

Inspection of St Monica's Nursery and Forest School

St Monica's Close, Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 3AW

Inspection date: 7 May 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 and settled in this setting. Friendly staff welcome them as they arrive, and they quickly become engaged in activities. Staff offer opportunities for children to explore. They offer forest school activities, where children can explore nature and wildlife. They also arrange visits from the fire service, local police and other community visitors. Children learn about life cycles, when they care for caterpillars as they grow into butterflies and tadpoles grow into frogs. Providers sensitively weave celebrations and festivals into their curriculum to ensure children have the opportunity to learn about other cultures and the diversity of the world. Children celebrate their families. They learn about different homes, family compositions, and discuss the similarities and differences between their home life and that of their friends.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for children's learning. Children learn to be polite, use manners, and develop respect and tolerance for others. They learn about feelings, and how to navigate their complex emotions. Staff support children to resolve their own differences and solve problems, such as taking turns and sharing. Staff model new learning to children and support them in trying new things. They encourage children to take risks but offer support if it is needed. Staff ask children to consider 'what would happen if?' and encourage them to learn from their own mistakes.

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

- Leaders quickly identify any breaches to requirements and put stringent measures in place to minimise the risk to children. For example, leaders have recently made changes to the arrival and departure arrangements and reviewed risk assessments. This ensures that the premises are secure and the children are safe from harm.
- Leaders and staff have developed their own curriculum which is sequenced and bespoke to the children who are attending the setting. Staff carry out regular observations and assessments. This helps them to identify children's progress and any gaps in their learning.
- Staff plan for children's interests and next steps. They provide a range of learning opportunities that reflect children's interests. However, the curriculum intent is not always clear. As such, teaching is not always focused precisely on what staff want children to learn.
- Staff teach children about health and self-care. They model good hygiene practices and teach children about good oral hygiene and toothbrushing. Children are able to explain how germs are spread and why we need to wash our hands. This helps children to understand the importance of good health and hygiene practices.

- Provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Staff work closely with other professionals, such as occupational therapists and speech and language therapists to ensure children receive the personalised support they need to make progress. They implement plans set by professionals to ensure children are meeting their goals. As such, all children make progress in their learning and their overall development.
- Staff know their key children extremely well and have built up good relationships with them and their families. The key-person-system is well-embedded and children are secure in their relationships within the setting. If they become upset, they are easily settled by caring staff members, who understand their emotional needs. This helps children to be self-assured and develop confidence in a comfortable and safe environment.
- Leaders carry out regular supervisions and appraisals with staff. They identify staff strengths and areas for improvement, and make action plans for the term ahead. Training is linked to these actions, with additional modelling and coaching offered to support staff to improve. As such, staff are aware of their training needs and how they can improve their teaching and learning practice.
- Parents are pleased with the care and learning their children receive at the setting. They report excellent communication, with staff updating the on-line app regularly and providing information on care routines, what children have been learning, and examples of activities they have been doing. Parents receive monthly newsletters, reports and progress checks to keep them updated about their child's learning. As such, they feel supported and involved in their child's learning, and know how to continue that learning at home.

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 staff's understanding of curriculum intent to ensure their teaching is more precisely focused on what they want children to learn

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY395744
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10397266
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	St. Monica's Nursery And Forest School CIO
Registered person unique reference number	RP906046
Telephone number	01925261255
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

St Monica's Nursery and Forest School registered in 2009. It is organised by a committee of trustees. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four have appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm, during term time only. The nursery receives funding for early education.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Michelle Highcock

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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.

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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