

Inspection of Paint Pots Preschool & Nursery

20 Waterloo Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 3AR

Inspection date: 4 July 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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children are warmly welcomed in by experienced staff and come in happy and ready to play with their friends. Staff know every child extremely well and have worked incredibly hard to ensure the environment is exciting and engaging for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language. This makes children feel fully included, as staff expertly tailor the planning of activities to reflect their individual needs

Staff have developed a curriculum that is ambitious and skilfully meets the needs of all children in every room across the setting. They have an in-depth understanding of the intentions of each activity and use their knowledge of each individual child, to move their learning on to the next stage promptly. For example, staff engage children in a fruit cutting activity and use this opportunity to explore new vocabulary, discuss textures of the fruits and the seeds inside them. Staff provide an excellent range of activities across the setting to fully engage children in their learning. For example, children are engrossed in an activity exploring slime and using a range of tools to explore shape and texture. They concentrate for long periods of time, which means they become highly motivated learners.

Staff are excellent role models and skilfully remind children how to behave when needed and reinforce positive behaviour using a thumbs up or 'well done'. Children understand why the rules of the setting are in place and can be heard reminding their friends the impact their behaviour has on others.

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

- Children are skilfully taught how to start to understand their emotions and how they might feel in different situations. Staff are extremely skilled at planning activities to help children to understand their emotions and to anticipate how they, and others, may feel in different situations. For example, pre-school children become engrossed in a fishing game, where they hook out a disc with a face showing a specific emotion. Staff support this experience with highly relevant, age-appropriate group discussions that provide an excellent opportunity for children to talk about their feelings.
- Staff expertly promote a love of stories to support children's communication and language development. For example, children in the older toddler room show exceptional levels of engagement during a story session and thoroughly enjoy waddling like penguins and trying to 'moo' like a cow.
- Children benefit from impressive support to develop their confidence to try something new. For example, staff teach children about growing vegetables in the garden and how the seeds they plant will develop into pumpkins. This

provides children with excellent learning experiences and supports their curiosity to find out more.

- Babies enjoy moving around the space in the baby room and approach staff for a cuddle or to sit on their lap and watch their friends. Staff are extremely attentive and resources provided are enticing and encourage children to explore and practise their gross motor skills. For example, babies are excited to touch and squeeze a range of unusual sensory toys that are soft and squidgy. This also enables excellent opportunities for staff to introduce new words to promote children's communication and language development.
- Children demonstrate excellent levels of independence throughout the day. For example, younger children are taught to put on their own bibs at mealtimes and serve their own pasta. Children also enjoy washing their hands and hanging up their coats and bags. Staff are highly effective in teaching children to problem solve. For example, children are very well supported to play table top games together and talk about the rules if a child is unsure or does not understand. This means that children are learning to be self-reliant and develop a mature level of understanding.
- Children with SEND are superbly supported by staff, who are skilled and act quickly to provide the right support at the right time. Staff use their detailed knowledge of every child to communicate highly successfully using a range of methods, which children respond extremely well to. For example, children share what they would like to play with next or how they are feeling, using body language, picture cards on a lanyard or sign language. This means all children are able to communicate with staff in a way that suits their needs and makes them feel fully included and valued.
- Parents cannot speak highly enough of the support they have received from staff in the setting. They state how they have been helped to complete referrals to specialist organisations, are able to access a food bank inside the setting and receive emotional support when they have struggled with issues, such as behaviour and transitions. Parents express their gratitude to staff for teaching their children the skills they need to move their learning on promptly. Staff make time to develop positive and valuable relationships with parents. They share information effectively and work together to support and meet children's care and development needs. This means the care children receive is consistent.
- Leaders have developed exceptionally supportive relationships with staff, which makes every member feel valued. There is mental health support for staff to access when needed as well as a benefits scheme. Staff are asked for their thoughts and opinions on a range of topics. This makes them feel included and important.

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	131605
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10399163
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 5
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	109
Name of registered person	Paint Pots Pre-School & Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP526801
Telephone number	023 8022 7931
Date of previous inspection	21 November 2019

Information about this early years setting

Paint Pots Preschool & Nursery registered in 2000. The setting operates from a detached, converted house in Shirley in Southampton. It is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. A team of 18 staff work with the children. Of these, 13 hold early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lucy Short

Inspection activities

- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on the children's learning.
- The special educational needs coordinators spoke with the inspector about how they support children with SEND.

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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