



St. Philips Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	315248
Inspection date	26 September 2006
Inspector	Ann, Theresa Flynn
Setting Address	St. Philips Community School, Westbrook Centre, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 8UE
Telephone number	07960 428 892
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Registered person	St Philips Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St. Philips Playgroup has been registered since 2001 and is situated within St. Philips Community School in Westbrook, Warrington. The playgroup operates from two rooms and there is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play.

The playgroup is open from 12:30 to 15:00 on Monday, and 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during term time only.

A maximum of 16 children aged from two to under five years may attend at any one time. There are 31 children on roll, all of whom receive funding and who attend for a variety of sessions across the week. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are three staff who work with the children all of whom are suitably qualified to level three in child care. The provision receives support from Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a very good range of physical activities both indoors and outdoors, providing them with regular access to fresh air. They enjoy a wide range of resources including a slide, stilts, which children enjoy trying to balance on, age appropriate bikes and cars, balls and children particularly enjoy water play outdoors, watering the grass with their watering cans, thus promoting children's health, well-being and enjoyment.

Children generally stay healthy because staff follow good hygiene practices. For example, cleaning tables prior to snack time and overseeing children to ensure they wash their hands prior to snack. However, children share water for hand-washing purposes following activities, thus compromising their health.

Children are well nourished through the provision of healthy snacks, which includes a choice of fresh fruits or toast, which children freely choose. Children benefit from easy access to drinks, which they access themselves, thereby helping to develop their personal independence and providing children with healthy choices.

Staff promote children's understanding about healthy eating by discussing, for example, too much sugar being bad for teeth. Visitors, such as the dentist, help children to understand about oral hygiene and the importance of cleaning teeth.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, safe indoor and outdoor environment. The environment is bright and colourful with displays of children's work around the walls, many varied resources are available at child height, which children freely access, thereby providing a welcoming environment. Space is well organised into planned areas, which enables children to enjoy varied choices from a balanced range of continuous provision.

Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe. For example, by being involved in regular emergency evacuation practices and through staff reminding children of safety issues. For example, sitting down whilst sliding down the slide and not sliding too fast, not to run and to sit properly on chairs, thus developing their knowledge about safety.

Within the setting, risk assessments are undertaken on a regular basis with hazards being recorded for any required action. The outdoor area is safe and secure ensuring children are able to play and investigate outdoors whilst remaining safe.

Children are adequately protected because staff are well informed through written child protection procedures. Staff understand the correct procedures to follow in the event of concerns about any child in their care and about any possible allegations concerning staff; therefore children are appropriately protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Activities and opportunities provided for children are good. A varied, stimulating and interesting range of age appropriate resources and activities are available. These include a quiet area in which children freely access books. Water play outdoors, craft activities, painting, puzzles and story time, all of which provide interest, stimulation and challenge to help children progress and enjoy their time at the setting.

Children access activities both indoors and outdoors wandering freely to choose from the good and varied range of resources available. Staff are well deployed offering appropriate support and guidance without over-directing children's play. The children outdoors initiated their own imaginary play involving ghosts. This involves developing their social skills, language and imagination, with staff available to offer support and guidance when necessary, thereby maximising children's learning experiences. Activities are adapted to provide age-appropriate play opportunities, thus providing an inclusive environment, which meets the individual needs of all children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children benefit from the staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, and effective teaching helps children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are questioned and challenged by the staff, who ask appropriate questions to help children to think and to learn at their own pace. For example, discussing stories to ensure children understand the context of what is being read and asking questions, such as how many carriages on the train, to help children to develop concepts of number, thus helping them to learn.

Children are encouraged to be independent and are able to make their own choices for learning. The curriculum is sufficiently matched to children's interests and there is an appropriate balance between child-led and staff-led activities. For example, children choose where they wish to play either indoors or outdoors and whether they wish staff to become involved within their play.

Children are developing confidence through appropriate praise and encouragement. For example, when being praised for their efforts during their Humpty Dumpty card creations or when using manners, such as 'please' and 'thank you' during snack time, thus helping to develop confidence and self-esteem. Children are socialising well as they learn to wait their turn for the slide, thereby developing an understanding of how to share. Children's personal independence is developing as they learn skills, such as accessing their own drinks, learning to hang up their own coats and by learning to put on their own aprons for painting.

