

Inspection of Holy Apostles Pre-School

Holy Apostles C of E School, Battledown Approach, CHELTENHAM, Gloucestershire
GL52 6QZ

Inspection date: 6 March 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy to attend this homely and well-organised pre-school. They are greeted by kind and familiar staff and quickly settle into their play. Staff plan a personalised curriculum that fosters children's independence, confidence and curiosity. They place a strong focus on supporting children to develop their communication skills. Staff engage them in meaningful and purposeful conversations throughout the day. Children show a positive attitude towards learning. They are eager to participate in group music sessions led by external professionals. Children listen attentively, understand expectations and raise their hands to share their ideas. Staff are enthusiastic and model engagement by singing along and joining in with actions.

Children are encouraged to make independent choices in their play, for example to play inside or outside. Younger children demonstrate their mathematical understanding. They match and sort shapes, build towers and count how many blocks they have used. Older children confidently gather their belongings and use 'the superhero method' to put on their coats independently. The environment is planned to support children's interests and understanding of current topics. Staff add a pirate flag to the outdoor climbing apparatus, and children use their imaginations as they pretend to be pirates. They encourage children to create telescopes and treasure maps. Children use and understand a good range of vocabulary, naming items such as 'compass'.

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

- Leaders monitor staffs' practice and offer training and support to improve their knowledge and skills. They have recently been working closely with the local authority advisor to ensure their personalised curriculum is securely embedded into practice. Staff value opportunities for professional development and training. They complete independent research on key areas of interest, such as the importance of outdoor play and teaching approaches for boys. Staff are reflective and share their newly gained knowledge with colleagues to implement it consistently across the setting.
- Staff support children to develop the skills needed in preparation for their move on to school. For example, they help children to be independent, recognise their name and manage their personal care. While staff take children to the school playground to familiarise them with the surroundings and help them feel safe and secure, they do not always share enough information with other professionals at the school about children's routines and prior learning at pre-school in order to ensure a more seamless transition to the next phase of education.
- Children develop early technology skills through access to a tabletop computer

monitor, where they engage with educational games and programs. Staff encourage turn-taking by using timers to ensure all children have opportunities to participate. They share information with parents on how to support safe technology use at home. However, staff do not always use this time to extend children's learning to further support their understanding of how to use technology safely, including the effects of screen time and internet use.

- Partnerships with parents are a strength of the setting. Staff spend time with them during the induction period, getting to know children's past learning experiences, interests and routines from home. They maintain ongoing communication with parents through daily discussions, online learning journal updates and report cards each term. Parents are kept informed about what children are learning at pre-school to help them continue and extend children's learning at home. Feedback is very positive, with parents highlighting the setting's role in their children's development as 'instrumental'. They comment on their child's love for attending and the welcoming indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Staff regularly observe children's play to monitor their progress. They swiftly identify any emerging gaps in learning and put support measures into place to close these. Staff engage with other professionals to ensure that children receive targeted support where needed. They regularly review support plans with parents to ensure these demonstrate a holistic and consistent approach to children's learning and development.
- Children have plenty of opportunities to be active outdoors, promoting their physical development and overall health and well-being. They demonstrate an awareness of how to keep themselves safe and are supported by staff to manage risks safely. For example, they wait at the top of the pirate ship for staff guidance before sliding down the pole. Children develop balance and coordination as they walk across balance beams, pretending to be pirates walking the plank.

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:

- provide children with more experiences to learn about the risks of technology use, including the internet and screen time, to help them stay safe in the digital world
- strengthen partnerships with schools to ensure more information is shared about

children's routines and prior learning to further support their move from the pre-school to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	510068
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10376045
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	32
Name of registered person	Holy Apostles' Pavilion Groups Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP519876
Telephone number	01242 526858
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2019

Information about this early years setting

Holy Apostles Pre-School registered in 1994. It is located in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. It opens from 9am to 3pm, on weekdays, during term time only. The provider receives funding to provide early years education for children aged two to four years. There are five staff members, including the manager, all of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. The manager has a level 6 qualification and qualified teacher status. Four staff members have level 3 qualifications and one has a level 2 qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Holly 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.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual and registered individuals about the leadership and management of the setting.
- 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 inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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