



St Peters Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY224997
Inspection date	30 January 2007
Inspector	Anne Georgina Phillips
Setting Address	Pedmore Lane, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 0SW
Telephone number	07817 459275
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Registered person	St Peter's 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 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 is managed by a voluntary management committee that is made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in 1985 and has operated from St Peter's Church Centre in the Pedmore area of Stourbridge, West Midlands since 2002. It uses two rooms and the associated facilities within the centre which are fully accessible to wheelchair users. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 42 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:00 during school term times only. There are currently 57 children aged from two years six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 39 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the surrounding local area. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting holds the Growing Together Quality Assurance Award. It receives support from a local authority teacher mentor and is also a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. They make healthy choices and are learning about leading healthy lifestyles. Children are well-protected from infection because staff consistently implement good daily routines and procedures. The premises are clean and well-kept. Children learn about simple good hygiene practices that teach them how to keep themselves healthy. As well as washing their hands carefully after using the toilet, they help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses and put them in the covered bin independently. They also carefully wipe their hands on wet wipes before helping themselves to a snack. There are good procedures in place to inform parents about infectious diseases and exclusion periods to ensure that children do not attend when they are ill thus protecting other children from infection.

Children are very well supervised to prevent accidents but that there are good procedures in place to care for children if this happens. All except the newest member of staff holds a first aid certificate and detailed records are kept of any accidents and how these are treated which are signed by parents.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating because they are provided with nutritious snacks appropriate to their individual needs. They make healthy choices from pieces of rice cake, apple, carrots, cucumber, and savoury snacks at the cafe style snack time. They help themselves to milk, water or diluted juice when the cafe is open for the first half of the session but when this is cleared away and every child has had their snack they are no longer able to help themselves to a drink if they are thirsty.

Children's individual dietary needs are well known, catered for and respected. Details of children's specific dietary needs including any allergies are confidentially displayed inside the store room with photographs of individual children so that all staff are readily informed.

Children have daily opportunities to be physically active. When the weather is fine they use the paved area directly off the main hall to ride their wheeled toys enthusiastically. Children are able to pace their activities by choosing quieter or more active play. A quiet area with soft cushions and a good selection of books provides a haven for them to play quietly if they're tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are very safe and secure. They enjoy stable care that protects them from harm well. Children are cared for in a clean, spacious, and well kept environment. The premises are well

laid out to be attractive to the children who come in confidently with their parents and settle to their chosen activity quickly. Staff give parents and children a genuinely warm welcome so they quickly develop a sense of belonging and feel at home. Access to a second room enables the group to divide the children into smaller groups so that children's needs are better met. For example, groups of younger or older children are able to use this small room to listen to stories or develop their play with more intensive support from staff.

Children use safe and suitable toys and equipment that is stimulating and challenges them. They access a very large and varied range of toys and resources which are attractively presented to them either on the floor or on low-level tables so they can access them easily and make ready choices about their play. Resources are very appropriate to children's ages and stages of development so that children quickly become involved in and persist well for their chosen activity. A very good quality low level computer and trolley with a member of staff on hand to provide support is very popular with the children.

Children are very secure because staff are vigilant and consistently implement very good security measures within the shared premises. Staff members are strategically placed as children arrive and depart quickly locking the external doors when parents have left. Children are always carefully supervised when using the shared toilets off the lobby and there are locks on the internal doors to ensure that no one enters the rooms where children are being cared for unannounced.

Children have good opportunities to learn to keep themselves safe. They take part in regular fire and emergency drills. They calmly respond to the signal to line up and go outside. Records show that this is a regular occurrence to ensure that children are well-protected in case of an emergency and are learning to think and act safely. They learn that it is important not to touch the berries on the plants when they're out on their walk with the staff. They talk about the dinosaur who ate berries and had a poorly tummy and carefully wash their hands when they come inside.

Children are well-protected by adults who are suitable and vigilant and understand their role in child protection. There is a clear child protection policy and several staff have attended relevant training. Full local authority guidance is available on the premises for reference but this is not readily accessible to all staff in case of reference in an emergency potentially compromising children's well-being. There are very good procedures in place to ensure that those persons picking up children are suitable so that children are well-protected overall.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy varied, broad and interesting play experiences that help them develop and achieve well in line with their ages and stages of development. They quickly become happy and well-settled because staff sensitively settle each child gradually. No more than two new children start at any one time ensuring that staff can give children and parents individual attention. Children gain self-esteem when managing things for themselves such as selecting their own snack and pouring their own drink in the cafe. Older children are becoming competent

at putting on their own coats. They see paintings that they have made the week before attractively displayed in the hall promoting their sense of belonging and worth.

Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and overall learning. There are lots of opportunities to be active as well as to enjoy messy activities such as sand, play dough, painting and exploring the feel of the wet noodles. They enjoy a circle time when all the children feel involved and valued.

Children are confident to make decisions, explore and investigate. They notice the stone faces on the church. They listen to the birds and look out for the flowers that have started to open. They notice the noise coming from the other room and say it sounds like thunder. They respond well to the routines of the setting, for example, when taking turns with the ride-along toys outdoors, or waiting a turn at the computer.

Children respond well to adults who are interested in what they do and say and frequently give explanations about what's happening or what is going to happen next which helps children feel secure and develops their understanding and thinking. For example, the reasons for unusual noises are explained. Staff encourage children to think ahead by putting an extra tissue in their pocket for the walk.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress and achieve well overall. Children are interested and keen to learn because they access a range of stimulating activities and well chosen resources that are readily accessible to them. These are play based with good opportunities for children to make choices about their activities in free play. For example, the sand, play dough, water, role play, and floor play opportunities give lots of open-ended experiences for children to develop and practise their developing skills.

The close-knit staff team have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, stepping stones and early learning goals. They are all involved in the planning process so they have a good understanding of the learning objectives for the children. Systems for planning, observation and assessment are thorough and generally well used to ensure positive outcomes for children. Daily plans are prominently displayed and used by staff working with the children. These include all the required elements and are evaluated by the staff group at the end of each session. Staff make the shared premises as accessible, attractive and child-friendly as possible but the older or more able children would benefit from more frequent opportunities to initiate and develop their own thinking and learning.

Staff have a very good knowledge of individual children, their needs and abilities. An effective key worker system ensures that each child's skills and abilities are noted on a regular basis and recorded in their individual profiles. Photographs and written comments as well as examples of children's work help to ensure that they are a meaningful and attractive record for parents as well as informing other members of staff. Their observations are used effectively to inform the next steps in their learning. Children are involved in the daily organisation of the group, such as helping themselves to their own snack and looking after the environment by tidying away the toys which builds their confidence and self-esteem. Close working with parents and other agencies ensures that children with special or additional needs are sensitively supported and plans drawn up to support each child effectively.

Children make good relationships and behave well. They are confident and develop independence in choosing their activities and managing their personal care. They are developing good self-esteem and respect for others. They benefit from activities and resources that help them to develop an understanding of diversity and learn about the wider community. They develop very positive attitudes to learning by quickly becoming involved in the activities and resources available, concentrating and persisting. For example, children have several goes at fastening the zip up on their coats and beam with pride when they succeed which builds confidence, high self-esteem and a very positive attitude to learning. They respond really well to the fire drill routine standing very quietly and listening intently to the instructions. They learn to respect others, for example, by learning not to kick one another when they're sitting close together at story time. The older children play cooperatively together in the role play area carefully negotiating who is to act out each role.

Children are very keen to communicate. They readily share their news at group times. They listen and respond well for example when answering their names at registration and listening for instructions such as at fire drills. They confidently talk about the fire station and tell me about the danger of the berries. They are becoming competent at making marks and are starting to recognise the print carries meaning when carefully looking at books, finding their name cards or when starting to write their own name.

Children are beginning to see connections and relationships in numbers, shapes and measures. They count the stone faces on the church and comment about the big and little windows. Their mathematical skills are developed through lots of daily routines such as finding the date for the date board and action rhymes, for example, 'Five little pigs'. Older children competently say when one has disappeared and there are four left. They count with their fingers when doing action rhymes so they're starting to solve mathematical problems for themselves.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills both when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. There is good space to move freely, and they are learning the importance of fresh air in exercise on daily walks or when playing outdoors. They are becoming confident in a wide range of skills and activities including developing their hand eye coordination. They competently use the mouse on the computer to build their own snowman, jump down the steps with two feet outdoors, and carefully cut out the Chinese money pockets. They can stand very still for the fire drill and can walk slowly in pairs when out on their walk.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them through first-hand experiences in an interesting environment. They have opportunities to explore, observe, and investigate. They are observant and interested. They look to see if the plants are starting to flower yet which helps them develop a sense of the seasons and changes that are happening around them. They enjoy imaginative opportunities to find out about small creatures when carrying out a bug hunt outdoors. They build and construct with a wide variety of objects in free play and planned activities but there are limited opportunities to access resources to initiate their own activities at some sessions.

