

Inspection of Voyage @ Flash Ley

Flash Ley Cp School, Hawksmoor Road, STAFFORD ST17 9DR

Inspection date:

29 April 2025

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Some aspects of the continuous provision do not meet the required hygiene standards. For example, some furniture is in less-than good condition, with exposed foam that could harbour germs. Bathroom checks are not always carried out effectively, resulting in some toilets being left without supplies. Additionally, the current method of dummy storage is unhygienic. These issues compromise children's good health. Furthermore, staff do not place enough emphasis on teaching children self-help skills. Consequently, children have limited opportunities to practise these skills before they go to school.

That said, children learn the importance of rest after engaging in physical play. For instance, staff encourage them to have a drink and lie down, and they blow bubbles to create a calm and soothing atmosphere. This helps children to regulate their emotions before moving on to the next part of the day. Children enjoy being able to free flow between their room and the outdoor area. They show confidence and independence as they climb, balance and slide down the fireman's pole. Babies happily engage in sensory exploration, using spades to fill up buckets with sand.

Staff meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. For example, they work closely with parents and carers, make timely referrals to relevant services and introduce various interventions such as the use of 'fidget toys' to encourage children's positive behaviour. Staff use additional funding to buy resources that help children to connect with their peers. For example, they purchase matching games that encourage turn-taking, sharing and socialisation.

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

- Although some hygiene standards are not yet good, leaders recognise the need for improvement and have started taking action to strengthen their procedures.
- Leaders explain how staff strongly focus on children's self-help skills during the final term. However, this limits the opportunities children have to embed these skills early. For example, staff do not ensure capable children can consistently practise drinking from an open cup. Children are not routinely encouraged to wipe their own noses, hands or faces, as these tasks are carried out by staff. Additionally, children are not taught to cover their mouths when coughing.
- Staff recognise that dummies can offer children comfort when they feel unsettled and are aware of the potential impact on language development. However, they sometimes offer children their dummies too early in preparation for sleep. This premature use limits these children's engagement in conversation.
- Staff sing with children and use sign language to promote their communication development. They use age-appropriate language, such as saying 'pat pat' as

they tap the top of the sand bucket. They provide helpful prompts that encourage children to think and use language themselves. However, staff do not always organise group activities as effectively as they could, which limits some children's participation in their learning.

- Staff support children's transition to the next room when developmentally ready. For example, they identify when children would benefit from more space and greater access to outdoor areas. They observe the noticeable improvements in children's behaviour as a result of these well-planned transitions.
- Early number skills are embedded throughout the setting. For example, staff count aloud with children before they go down the slide or turn over their sand bucket. They prompt children to count how many pins have fallen during a game of bowling and encourage older children to count on from a given number. This helps to develop children's understanding of number sequences.
- Parents speak positively about the setting, describing it as 'kind' and 'loving'. They appreciate the strong communication they receive from staff, including regular observations and updates on their child's progress. Parents of children with SEND feel well-supported, highlighting the collaborative approach staff take to develop and implement strategies together.
- Dietary needs and allergies are managed through clear signage, care plans and staff awareness. Leaders communicate effectively with the school's catering team to ensure they are aware of the requirements when preparing children's food. Staff are confident in the actions to take should a child be exposed to an allergen, including recognising the signs of an allergic reaction.
- Staff complete mandatory training and attend some additional courses. However, leaders do not fully provide staff with clear direction for their ongoing professional development to further strengthen their confidence and 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 meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
ensure the continuous provision meets the required hygiene standards to promote children's good health	20/05/2025

improve opportunities to support and develop children's self-help skills to promote independence further and ensure they are well prepared for school.	03/06/2025
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- help staff to recognise when it is appropriate for children to use their dummies
- strengthen the organisation of group activities to ensure all children can participate equally in their learning
- establish a targeted plan to support staff's professional development to address weaknesses in practice and build on their confidence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY423177
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10400317
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	50
Name of registered person	Flash Ley CP School Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP530437
Telephone number	01785 356 642
Date of previous inspection	29 March 2023

Information about this early years setting

Voyage @ Flash Ley registered in 2011. It operates from Flash Ley Community Primary School and is governed by the school governing body. The setting is open Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 5.30pm, 48 weeks of the year. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The provision provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Mikaela Stallard

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk to discuss the intentions for children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children throughout the day and evaluated the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The views of parents were considered by the inspector through verbal discussions.
- Relevant documentation was reviewed by the inspector, including evidence of the suitability of those working with children and accident forms.

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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