Children are developing their literacy skills as they listen to story time, beginning to understand text is read from left to right. They are developing their understanding of mathematics, as they count the carriages on the train. Children are learning about the world in which they live by undertaking visits to places, such as the woods, which provides children with good hands-on experiences and opportunities to develop their understanding of their environment. Children's creativity is developing well through good experiences, such as painting, gluing, construction and imaginary play within the dolls house, all of which provides good and varied opportunities to develop children's creativity and imagination.

Planning is clear and identifies how all six areas of learning are to be developed. However, the present planning system does not clearly show how children's assessments are used to inform future planning. Assessments and observations of the children are undertaken to ensure children are appropriately supported and challenged. However, the system of recording children's progress does not always provide a clear picture of their progress or clearly identify the next steps in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing their awareness and understanding about diversity. They have access to a good range of resources, including books, computer games and various small world figures, which reflect diversity. Children undertake activities involving cultures and festivals from around the world, such as Chinese new year and Dwali, which help children to understand about the needs of others. Discussions with staff help to re-enforce children's learning and understanding of the diverse society in which they live.

Children are valued, included and have their individual needs met appropriately. Children's all round needs are catered for and all children are included within the setting. Activities are adapted when required to ensure an inclusive environment is provided. Staff work consistently with parents and other carers to provide continuity of care, thus working in the best interests of the children.

The behaviour of children is good. They accept and work with age appropriate strategies, praise and encouragement, to promote positive behaviour and to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately as they learn to take turns and share. For example, when using the slide and when sharing the dolls house.

The partnership with parents and carers is good.

Children's individual needs are well met because of the good relationships which have been established with parents. Information is shared through written policies and procedures, routines, newsletters, daily discussions and information about the Foundation Stage, which is provided for parents during a parents only day.

Parents are informed about their child's learning through regular discussions and reports, thus keeping them well informed. A system for seeking parental views regarding children's learning

at home is maintained. Newsletters informing parents about up and coming topics helps to involve parents in their children's learning, thereby helping to develop a strong link between home and pre-school.

Parents comments about the professionalism of the staff, the excellent opportunities provided to children, the very good information they receive on children's progress and about how approachable the staff are, confirms the positive relationships staff are developing with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. Time and space is well organised so that children are able to independently play and relax within the setting. Children easily access varied resources both indoors and outdoors, which helps in promoting their all-round development. Time is effectively organised to cater for structured, free play and snack times, therefore meeting children's individual needs.

Adequate procedures are in place for the recruitment of staff, who are trained to level three in childcare. Good staff-to-child ratios are consistently maintained, thereby ensuring that children receive good levels of support to help their individual developmental requirements.

Documentation is maintained in line with National Standards and therefore helps in promoting the safe and efficient management of the setting. Thus, the welfare and care of children is maintained. However, there is no record of complaints or concerns maintained.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good.

There is a clear understanding of what children are intended to learn; staff are able to identify areas for improvement and are clear on their roles, responsibilities and deployment areas. Curriculum planning is in place and is implemented, delivered and monitored by all staff. Regular staff meetings, in which monitoring of the nursery education is discussed, ensures the provision of nursery education is effective in helping children progress.

Staff identify their own training needs and access appropriate training as required. However, there is no formal staff appraisal system in place and no system of recording the professional development of staff.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection two actions relating to documentation were raised and two recommendations; one in relation to documentation and one relating to the organisation of resources.

Both actions have received attention; written parental consent is obtained prior to administering medication to children and a written medication record is maintained.

The child protection procedure complies with local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures and the procedure includes allegations against staff.

One of the two recommendations raised has received attention, resources have been reorganised to allow children free choice in their play. The second recommendation relating to identifying the next steps in children's learning and using these to inform planning has only partially been met and is therefore raised again following this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- ensure the good health of children is promoted by providing suitable hand washing facilities
- ensure records which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are maintained, especially in relation to the record of complaints

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):

- ensure the next steps in children's learning are clearly identified, provide a clear picture of children's progress and are used to inform future planning
- ensure the professional development of staff is effectively identified and promoted by implementing a formal staff appraisal system.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk