



# St George The Martyr Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	203635
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 June 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Lisa Paisley
<b>Setting Address</b>	St George's Church Hall, Ongar Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9EE
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<b>Registered person</b>	St George the Martyr Pre-school
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St George The Martyr Pre-School is run by a committee. It opened in 1980 and operates from St George's Church Hall in Brentwood. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.15 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 29

receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine staff. Seven of the staff, including the managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is currently attending training.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where effective hygiene practices are maintained. Children learn about suitable hygiene routines through washing their hands appropriately, such as after using the toilet and before snack time. Children have access to hot and cold water, soap and paper towels. However, after messy play children wash their hands in a bowl of water without soap increasing the risk of cross infection. Most staff are first aid trained, this results in children receiving good care and attendance in the event of an accident or the need to administer medication.

Children's awareness of the benefits of healthy eating is well promoted at snack time as children are offered a range of fruit, vegetables and a variety of breads. They learn why some foods are better for our bodies than others through daily discussions and planned topics. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the session and children are able to help themselves independently. Staff maintain clear written records for each child to ensure their individual health and dietary requirements are met.

All children enjoy good opportunities to engage in physical activities that support their whole body movements. Children use a wide range of tools and equipment to promote their small movement skills, such as threading activities, magnetic games and puzzles. As a result, children are making good progress in all aspects of physical development and their skills are challenged appropriately.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The provision is warm and welcoming to children, ensuring they feel safe and settled in the pre-school. Staff have very good measures in place to ensure that risks to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors, are minimised. For example, clear arrival and departure procedures, ensure children are safe while at the pre-school. Formal risk assessments are effective in ensuring that potential hazards to children are minimised, for example the main entrance is secure with an alarm to alert staff and fire exits are clear, ensuring children can exit safely in the event of an emergency. Staff have a good awareness of how to organise space, furniture and equipment effectively to enable children to move freely with independence between

activities and different play areas. Consequently children feel confident within the setting and are safe and secure.

Children benefit from using a good range of toys and play equipment which are maintained to a high standard. They enthusiastically select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Resources and play equipment are organised at child height, allowing children to self-select promoting their independence and choice. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through regular fire drills and by gentle reminders from staff, for example, going down the slide safely and holding scissors appropriately.

Children are protected by staff who have a very good awareness of child protection procedures and know how to put these into practice to safeguard children's welfare. Staff inform parents of their role and responsibility in protecting children. This reassures parents of their child's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and are happy and settled due to staff relating to them sensitively and providing a range of activities which are interesting and stimulating. Staff have developed warm and effective relationships with the children, enabling them to feel secure and develop a strong sense of their own self-worth. They learn through the range of activities that staff offer, these include sand, painting, small world play, construction and play dough. Themed resources allow children to develop their role play, for example, the home corner.

The younger children are confident and are making good progress. However, staff are not yet using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan learning opportunities to support and encourage the development of the two year-olds who attend the pre-school.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use the Foundation Stage curriculum soundly to plan a balanced range of activities to promote the six areas of learning. Planning covers all the elements including differentiation and evaluations. Children's developmental progress is supported by an effective key worker system and staff use early years profiles to record children's individual achievements and progress. The structure of the session allows children to choose activities and work at their own pace, however, the organisation of snack time interrupts their play and limits learning opportunities.

Children are keen to participate and are eager learners in the broad range of activities provided. They are encouraged to independently select resources and initiate their own activities and games. Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other upon arrival. They work well together and understand the importance of co-operation during group activities. For example, they negotiate with each other and agree turn-taking when engaging in activities such as cars, play

dough and card games. Children are confident speakers, using words effectively to convey their experiences both real and imaginary. More able children are able to phonetically sound out their own name and other single words. They have access to a range of age-appropriate books and enjoy story time with the staff. They have regular opportunities to use tools and resources to develop their early writing skills. Children have a secure understanding of early maths through everyday routines and discussion, for example, counting chairs at snack time and nursery rhymes. More able children are able to confidently count to 10 and beyond. Free play with dough and structured cooking activities teach about weight and measuring. The good selection of puzzles help children with shape, space, size and patterns.