Children are able to be creative, and express their own ideas and thoughts through a good range of messy play activities such as free painting, role play, and imaginative play. They use

their senses and imaginations to create their own work and to indicate their feelings. Children make lovely colourful individual pictures of Chinese dragons using thick green, red, black and gold paint. They learn to move expressively when acting out what it feels like to be a Chinese dragon. They enjoy singing songs accompanied by a piano which helps them to recognise and explore how sounds can be changed. They act out their role in the '10 Green bottles' enthusiastically.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children make positive relationships, engage in positive behaviour, are involved in what is going on around them, and gain in self-confidence. Resources reflect people from the wider community which helps them to value diversity. Themes relating to other cultures are used in an imaginative way over an extended period to explore what it feels like to be a member of that culture or community. For example, the theme of Chinese New Year is continued over a whole half term and gives children the opportunities to make their own dragon and use it in a special dance. They try their very own Chinese writing.

All children are valued and included. The setting has very inclusive practice. The high adult child ratio positively supports the inclusion of all children and ensures sensitive one-to-one support where necessary to meet children's individual needs. Close liaison with parents and other agencies ensures that they make very good progress.

Children make choices and decisions. They develop independence when using the cafe and managing their personal hygiene. They carefully carry their drinks and food to the table, and concentrate and persist well at their activities. They behave well as they learn to consider others and what is expected of them. They respond to routines well. They competently tidy away so they learning to care for their own environment. They learn to share in taking turns with the toys and equipment for example when playing outside or with the computer. They work harmoniously with others when playing in the sand, with the play dough, or playing in the role play area. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Very good relationships are established and maintained between staff and parents. Parents make very positive comments about the care their children receive. They receive good quality information about the pre-school. There is an attractive notice board in the entrance lobby which includes up-to-date pictures of the staff so they can easily identify who is the key worker for their child. They have ready access to the group's operational plan which includes written operational procedures. There are regular newsletters which include details of current learning themes and 'Stay and play' sessions are offered so that parents have an opportunity to be actively involved in children's learning in the group. An active parent committee and questionnaires to all parents ensure that their views are sought and acted upon.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The committee and staff team work closely together to ensure that the pre-school is well resourced and staffed. Policies and procedures are updated regularly, staff are appraised and self evaluations carried out and acted upon. There are effective procedures for employing appropriately skilled and vetted staff and ensuring that their induction and training needs are met thus promoting positive outcomes for children. The Growing Together Quality Assurance award has been undertaken and achieved demonstrating a commitment to providing quality care and education for children. Staff and committee are currently working together with the host venue committee to improve the outdoor storage space and make better use of the outdoor area.

Staff have a clear sense of purpose, and a commitment to continual improvement. They are well qualified and experienced. They are proactive in updating their knowledge and skills by attending a range of training courses to enhance children's learning and specific needs. The pre-school has undertaken its own internally self evaluation with action plans which had been followed through and implemented to continue to improve its practice.

The close-knit staff team communicate well with one another about children's needs ensuring that these are met very effectively, especially those with additional needs. They interact skilfully with the children implementing a consistent and caring approach. They use space and resources well to create an interesting and inviting environment for children. A high adult: child ratio ensures that is always good support for their individual care and learning needs. They are consistently well-deployed to ensure children's security, health and safety.

Comprehensive and detailed information about children and their individual needs is readily available to staff, well kept and up-to-date. A newly acquired locking filing cabinet will significantly improve the availability of reference documentation. Staff use policies and procedures well in practice to promote positive outcomes for children but some of these are not always easily found by all the staff, for example, the child protection file. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

A recommendation relating to children's care and two others relating to nursery education were made at the last inspection. Good progress has been made overall in these areas. The pre-school was asked to expand its child protection statements to include procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff. This has now been addressed ensuring that children's welfare is safeguarded. The pre-school was also asked to improve the way it plans to extend and challenge children with a range of different abilities and how it uses assessment to promote the next steps in children's progress. Consistent key workers now carry out frequent observations of children's progress and by keeping careful records of this identify areas of children's learning that needs extending. They use this information and a very good knowledge of individual children, their abilities and learning styles, to sensitively support and extend children's individual learning by adapting planned and spontaneous activities effectively.

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

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 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):

- improve children's access to drinking water
- ensure that all reference documentation is readily accessible on the premises

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):

- improve the opportunities for children to initiate and develop their own ideas

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