



St Peter's Under 5's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133990
Inspection date	05 December 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Davies
Setting Address	St Peter's Church Rooms, First Turn, Wolvercote, Oxfordshire, OX2 8AQ
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	St Peter's Under Fives Pre-School
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 satisfactory. 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 Peter's Under 5s Pre-School has been open for over 35 years. It is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents whose children attend the pre-school. It operates from a hall behind St Peter's Church, in Wolvercote, on the northern outskirts of the city of Oxford. An enclosed outdoor play area is provided. The pre-school reflects the local mixed area of the village of Wolvercote itself and north Oxfordshire.

The pre-school opens on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during school terms. Sessions run from 09:00 to 12:00. There are currently 23 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 11 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs three part time staff, of whom one has an early years qualification at level 3. Regular support is received from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy plenty of daily fresh air and physical exercise when in this pre-school. They decide for themselves when to go outside and eagerly anticipate the moment the door opens. Children develop their physical skills well. They gain a sense of space, either through running around on the grassy area or by pedalling tricycles along the paths - avoiding too many collisions with their friends. Children acquire greater control over their bodies being able to balance, for example, along a row of tyres and crates.

Children eat healthy and nutritious snacks, which are supplied by parents. Staff establish children's individual dietary needs through discussions with parents before children start in the pre-school; they meet these needs appropriately. They make sure parents understand snacks must not contain any nuts or meat products. Children eat and drink according to their needs. They cannot decide for themselves when to take their snack, so some children may be hungry earlier.

Suitable policies, detailing procedures to be followed to prevent the spread of cross infection, are in place. These are not always followed closely, however, so children's health is put at risk. Children do not always wash their hands thoroughly and use individual towels before eating, for example.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use a suitable, child friendly environment, which staff work hard to maintain. Children choose from a wide range of well presented and good quality resources, each day. These are stored methodically so that items can be quickly located. Children make full use of both the indoor and outdoor areas. They use other resources when visiting the nearby primary school's nursery area. When doing so, children learn the fundamentals of how to cross roads safely, under the vigilant eyes of staff. Staff use a 'walking rope' on such outings in order to keep children safe.

Children are kept secure both inside the playrooms and when playing outside. They remain under close supervision at all times. Staff undertake daily informal safety checks but there is no system in place to make sure such checks have been carried out, which puts children's safety at risk. This is particularly important in premises which are shared with other users. Suitable fire prevention precautions are in place. Staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding the children, although not all staff update their knowledge and understanding of child protection regularly.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their stimulating experiences. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a suitable programme of activities. Children learn through worthwhile, practical activities using all their senses. These support children's all round development well. They understand how sessions run and this helps them feel settled and secure. Children make many decisions for themselves but their growing independence is not fully supported. They cannot help themselves to aprons, for example, because these are too difficult for them to access. Children develop warm relationships with staff. They often show their feelings, such as delight in singing or in hearing real instruments played.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage. They use their knowledge to plan a suitable broad, and mostly balanced, programme of activities. These interest children and, as a result, children now make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creativity, particularly well. They learn about their locality and both the natural and made worlds around them. They explore a wide range of media and materials freely, discovering how to use tubes of glitter-glue, for example, and mixing paints to achieve just the right shade of purple for a 'robot' painting.

Staff support activities well giving children lots of individual attention. They encourage children to talk about what they do, so that the playrooms are a buzz of activity and chatter. Funded children now speak confidently in large groups. They benefit from frequent conversations with staff, which help children develop their vocabularies, including those learning English as an additional language. Children listen well, particularly to clearly read and well chosen stories, which captivate their interest. Older children recognise their names, sounding out letters accurately. They develop their hand and finger skills well through using tools and materials. They gain an effective pencil grip. They do not use these emerging mark-making skills sufficiently in the daily routines.

These routines are used well now, however, for children to practise early mathematical skills for real purposes. They count the number of adults present during circle time, for example. Children now count spontaneously in their play. Staff plan worthwhile adult-led activities to promote other mathematical ideas, such as 'shape'. They do not encourage children to solve problems sufficiently. Staff observe children regularly and begin to use assessment to plan children's future activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children receive a warm welcome into this pre-school. Staff know them well, treating them as individuals so that their particular needs are identified and met. The favourable adult to child ratio means that children often receive support on a one to one basis. This helps children learning English as an additional language. Some activities are not available to all children, as

they take place on one particular day of the week. Children behave well because they enjoy their activities and staff take a consistent approach to behaviour management. Children get on well together; they share resources well. They learn about their locality, visiting the school and church regularly. They begin to understand that families differ, some regarding Christmas as special, whilst others look forward to Divali or Hanukah. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the strong support parents give the pre-school. They enjoy singing to real instruments played by parents, such as the guitar and piano. Parents receive a particularly good range of information about what the pre-school offers their children. They are kept informed as to children's progress, although they are not fully encouraged to extend and support their children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

This is an improving pre-school. Since the last inspection many changes have taken place. The new committee and staff team, with good support from parents, are working hard to improve what is offered to the children. Staff show a clear commitment to gaining required qualifications. The committee chairperson and acting supervisor are clear about their differing roles. Suitable procedures are in place to appoint staff who are cleared as suitable to work with children. There is no system of staff appraisal, so that some skills are not updated regularly. Some use is made of the self evaluation form to identify the pre-school's strengths and weaknesses but monitoring systems are not yet fully effective. This means that some procedures are not always followed, so that children's health and safety is sometimes put at risk. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education are satisfactory. The committee chairperson and acting supervisor share a clear vision for the future of the pre-school. Staff willingly take training courses to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, although their individual training needs are not always identified owing to the lack of an appraisal system. They take, and act on, advice from outside professionals, being willing to try new methods, such as a different planning system, to improve the quality of nursery education. Staff work well together to provide a suitable learning environment for the children, overcoming many of the difficulties of shared accommodation. The developing close relationship with the nearby school nursery benefits the children and aids the transition from pre-school to the next stage in their education.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection for day care, there were three issues to be addressed. These related to security of the premises, meeting children's individual needs and developing the staff's ability to manage children's behaviour.

The pre-school has a new door security system so that visitors cannot access the premises unchallenged and children are therefore safeguarded. Children's individual needs are now met

and activities provided are suited to their stages of development. Staff have undertaken training in behaviour management. As a result of both these actions, children now behave well.

At the last inspection for nursery education, the provision was judged as inadequate. There were five key issues to be addressed. These related to staff understanding of the Foundation Stage and the planning, provision and evaluation of a suitable learning environment for the children. Staff were required to assess children effectively so that they are provided with appropriate challenges in their learning.

The appointment of new members of staff, some of whom have appropriate early years qualifications, and the willingness of staff to undertake appropriate training, has resulted in improved understanding of the Foundation Stage, its planning and evaluation. A broad and mostly balanced programme is now offered to children. Children are challenged appropriately. They are assessed regularly and the information gained begins to inform planning for their future learning.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- instigate effective monitoring systems to ensure health and safety policies and procedures are followed by all who work or volunteer in the pre-school, in order to further promote the good health and safety of children
- implement a system of staff appraisal to identify staff training needs (also applies to nursery education)
- further extend opportunities for children to develop their independence (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- provide children with regular opportunities to problem solve and to use their emerging mark-making skills more in the daily routines.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk