



St Peters C of E Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306497
Inspection date	07 December 2006
Inspector	Janice Linsdell
Setting Address	Thurstaston Road, Heswall, Wirral, Merseyside, CH60 4SA
Telephone number	0151 342 9909
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Registered person	St Peters Pre-School 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 Peter's Pre-school Playgroup has been open since 1968. It is run by a management committee of parents and operates from a building situated in the grounds of St Peter's primary school in the Heswall area of Wirral. Children have access to a play room, entrance area and fully enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open each week day from 09.05 to 15.15, term time only.

The pre-school is registered to provide full day care for a maximum of 22 children at any one time and there are currently 55 children aged from two to under five years on roll, of whom 29 receive funding for nursery education. The majority of children live within the catchment area for St Peter's primary school.

The pre-school employs six staff including the manager, of whom three hold appropriate qualifications in early years. There are two members of staff working towards a recognised qualification. The pre-school has achieved recognition through the Effective Early Learning Programme quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy good health. Staff consistently implement effective health and hygiene procedures to minimise the risk of cross infection, such as washing hands, disinfecting tables and keeping the premises clean and tidy. Children know they have to wash their hands, such as before eating their snack, and the well illustrated hand washing instructions remind them how to do this properly. Children are involved in keeping play areas clean and help with small tasks, such as brushing up the sand. Most of the staff are trained in first aid, which ensures children's accidents are dealt with appropriately.

Children receive a healthy diet and enjoy snacks, such as cheese and crackers, fresh fruit and vegetable sticks. Snack time is self service and well organised to promote children's independence. For example, children are fully involved in setting the table and preparing their own snacks. Snacks are made available throughout the session, so children can choose when they want to eat. Children have a choice of milk or water to drink, and also have independent access to drinking water to keep themselves refreshed.

Children benefit from having free access to outdoor play for most of the session. They show much excitement as they play in the well equipped outside play area, using wheeled toys to manoeuvre themselves around obstacles. They show good balancing skills as they travel forwards and backwards on the 'go bus', and demonstrate strength and coordination as they peddle the tandem bike. Staff organise fun activities to promote exercise and encourage children's fitness, for example, inviting parents to take part in physical education sessions with the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and very stimulating environment. They use a wide range of good quality resources, which staff ensure are kept safe, clean and in good repair. Resources are well organised and clearly labelled, so that children can access equipment easily and safely. The premises are safe and staff make sure all exits are secure, so that children are unable to leave unsupervised.

Children are kept very safe on the premises and on outings because staff provide close supervision at all times. Staff carry out daily safety checks, conduct regular head counts and continually check areas to ensure children's safety and security. Some staff are trained in health and safety and there are detailed risk assessments in place to ensure hazards are quickly addressed. However, fire drills conducted on the premises are infrequent, which restricts children's understanding of fire evacuation procedures.

Children develop good awareness of their own safety because staff regularly remind them about hazards and dangers as they play. Well planned activities are organised to help children learn about keeping safe, such as visits from the police and the school crossing patrol.

Children's safety and welfare is well safeguarded because staff demonstrate secure knowledge of their role in keeping children safe from harm. Some staff have attended training to enhance their understanding of child protection issues. Detailed information, procedures and leaflets are available to ensure that prompt action would be taken to protect children from abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy their time in the group because they are actively involved in a wide range of fun and exciting activities. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum very well to plan a variety of experiences to promote children's enjoyment and development. Children relate very well to each other and adults and good relationships are clearly evident. Staff are very caring and pay close attention to children's needs. They guide and support children's play and learning very well; spending time talking and listening to them. This enables children to feel happy, settled and well cared for.

The focus of the session enables children to make plenty of independent choices in their play. They freely access a variety of good quality toys and equipment to support their play, and most children are confident to help themselves to the many resources on offer. Children particularly enjoy the sand and water play. They show much interest as they enjoy sensory experiences, such as exploring with 'gloop', and they use their imagination well as they wrap presents in 'Santa's workshop'. There are many photographs and attractive wall displays around the room, which help children to feel valued and to be proud of their achievements.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide many valuable experiences so that children make good progress across the six areas of learning. Children settle quickly into the group and show a willingness to learn. They behave well and develop positive relationships with staff and peers. Children show confidence, patience and good concentration skills as they perform for parents and carers in the Christmas nativity. They are learning to be independent, for example, as they make decisions for themselves, help with small tasks, and see to their own personal needs. Children's vocabulary is developing well as they engage in some lively conversations with each other and adults. They are beginning to listen to each other, such as at circle time, and enjoy sharing books with staff. The well resourced writing area is popular and children spend long periods practising their writing skills, and target activities help to improve children's letter formation, such as when making Christmas cards.

Children are able to recognise numbers, for example, as they spontaneously point out the number of the bike they are riding during outside play. They are beginning to use mathematical language in their play and enjoy taking part in activities where they count, sort and match different objects. The designated listening centre means that children access some good quality resources to promote their understanding of information technology. They explore and

investigate in their play as they take part in wood work activities and as they participate in experiments using water. Children build and construct using a variety of objects, such as large wooden blocks, milk crates and junk modelling.

Children show good coordination skills as they move confidently indoors and outside. They access various equipment to promote their balancing and climbing skills and show good hand-eye coordination when handling small tools, such as scissors, shape cutters and glue spreaders. They enjoy physical exercise and show much excitement during outside play. Children's creative skills are well promoted. They express themselves through a variety of activities, such as crafts, imaginative play and music. They show excitement as they choose items from the singing sack and enjoy singing songs as they use the musical instruments. They have good opportunities to use their imagination because staff create interesting role play areas both indoors and outside, such as a hospital, a hotel and the ice cream shop.

Staff support and guide children's learning very well and demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children develop. They ask meaningful questions and provide detailed explanations to extend children's learning across all areas. The environment is carefully organised to promote all areas of learning both indoors and outside, enabling children to make plenty of independent choices. Due to space restrictions, this should continue to be monitored to further enhance children's access to resources, whilst avoiding the risk of the room appearing too cluttered.

Staff plan effectively so that children receive a broad and well balanced curriculum that offers a wide range of interesting and practical activities. They incorporate 'child initiated' ideas into the planning to accommodate children's interests, and carry out daily observations so that any gaps in children's learning are quickly identified and addressed. Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate children's development and accurate records are kept of children's progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very much valued and treated with courtesy and respect, and their contribution to the group is positively encouraged. Children learn to appreciate their own and other cultures because staff provide a variety of activities and experiences to promote positive images of diversity. For example, they enjoy outings in the local area as they visit the library, village stores and the church farm, and they celebrate different cultural festivals, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff act as good role models in promoting good behaviour, which means children learn to be polite, helpful and kind to others. They help children to learn the difference between right and wrong, and to develop negotiation skills, such as when sharing resources. Staff consistently use a good level of praise and encouragement to help children feel good about themselves, and children enjoy choosing stickers as rewards for their efforts.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff develop positive and friendly relationships with parents and regularly discuss issues relating to the children's care and education. Good

systems are in place to keep parents well informed of issues, such as parents' evenings, newsletters, informative notice boards, and a welcome pack which includes details of policies and the educational programme. Feedback from parents is very complimentary, particularly about the staff and the overall positive learning experience for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff are experienced, enthusiastic and work very well together as a team to ensure the group runs efficiently. They show a commitment to the children in their care and make sure the session is well planned and organised so that children have some very good opportunities to play, learn and develop. Staff are well deployed and have clear roles within the group, which enables children to receive good quality care, support and attention.

All documentation to promote children's care and welfare is readily accessible, well organised and accurately maintained. There are effective policies and procedures in place to support good childcare practice, which are regularly reviewed and updated. In the main, these are very well implemented by staff, with the exception of conducting fire drills.

Leadership and management is good overall. The manager is qualified, knowledgeable and very experienced in childcare. She acts as a good role model for staff and shows a commitment to continual improvement, for example, by working hard to achieve quality assurance accreditation. Effective procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of staff and the safety of children. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the educational provision and children's progress in their learning. Staff have annual appraisals to identify and address their developmental needs and they have good access to ongoing training to support them in their role.

Staff are supported by a management committee of parents who undertaken various roles to assist the smooth operation of the group, such as administration and fundraising. However, there is a lack of information regarding roles and responsibilities for committee members, and members are not taking prompt action to complete necessary checks to ensure their suitability.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, some issues were identified as areas for improvement which related to; the deputy achieving a recognised qualification; promoting equality and inclusion; obtaining consent for emergency treatment, and the procedures for outings and allegations made against staff.

Almost all of these actions have been completed appropriately. A detailed action plan has been devised to promote inclusion, accessibility, staff training and resources. The policy regarding children with learning difficulties and disabilities has been updated and some staff have attended training in this area. Parents have provided their written consent for staff to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. Effective procedures for outings are in place and staff conduct risk assessments prior to any outings being provided. The child protection policy has

been updated to include procedures to be followed should any allegations be made against staff. These actions have improved children's care and welfare and ensures their safety on the premises. However, the deputy is still in the process of achieving a recognised qualification.

At the last education inspection, staff were required to show how activities are adapted to meet children's differing needs. This has been well addressed as staff have benefited from attending the 'Birth to three matters' training, and use their knowledge to plan effectively for younger, as well as older children.

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 complaint 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):

- make sure fire drills are carried out more frequently
- improve arrangements to ensure all committee members promptly complete required vetting procedures, and consider developing information regarding roles and responsibilities for the committee.

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):

- continue to monitor play areas and resources so that best use is made of available space, to further enhance children's accessibility and independent choices in their play and learning.

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