

Paint Pots Preschool @ St Joseph's

Unique reference number (URN): 2809604

Address: St. Josephs Hall, Bugle Street, Southampton, SO14 2AH

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 17/09/2024

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Paint Pots Pre-School & Nursery Limited

Inspection report: 17 June 2026

Exceptional

Strong standard

Expected standard



Needs attention

Urgent improvement

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- **Not met:** The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Children gain developmentally appropriate knowledge during their time at the pre-school which means they are effectively prepared for transition to school. All children, including those facing barriers to their learning, make steady progress in their development from their starting points.

Children make consistent progress from their starting points in communication and language skills. They develop from sometimes having no vocabulary when they start at the pre-school, to speaking in simple three-word sentences. Children follow instructions and understand the routines.

Children show perseverance in their play. They focus and concentrate as they construct a tower with the building blocks in the outside area, skilfully balancing the bricks so that they do not fall down. Children demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of using scissors safely and confidently cut pieces of paper. Staff support younger children to cut and praise them on their achievements.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Generally, leaders and staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. All children feel respected and valued in the highly inclusive environment. Staff are good role models and get to know the children well and understand their needs and individual areas for development. Children form secure attachments with the caring and kind staff. This helps children to develop a sense of security and confidence. Leaders work closely with families to support punctuality. They monitor attendance and work with families to help them develop routines.

Children begin to learn to play collaboratively and show positive attitudes to learning. For example, children work together in the outside area to transport soil for the mud kitchen. They take turns in the role play area sharing the 'food' they have made with the staff. Children usually behave well but sometimes they struggle to share toys and resources. Generally, staff handle this sensitively, but on occasion, this is not consistently managed and preschool rules, such as 'walking feet' are not routinely embedded. This means that children become confused and do not understand what is expected of them.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders and staff promote and support children's welfare and wellbeing well. They embed effective hygiene practices and children are familiar with routines to wash their hands before snack, after using the toilet and before toothbrushing. Children learn to competently brush their teeth and staff support parents to access dental practices to further promote oral health. Staff create a safe, welcoming space and recognise that children need access to fresh air and exercise. They plan a variety of activities to support children's development in the outside area.

Snack time is a social experience. Children cut their own fruit and vegetables, spread their crackers and pour their own drinks. Staff are working with parents to help them provide healthy lunch boxes for their children and staff ensure that fruit and vegetables are readily available at mealtimes. All children, including those who face barriers to their learning form secure attachments with their key persons. Staff know their children incredibly well and have warm positive relationships with them. They offer cuddles and reassurances when children are upset. This helps to promote children's wellbeing and sense of security.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching and have a development plan to continue to improve practice. They understand the needs of the children attending the pre-school and use this knowledge to inform their planning and ensure that it is inclusive. Staff place a great focus on children's communication and language development as they recognise this is a high priority. They know that small groups give children the opportunity to speak up and contribute in planned communication sessions. Staff read familiar repetitive stories enthusiastically to children and encourage them to finish the sentences. Children confidently join in the actions. Parents value the book lending library but are unsure of their children's next steps. This does not help parents to be able to fully support their children's learning and development at home.

Staff skilfully weave mathematical learning into daily routines. For example, during nappy changing staff follow the children's lead when they begin to talk about their fingers. They naturally extend this activity, counting with the children and praising them on their achievements. During role play, children confidently recognise their baby dolls are dressed in the same patterned material as the saris they are wearing. This further demonstrates children's growing knowledge of mathematical learning, such as matching patterns.

Music and song time further extends this learning as children sing number rhymes. During water play, mathematical language is incorporated further as children and staff talk about containers being full and empty. Children talk about making 'juice'. As they experiment, they use language such as 'squash' as they realise they can get more lemon slices in their pot if they press the pieces down. Staff use effective questioning to ask children about the smells and what these might be.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff put the children and families at the heart of what they do. Information gained during settling-in visits enables staff to effectively plan for children in their care from the start of their time in the pre-school. Experienced staff have the knowledge and skills to identify children who may need additional help. They make timely referrals to ensure children receive appropriate support at the earliest opportunity. This helps to ensure that all children, including those who face barriers to their learning make suitable progress from their starting points and thrive in this inclusive pre-school.

Leaders and staff work with other professionals to ensure that individual targets are embedded in the planning for the children in the pre-school. This joined up approach helps staff to provide appropriate next steps to aid the children's development to enable them to make the best progress. Funding is used effectively to support children. Leaders use

observations to assess children's needs and use this data to inform their spending. For example, funding has been used for extensive training for staff to equip them to be able to fully support children. They have also developed the sensory room which is used constantly for one-to-one support and small focus group activities.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear understanding of the preschool's strengths and areas for development. They have children and families at the heart of everything they do. Staff receive appropriate supervision and support to enable them to carry out their roles effectively. Staff report their wellbeing is good, workloads are manageable and they access professional training opportunities to ensure their skills remain current. Generally, staff manage children's behaviour effectively, but this is not consistently embedded to ensure children understand rules and boundaries.

Leaders and staff work effectively with local schools to aid smooth transitions. They invite reception class teachers into the pre-school and support children at settling-in visits at the schools. This helps to ensure that all children, including those facing barriers to their learning, have a seamless transition to the next stage of their education.

Parents describe the leaders and staff, and their experience of the pre-school, as 'amazing'. They really value the support they receive. Parents also enjoy the extra activities children do such as trips to the local residential care home and visitors from the local supermarket. They comment that 'their lives started' when their children joined the pre-school and how much progress their children have made. Parents say the staff are like family. Parent partnerships are effective but information about children's learning is not shared robustly enough to consistently promote continuity.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children arrive happy and ready to learn. They separate from their parents with ease and access the inclusive stimulating, learning environment. Children find their photographs to self-register and peg them on the string with support from their key persons, if necessary. This helps to develop their sense of belonging and wellbeing. Staff gather the required information at settling-in visits to enable them to meet the children's needs from the start. This includes information about children's interests, stages of development and any outside agency involvement. All children including those who faces barriers to their learning make steady progress from their starting points. Children's individual needs and interests are met

through small bespoke focus groups. This includes communication and language sessions and opportunities to develop turn taking skills and promote emotional wellbeing. Children are beginning to develop positive social skills as they find their friends and lay the table in the role play area, actively taking on family roles such as mummy and daddy. Generally, children share the resources, but occasionally they struggle and staff sensitively intervene.

Children have many opportunities to develop their physical skills in the well-equipped pre-school provision. For example, they enjoy rolling the balls down the guttering and playing with skittles outside. This also helps to develop their hand-eye coordination. Inside, during water play, children competently undo the lids on the jars and tighten them up again. Children benefit from regular visits out into the community, taking in part in litter picking in partnership with the local supermarket and visits to the nearby residential home. This helps to develop their understanding of the area in which they live. Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality and follow up on any unplanned absences.

Next steps

- Leaders should support staff to consistently embed strategies to help children understand and manage their behaviour and learn what is expected of them.
 - Leaders should further help parents to understand their children's next steps so that they can fully support their children's learning and development at home.
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About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, practitioners, parents and children during the inspection.

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.

Inspector:

Lindsay Osman

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2809604

Address:

St. Josephs Hall

Bugle Street
Southampton
SO14 2AH

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 17/09/2024

Registered person: Paint Pots Pre-School & Nursery Limited

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours:

Local authority: Southampton

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 17 June 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

2 to 4

Total number of places

54

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard 

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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