



St Josephs RC Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206154
Inspection date	26 January 2007
Inspector	Justine Ellaway
Setting Address	Mill Hill Lane, Derby, Derbyshire, DE23 6SB
Telephone number	01332 372453
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Registered person	St Joseph'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 satisfactory. 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 Joseph's Roman Catholic Pre-School opened in 1989. It operates from a self contained building within the grounds of St Joseph's Roman Catholic School, Derby. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time from 09.00 to 11.30, on Wednesday from 12.30 to 15.00 and runs a lunch club every day except Wednesday from 11.30 to 13.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 51 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of them, 38 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community and priority is given to children that are baptized Roman Catholic. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 members of staff. Nine of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted in the setting as there are good hygiene procedures. For example, it is a clean and tidy environment, staff wipe down tables before and after snack, clear up any spilt sand during the session. Children are asked to wash their hands before snack and after toileting. They are beginning to understand why they are washing their hands, a child says 'because we touch our food'.

There are a high number of staff who have a first aid qualification and a rota clearly identifies the first aider during each session. There is a clear medication policy in place and appropriate records are maintained. As a result children's good health is fully promoted when they are ill.

The risk of infection is suitably minimised and the good health of children maintained. Children have access to tissues to wipe their nose and know where these are kept and to put these in the bin when they have used them. They have paper towels in the toilets for hand drying, although they currently use bar soap for hand washing. There is a clear sick child policy in place to exclude children who are ill or infectious.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to be active and have physical exercise, which promotes development of their physical skills. They go out daily and have lots of space to move around freely. Staff set up large play equipment indoors when the children are unable to go outside on the playground. This provides lots of challenge for younger children and staff let the children try to do things for themselves with encouragement. Children play outside with sit and ride toys, they have lots of space to move around. They steer ably around others and pedal fast, and able to control the bikes well to ensure they do not slide down the slope of the playground. Children perform actions to a song, moving around carefully in quite a small space, keeping up with each other. They shake their feet and turn around ably. Children ably negotiate their way around the main pre-school room.

Children regularly use scissors and other small items such as pencils. They are developing good control when cutting out. Three year olds ably cut out pictures they are drawing. Children participate in activities that develop their knowledge and understanding of keeping healthy, for example, they try different fruits. Children talk about what clothes they need to wear when it is cold and that their body becomes hot when they exercise.

Children are well nourished. They enjoy a healthy snack, for example, apple, banana and orange. They drink water and can help themselves to this during the session if they are thirsty. Children sit together at snack time which promotes their social skills. Their independence is not fully promoted at snack time as staff sometimes give out snack and pour out the drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming environment. The room is very attractive for children when they enter as there is lots of bright and colourful child sized furniture. There is a very good selection of toys and resources laid out for children to begin playing. There is sufficient space for the number of children and it is very well organised. Each day there is a messy play area with different activities, for example, craft, sand tray and painting easel. There is a quiet book corner with a comfy sofa, a home corner and role play area, as well as space to play on the floor. Although there are close to the maximum number of children attending some sessions the layout of the room supports children in engaging in an activity without being disrupted by others playing nearby. Children show respect for the toys and resources when they play with them, for example, putting all the toys back on the car mat before moving on. They help to tidy away which promotes a sense of ownership.

Risks and hazards are suitably minimised within the pre-school. There is a clear risk assessment in place and a designated member of staff for health and safety who has been on recent training. Children's access to the kitchen is restricted by a gate to promote their safety. Children are signed in and out by their parents and a visitors book is maintained. There is a clear lost and uncollected child policy in place. The front door is locked during the session, however the door is not consistently supervised at the time of arrival to ensure children's safety when they are dropped off. Staff are vigilant when children play outside. Children learn how to keep themselves safe, they know how to ride around the playground safely and are given very clear reminders by staff during the session.

