

Inspection of Portico Lodge

Portico Lane, Eccelston Park, St Helens, Merseyside L35 7JS

Inspection date: 17 October 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive in this welcoming and nurturing nursery. Babies happily explore the spacious rooms, knowing their caring key person is nearby. They show great concentration as they scoop lentils into containers. Children enjoy being physically active. They giggle and say, 'We can't go under it,' as they hold 'plank' positions during 'bear hunt' yoga. Staff provide a broad curriculum, and all children make good progress. Staff are enthusiastic and find new and interesting ways to teach. For example, children become shape detectives and search the room for shapes that they recognise using different-shaped magnifying glasses. Children also learn how to be responsible and take care of things by using china tea sets in their play.

Staff have high expectations for all children. They understand that all children are unique and need different support to reach their goals. Staff help children to develop the skills they need to be happy, healthy and ready to learn. Parents and carers praise staff communication and are amazed at what their children learn. For example, children use sign language to communicate their emotions. Parents feel confident that their children will be safe at the nursery. The children in this setting are well behaved, curious and confident. They find out the inspector is learning about their nursery and say, 'You should write that they do good things.'

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

- Staff deliver an effectively sequenced curriculum. They plan activities which follow children's interests to help to ensure that children are motivated to learn. Additionally, each child experiences a broad curriculum during routines such as story time and circle time. Staff assess what children have previously learned and can do, and use this as a foundation for further learning. As a result, all children make good progress in the seven areas of learning and development.
- The curriculum is underpinned by the development of communication and language skills. Babies enjoy an environment rich in language. Staff sing, read and narrate what they are doing throughout the day. Staff introduce new vocabulary as children use craft materials to act out 'The Three Little Pigs'. Children stick out their tongue in concentration and say they will use a feather to make 'a fluffy bed for the pig'. Consequently, children are eager to communicate and use a wide vocabulary.
- Children learn about mathematical concepts through play. For example, as children name toy zoo animals, their key person asks, 'How many elephants do you have? Which one is the biggest?' When children playing outdoors spot the half moon, staff ask, 'When it's a full moon what shape is it? How much of the moon can we see now?' This successfully extends children's thinking and prepares them well for future learning.
- Children learn to behave well and manage their own emotions through a range

of strategies. Children enjoy meditation and retreat to a safe space when their emotions 'get too big'. Staff support children to understand how the rules benefit every child. Children say they follow the rules because they want 'to be good people'. As a consequence, children show high standards of behaviour and contribute to a peaceful environment.

- Staff understand that children need to feel secure, to explore and be curious. Staff particularly focus on this when children begin attending the nursery or at times of transition. The key person works closely with the child's parents and carers to meet each child's individual needs. Staff promote a sense of belonging by displaying children's artwork and family photos. As a result, children are confident.
- The setting promotes the importance of good health. Children are encouraged to run until they breathe faster and feel warm. They learn that this keeps their body healthy. Children learn how to brush their teeth and wash their hands independently. This helps children to learn how to take care of their personal needs.
- The manager has a clear vision of the high-quality education and care she wants all children to receive. She is passionate about ensuring that all children reach their full potential and enjoy their time at the nursery. Staff feel supported and share her enthusiasm. However, feedback following observations does not always help staff to improve their practice even further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are alert to the signs a child may be at risk of abuse, including emotional abuse and exposure to domestic violence. Staff understand who to contact if they have any concerns and have a thorough understanding of the setting's whistle-blowing policy. Staff undertake risk assessments to ensure practice is safe for all children. The setting has a robust procedure for recording accidents. Leaders work with other agencies to protect the health and well-being of children. The setting supports parents to understand how to protect their children's health and development. Staff hold valid paediatric first-aid certificates. The manager ensures that recruitment and induction procedures protect children and promote good safeguarding practice.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide focused feedback after observing practice in order to develop teaching even further.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY222717
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10234646
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	52
Name of registered person	Portico Day Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP900806
Telephone number	0151 430 8005
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

Portico Lodge registered in 2002. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. One member of staff holds a level 6 qualification. All others hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Natalie Myatt

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk. They discussed the curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector and shared what they enjoy doing in their nursery.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector carried out a joint observation together before discussing the impact practice had on children.
- Parents and carers shared their views about the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager.

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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