

Inspection of Southminster Preschool Learning Alliance

Community Hall 2, King George V Memorial Field, Station Road, Southminster,
Essex CM0 7EW

Inspection date: 9 January 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff happily greet children and are genuinely interested and pleased to see them. Settling-in sessions are tailored to meet the child's needs to ensure a smooth transition from home to pre-school. As a result, they leave their parents with ease and settle quickly. Staff take great care to provide children with quality interaction, experiences and a fun place in which to learn. The curriculum is varied and supports spontaneous play well, both indoors and outdoors. Staff support children's speech and language throughout all activities. Children have developed close and trusting bonds with their key person who are good role models. Children delight in the praise they receive for their achievements. They understand the high expectations of the staff as these are consistently reinforced throughout the session. Children's behaviour is good.

Children benefit from a range of activities outside of the pre-school. For example, children eagerly participate in weekly swimming sessions in the local pool. This helps children's confidence and teaches them the importance of keeping safe around water. Children learn about road safety when walking to the pool and they gain the skills needed to be independent. For example, they dress themselves in preparation to return to the pre-school following their swim. Children have opportunities to participate in tennis sessions and develop their physical and listening skills as they follow instructions. They thoroughly enjoy a treat of hot chocolate when they visit the local tea shop.

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

- The quality of teaching is good. The curriculum supports spontaneous play and ensures learning for all participating. This means all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve good outcomes and are prepared for their transition to school.
- The management, and team of staff ensure the curriculum is planned around the children's interests and is embedded across all areas of learning, both indoors and outdoors. Children make choices as to where they play and move freely between indoors and outdoors, all year round.
- Children are keen and eager learners. They show enthusiasm and curiosity as they explore the activities provided. They enjoy their time outdoors and persevere and show determination as they manage the skill of bubble making, using large bubble wands.
- Staff are skilful with their interaction and when to offer help. They support children's understanding of numbers and shapes and introduce simple mathematics in daily routines. For example, staff encourage children to count the plates and cups needed for snack time and work out how many are left if they take some away. Children show sustained concentration as they complete

puzzles and make models from construction pieces.

- Parents speak positively about the welcoming team of staff. They say the staff invest time getting to know the children, are fully supportive of the whole family and go 'above and beyond' their expectations. They feel totally reassured their children are in safe hands and make very good progress as a result of attending.
- Children initiate their own play. Their imagination and creativity is supported well. For example, they decide to make models using boxes and packaging and use their creations as part of their imaginary play. Staff are on hand to help and guide their ideas as required.
- The caring, gentle staff demonstrate their commitment and dedication to provide children with a fun, secure and exciting place to learn. They feel valued, and work well as a team. Staff are fully supportive of the plans in place to enhance the environment as they understand this will have a positive impact on children's experiences.
- Staff are supported to complete training as continuous professional development is encouraged. Staff attend team meetings and supervisions. However, monitoring of staff practice is not fully embedded to ensure any issues are swiftly identified, to raise the quality of teaching to an even higher level.
- The team recognise the importance of developing relationships with other early years settings children also attend. They understand the value of sharing children's learning and progress, to provide continuity when children attend more than one setting, however this is not fully embedded in 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 further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- strengthen the monitoring of staff practice to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently higher level
- establish partnerships with other early years settings children attend, to provide the best possible support for their learning and development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2701920
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10367883
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years 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	23
Name of registered person	Southminster Pre-School Learning Alliance Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP910772
Telephone number	07914668852
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Southminster Preschool Learning Alliance registered in 2022 and is situated in Southminster, Essex. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, during term time, from 8.30am until 4pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Hartigan

Inspection activities

- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the curriculum and what it is that the team want the children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- Parents provided the inspector with oral and written feedback at the inspection.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation together.
- The inspector spoke with the staff team during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of the staff working in the pre-school.

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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