Children's welfare is mostly promoted in relation to child protection. Staff are very clear on the different types of abuse and possible signs and symptoms. There is an appropriate written policy in place. However, a clearly defined procedure has not yet been developed to deal with an allegation against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the pre-school and are very happy in the setting. They begin playing with the toys and resources when they arrive and separate from carers easily. Children are comfortable and confident in the environment. They are continually engaged in play. Staff are very effective at observing the children and then joining them at an activity talking to them about what they are doing, stimulating their thinking and learning. There is a very calm atmosphere. As a result children focus on what they are doing and spend a long time playing at an activity without interruption, either in small groups or on their own.

Children are involved in a good range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and learning. For example, free play, art and craft, mark making, role play, home corner, physical play, story and singing. It is a varied session to provide stimulation and enjoyment. Activities are well resourced, for example, when playing with play dough, children have rolling pins, cutters, baking trays and small tools. The 'Birth to three

matters' framework is used well to provide a range of activities for children under three years. The planning clearly shows how activities are linked to the aspects within the framework.

Children are becoming confident to make decisions, explore and investigate. They choose what they want to do during the session. They talk to others about what they are doing, they ask questions of staff and ask for help if they need it. Children frequently make up their own games, two boys play with the cars for a long time making up voices and making each other laugh, telling a story whilst they play.

Staff are skilled practitioners who support children's learning and development. They are effective at questioning, explaining and modelling. They get down to the children's level and play with them rather than supervise them and this is consistent across the staff team. Activities are differentiated according to age and ability to allow all children to participate. Staff support less able children or simplify their questioning and extend questioning for more able children.

Staff regularly complete observation assessment records on children either individually or through a focus activity where they assess all children. Systems have yet to be developed for under threes as they have only been attending for a few weeks and only attend one session.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are very clear on the Foundation Stage. Planning meets the needs of the children who attend, with differentiation depending on ability. Appropriate challenges are set for children during activities, staff encourage them to try things for themselves. For example, a child cannot stick an envelope down, so a staff member discusses how she might do this and she decides on sellotape. The staff member then talks her through how to do it. There are appropriate systems in place to monitor children's progress and all staff take responsibility for their own key children. However, a couple of the development files are not up to date. Very good use is made of an extra member of staff giving dedicated time for observation and working on a particular skill if a staff member feels it is necessary for their child.

Good methods are used to help children progress. Staff give very clear instructions and introductions to activities and use effective questioning, explanation and modelling. A staff member skilfully introduces an activity to a child to assess her number recognition and fully engages the child which she enjoys doing. At a game of lotto a staff member expertly involves the children with outlining the expectations, for example, asking them the rules of the game. A child explains them to the other children before they begin playing. Use of time and resources is good. Staff use signs, for example, to signify sitting still and use props for singing. Areas are well resourced to provide variety and are set up before the activity commences, meaning that children do not have to wait. As a result children engage in play for long periods of time.

Children are confident in approaching staff and talking to others. They are keen to learn, they sit quietly at register time and answer their name and wait until every child has answered (all twenty-three of them). All confidently say 'I'm here' when their name is called. Children show care and consideration for others. Two children try to help a child whose zip has got stuck on his coat. Children take turns with the resources. They understand the routine of the session,

when a staff member announces it is tidy up time they help to tidy away, four children roll the car mat together. Children line up well when going outside, they wait patiently whilst all the children get ready.

Children are developing good independence in self-care skills. They get their own coats on and off and hang them on their peg. They wash their hands independently. They get tissues and when they have used them they throw them in the bin.

Children are becoming confident and fluent speakers. They take turns in conversations, use lots of language when they play and role play and make relevant questions and comments. Lots of children talk to the inspector during the first session, one girl asks her if she can tie her belt on her skirt and asks her to tie it 'really tight'. The inspector asks if she wants it in a double bow and she says 'yes'. When the inspector has tied it she says 'that's really good'. Children regularly use language to pretend play in the home corner and other areas. They also talk about what they are doing. A three year old explains what she is doing in her drawing, she says what colour she is using and what she is going to draw.