Children have good opportunities to find out about the natural world and enjoy exploring their environment, for example, outings to the discovery centre, including a train journey. They are developing a sound awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment such as V-tech computers, remote control cars and telephones. Children talk with interest about their own lives and learn about the work of people in the community through planned topics which include 'where I live' and outings to the local farm. Children explore media and materials through colour-mixing, combining paint and textures and using collage materials. However, they have limited use of a sufficient range of creative activities, including sand and water. They enjoy music and movement sessions where they practise their singing and move their bodies rhythmically. Children's physical skills are sufficiently promoted, however, the outdoor play activities could be further developed to provide focussed learning opportunities. Children develop small motor skills as they use tools for cooking, mark-making and water play.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the setting which helps them to feel happy and secure. Children benefit from having access to a range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity and from participating in activities which promote their awareness of different festivals and cultures. For example, Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Easter and Father's Day. Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, other people and the world around them through planned activities and visitors to the setting such as the local community police officers.

Children settle well at the provision as staff work well with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. Staff seek information from parents before a child starts at the nursery regarding their interests and abilities. This enables staff to build on and develop children's previous knowledge, understanding and skills. Currently there are children attending who require additional support and who speak English as an additional language. Staff work effectively with parents and other professionals to meet each child's needs. Children are well behaved due to the staff good understanding of managing children's challenging behaviour positively and with confidence. Children are well supported by staff who use praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem. They develop a positive sense of sharing and respect for one another and they increasingly take responsibility for their own actions.

Their understanding of right and wrong is promoted well and sensitively by staff through gentle reminders to care for their environment, the equipment and each other. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good, this contributes positively to the well-being of all children in nursery including those in receipt of nursery education. Children benefit from their parents being actively involved in their learning. For example, all children have a homework pack which provides activities for parents and children to complete at home. New parents receive an information booklet and newsletters are sent out informing them of regular events in the pre-school. This results in ensuring parents are fully informed with regard to their child's developmental progress, topic work and any events or celebrations.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is supported by the secure organisation at the setting. Staff make sufficient use of available play space both indoors and out. As a result, children are able to move freely and independently around the setting accessing a range of activities which support their play and learning. Documentation and records are comprehensive and are suitably organised. Secure vetting procedures are in place however, the pre-school are not fully aware of the National Standards Addendum October 2005.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The pre-school has three supervisors who work closely together having clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Staff are effectively supported within their role and they are given regular training opportunities to further develop their professional practice. However, there are currently no systems in place for staff to monitor the quality of education that is offered. All the staff are professional, enthusiastic and committed to providing children with positive early year's experiences and learning opportunities. However, increased play and learning opportunities could be achieved by ensuring children are fully involved throughout their time at the pre-school. Children are provided with secure continuity of care

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to improve safety within the premises, amend policies relating to the lost and uncollected children and child protection and improve the organisation of the session to ensure a balance of both free play and focussed activities to help support children's learning. The group have minimised all potential risks to children within the setting and all the required policies have been amended. The organisation of the session allows children to make choices and planned activities appropriately support children's learning.

At the last education inspection the pre-school was asked to; ensure activities

covered all the six areas of learning, develop children's personal independence and social skills, create opportunities for children to write independently, link sounds and letters, develop children's understanding of problem solving, group children effectively allowing them to work at their own level and ensure greater availability of key activities, for example, the climbing frame. The group have taken positive steps to ensure all areas of the curriculum are offered to children on a daily basis, there are activities encouraging children to write independently and problem solve, children are sufficiently grouped in helping them learn and a greater range of activities are available to the children. Consequently, they are able to access all the six areas of learning effectively.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection. On 15 March 2006 concerns were raised about action taken following a minor accident. The complaint related to the National Standards 7 and 12. The registered person was asked to conduct an internal investigation and provide Ofsted with relevant records and documentation. A full account of the incident was received and the provider was given an action under National Standard 7, to ensure parents sign the accident book. A satisfactory response to this action was received on 20 April 2006. In addition the provider has taken steps to improve the arrangements for the collection of children. The provider continues to be qualified for registration.

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### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- minimise the risk of cross infection by ensuring children have suitable washing facilities to wash their hands after messy play
- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three years by using an approach similar to the 'Birth to three matters framework'
- update knowledge and understanding of the National Standards Addendum October 2005; this relates to vetting procedures.

## **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review the structure of the session to improve children's play opportunities and ensure they are involved throughout their time at the pre-school
- extend the range of creative activities for children and develop focused play opportunities for outdoor play
- develop a system to monitor and review the quality of nursery education offered.

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