

Inspection of St John's Sunshine Pre School

Delmar Morgan Centre, Copthorne Bank, Copthorne, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 3QX

Inspection date: 16 September 2025

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Weaknesses in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements means children's safety is compromised. Leaders have not followed safeguarding procedures effectively. Staff do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities, or those of others, and there are weaknesses in staff knowledge of safeguarding procedures. In addition, safe recruitment processes have not been followed for all staff and not all records are accessible. These breaches to requirements have a significant impact on the safety of children.

Despite the overall weaknesses, staff provide support to new children who are settling in. They give children space to gain confidence in the setting but stay close by to offer reassurance when they need it. Staff provide resources and activities for children that follow their emerging interests. For example, children enjoy catching bubbles outside in the garden and staff give children the opportunity to blow the bubbles themselves. Generally, children are happy and confidently access the resources they require for their play. However, the curriculum is limited and although children play happily with the resources available, they offer little challenge to older and most-able children.

Staff encourage children to practise different physical skills, such as jumping. They ask children to jump like different animals and encourage them to think about other animals that can jump. Children are keen to take part and laugh together. Staff encourage children to take turns to use binoculars to look for bubbles as they float up to the sky.

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

- Leaders have failed to notify Ofsted of changes to the committee. This means Ofsted has not been provided with the information required to assess all committee members suitability. This is a breach to the requirements. Through discussion, leaders understand they need to notify Ofsted of any change to the individuals who make up the body of the committee.
- There are inconsistencies in leaders' and staff's understanding of the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures. For example, the procedure for storing staff mobile phones is not followed consistently. In addition, not all staff understand the whistle-blowing procedure. This means safeguarding procedures are not implemented effectively to help keep children safe.
- Weaknesses in the leadership and management of the setting mean that safeguarding procedures have not been followed correctly, and concerns about children have not been referred to safeguarding services in a timely way. This is a breach of requirements and compromises children's safety.
- Leaders obtain a criminal records check for each member of staff working with

children. However, they do not always obtain written references for all staff before they start employment, in order to verify their suitability. This means they cannot be assured all staff working with children are suitable.

- Roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. This includes roles within the leadership team and the role of designated safeguarding leads. For example, staff are not always clear on who will lead on safeguarding concerns. In addition, they do not have a secure knowledge of, or feel confident to, implement the setting's safeguarding procedures. This has an impact on the overall effectiveness of safeguarding.
- At the time of the inspection, not all documentation was accessible. For example, some paediatric first-aid certificates were missing. Therefore, it was not possible to verify if the requirements for paediatric first aid are met at all times.
- The curriculum is not designed well enough to provide all children with meaningful learning opportunities. Although staff interact well with children, and activities successfully encourage children to join in, limited challenge is offered. This particularly impacts on the older and most-able children. While these children engage well and enjoy playing with their friends, they do not benefit from the extension they need to continually build on their knowledge and development.
- Staff use an online platform to monitor children's progress. Delays in children's learning are identified, and referrals are made to other professionals when needed. Additional funding is used to buy equipment, such as sensory resources, to support children's development further.
- Parents know who their child's key person is. Staff use the online platform to update parents on the progress their children make. They also use a more informal communication system. Parents feedback they do not always know who they are communicating with. Nonetheless, they feel staff share strategies they can use to help their child's development at home, and report their children are making progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not 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
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implement an effective safeguarding procedure that all staff understand, including whistle-blowing and the storage of mobile phones	30/09/2025
ensure all concerns about children's safety or welfare are reported to the local authority children's social care team immediately and in line with local reporting procedures	30/09/2025
implement robust recruitment processes to ensure references are obtained for all staff before they start employment	30/09/2025
ensure support, advice and guidance is provided for all staff so that they understand their roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to safeguarding issues	30/09/2025
ensure records are easily accessible and available for inspection	30/09/2025
plan and implement an ambitious curriculum that is challenging for all children.	17/10/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	2772149
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10419008
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	40
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	St John's Sunshine Pre-School
Registered person unique reference number	RP905343
Telephone number	07963501762
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St John's Sunshine Pre School registered in 2023 and is located in Copthorne, West Sussex. The setting is open from 8.45am to 2.15pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. There are six members of staff, of whom five hold a childcare qualification. The setting provides funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Pippa Clark

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The deputy 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 observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.

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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