

Toybox Pre-School

The Swainson Building, Ansford Academy, Maggs Lane, Castle Cary, Somerset, BA7 7JJ



Inspection date

6 March 2018

Previous inspection date

15 December 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The manager and staff have developed their partnerships with parents and outside agencies effectively. They get to know children and their families really well and provide good support for children's physical and emotional well-being.
- The manager provides good support for staff to continue to develop their skills and knowledge. Through training, staff have increased their expertise in helping children to improve their language and communication skills successfully.
- The strong key-person system ensures that children settle quickly on arrival and those new to the setting form secure attachments. This underpins children's confidence to explore and lead their learning. Children behave well and learn to manage their feelings.
- All children make good progress. Through effective self-evaluation, staff now seek good information from parents and other providers on children's starting points. This enables them to plan more effectively for children as soon as they start at the pre-school.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff sometimes over prepare creative activities and do not consistently help children to express their own thoughts and ideas.
- Staff miss opportunities to help older children work out totals in a group when they add or take away an item.
- Staff do not make full use of children's experiences of nature to help them understand how it changes across the different seasons.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- help children to extend their own ideas and creativity during adult-led activities
- support older children to understand one more or one less in a group, to develop their mathematical skills further
- deepen children's awareness of the natural world and how it changes.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching indoors, and accompanied staff and children on a walk.
- The inspector spoke with parents, staff and children, and took account of the provider's self-evaluation.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and carried out a joint observation.
- The inspector checked safeguarding information and the safety of the premises.
- The inspector sampled documentation, including policies and procedures, children's development records, and planning.

Inspector

Elaine Douglas

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. The manager and staff attend regular training and know what to do if they consider a child is at risk of harm. The pre-school now has sole use of its hall and the provider has strengthened the security to keep children safe. Staff seek parents' feedback to help them make policy decisions and evaluate their practice, such as when they reviewed their nappy-changing procedures. Parents confirm that the recent introduction of communication books has enhanced the sharing of information and meeting of children's individual needs consistently. The manager monitors children's overall development well. She identifies where children need additional support to help them to catch up. She is currently evaluating how to enhance this system to more meticulously monitor different groups and provide even better outcomes for children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff make regular observations of children's development and use them well to identify their next stages of learning. They share this with parents so that they can support their children's learning at home. Staff plan a challenging environment for children to explore and experiment. For example, young children become fascinated by magnets. They find out they can pick up lots of nuts and bolts, but not paper. Older children see how some magnets stick together and others push apart. Children discover that wet cornflour can be hard and also runny. Staff plan well for their key children's next stage of learning and provide key-group activities. For example, they provided effective support for older children to link sounds and letters, and recognise and write their names, while young children practised their early writing skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Following their last inspection, staff have improved children's independence with regard to handwashing. For example, they purchased a portable sink, so even young children wash their hands after or during messy play activities. Staff support children well in managing age-appropriate tasks, such as preparing their snack. They develop good healthy practices and understand about keeping themselves safe. For example, they cut grapes lengthways, stating it makes them easier to eat and to not get stuck and choke. They learn about road safety on outings. Staff organise the premises well to enable children to have enclosed space indoors for physical play, ensuring children can be active and remain safe. Staff follow hygienic procedures when changing nappies to protect young children's health and keep records to share with parents. Lunchtime is a social occasion and staff ensure all children receive their own lunchbox and have plenty to eat.

Outcomes for children are good

Children have good skills that prepare them well for their next stage of development and school. Older children confidently engage in whole-group activities and talk about their own experiences. They recognise shapes and use mathematical language, such as, 'halves means two'. Children have good relationships with each other and develop a positive awareness of their similarities and differences. Children are confident to seek help from an adult should they need it and concentrate well on their self-chosen activity.

Setting details

Unique reference number	142877
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	1070337
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	34
Name of registered person	The Toybox Preschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP523611
Date of previous inspection	15 December 2014
Telephone number	01963 359 600

Toybox Pre-School opened in 1986. It operates from the Swanson community building, near Castle Cary, Somerset. The pre-school is run by a committee of parents. It operates Monday to Friday from 9.15am until 3.45pm, during term time only. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early years education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff. Of these, two hold an early years qualification at level 5 and three hold a qualification at level 3.

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