meet all children's needs.

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

- Staff reflect exceptionally well on their practice to deliver a high-quality curriculum that is child led and focuses on fostering curiosity. For example, children instigate discussions about germs, which spark conversations about washing hands. This leads staff to provide a science experiment using a curiosity box. Children will observe this activity over a period of time to monitor change and gather answers to their questions about how germs grow. This introduces children to science and encourages problem-solving skills.
- Staff provide a language-rich environment using a variety of highly effective strategies to support all children to successfully develop their speech and communication skills. For example, staff copy children's actions, and they use language boards, visual prompts and sign language to support quality interactions. Staff work closely with other professionals to evaluate their language environment to ensure that it suits all children's needs. As a result, children are making excellent progress with their speech and language skills.

- Staff plan wonderful opportunities to teach children how to value and protect the environment. For example, they provide a recycling station where children sort soft and hard plastics. Staff encourage children to recycle food waste in the compost bin, which they will use to plant and grow seeds. This helps children to learn about the importance of protecting the world they live in.
- To enrich the curriculum, staff organise exciting trips outside of the setting to extend children's learning. For example, children regularly visit a local nursing home to engage with the residents and join them for activities, such as parachute games and ballet. This experience helps children to learn about different generations and the community they live in.
- Staff prioritise children's emotional development. They complete training and learn techniques to help children regulate their emotions. For example, staff demonstrate physical movements for children to copy, including star jumps and balancing exercises. Staff teach children to control their breathing by taking a long breath in and then hiss like a snake. They call this 'snake breathing'. Throughout the activity, children concentrate well and listen intently. They follow instructions and show high levels of engagement. As a result, children are learning how to relax and be calm.
- Children are very independent. Staff provide excellent opportunities that encourage children to develop their independence skills. For example, children have the responsibility of preparing for snack time. Children gather the resources and lay the table, chop their own fruit and access their own drinks. Staff closely monitor the activity, ensuring dietary requirements are met. This helps to keep children safe. Children know the routine well and confidently complete their tasks, such as washing their hands and collecting a cup and plate. This helps children to build life skills and prepares them for managing their needs in preparation for starting school.
- Staff's well-being is supported exceptionally well. Leaders go above and beyond to ensure that staff receive meaningful supervision sessions and ongoing communication. They ensure staff are happy in their role and have specialist training to deliver the very best care for all children in the setting. As a result, staff learn new strategies and techniques to deliver high quality teaching experiences for children.
- Staff have excellent relationships with parents and use a range of highly effective techniques to ensure they can successfully communicate with everyone. This includes 'pop in and play sessions', where parents can stay at the setting with their children. In addition, they hold video calls with parents. Staff use these opportunities to fully involve parents in their children's learning and share progress reports.

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	EY402776
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10380318
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	18
Name of registered person	St John The Divine Church of England Church Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP529403
Telephone number	07708830733
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2019

Information about this early years setting

St John's Pre-School first opened in 1970 and re-registered in 2009. It operates from St John's Hall in Worthing, West Sussex. The pre-school is open between 8.30am and 2.30pm each weekday, during term time only. It accepts early years funding for eligible children aged two, three and four years and receives specific funding for disadvantaged children. There are six members of staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications between level 3 and level 7.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lisa Smith

Inspection activities

- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- 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.
- The inspector spoke with the manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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