Children listen with good attention to stories and enjoy looking at books. They independently use the book corner and look at books on their own or ask staff to read them. Children are developing letter recognition and writing skills well. Lots of children make good attempts at writing their own name using recognisable letters. They are encouraged to write their own name on their work when they do pictures. A staff member supports children who are not able to form recognisable letters on their own by doing dots they can follow. Children make good attempts at linking sounds and letters, a large number of children are able to say the first letter of their name.

Lots of children ably count by rote to high numbers and do this regularly. For example, at register time more able children are able to count to twenty-three as they count how many children are present. Children recognise numbers and have regular opportunities to do so. More able children recognise numbers nought to nine when placed randomly on a table. Staff introduce calculation regularly to the children, for example, at register time looking at groups of boys, girls and adults and then adding them together. Children are able to recognise shapes and use appropriate size language during play. A child identifies that one box is bigger than the other and that one box is small. Children regularly do threading looking at patterns.

Children ably use words to describe things, for example, a child describes the sand as feeling 'goeey'. Children have sufficient opportunities to learn about how things work and exploring different textures, through activities such as floating and sinking and playing with corn flour and water. Children show curiosity about how things work, a child has two calculators side by side and is attempting to get the screens to show the same things. When playing outside children go over to the bench that has frost on it. A staff member talks to them about it and they try to make it melt with their finger.

Children have some opportunities to design and make selecting their own resources through planned junk modelling activities. However, some of the art and craft activities are pre-determined where resources are selected by staff and children are expected to make a specific thing. Children enjoy using programmable toys. A child comes in and turns the computer

on and starts using a programme on her own. Children have sufficient opportunities to learn about a sense of time, as they talk about things that happened previously, for example, at the weekend and on their holidays. Staff use a calendar at circle time and talk about the seasons. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through activities on different festivals, for example, Hannukah.

Children regularly experiment with colour as they paint or draw, and participate in regular planned activities looking at colour mixing and more complex colours. Children enjoy joining in with singing. They recall their favourite songs and join in with the actions. Children ably play musical instruments with control. During an activity a three year old ably plays the cymbals quietly as well as loudly. Another child marches as she plays the instrument and is in time with the beat.

Children use lots of imagination when they play in the home corner or with the role play resources. They make up stories, use different voices and act out roles. Two children play in the sand tray and pretend they are making different foods. They explain they are making a stew and say that it has tomatoes and leeks in it.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met to ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the children who attend and spend a lot of time getting to know them by observing them. For example, a staff member identifies that a child who has English as a second language needs another drink as she is fiddling with her cup. There is a clear settling in policy and parents are encouraged to visit with children before they start and are told who their key worker is.

Staff are proactive in working to support children to settle and integrate fully into the setting. They invited an external support worker in to support a child who's first language is not English. As a result of the meeting staff have devised some pictures of everyday words and written the child's first language and English underneath. They have also shared a tape of the nursery rhymes played in the session so the child can listen to them at home. A member of staff has been learning some words so that she can communicate with the child during the session.

Children become aware of wider society through a good range of toys and resources including jigsaws, dolls, books, play food from different countries and posters. Resources reflecting disability and gender including disabled play people and books that show females in 'traditional male occupations' such as a mechanic are available for children to play with. The setting also celebrates different festivals. As a result children develop an understanding of the wider world.

Children with special needs are given appropriate support to integrate them into the setting. The special needs co-ordinator is clear about her role and has had training. She demonstrates a sound understanding of the issues and is proactive in identifying and addressing any concerns.

Children understand responsible behaviour. Children behave very well, they share and take turns and listen to staff. Staff use simple clear instructions to children to explain the

expectations, for example, when a child is being silly at the snack table, the staff member explains that 'we are eating now, we can play afterwards'. Children know the 'rules' for example, they line up quietly when they are going outside and they tidy away when they are asked. Staff are very effective at diffusing situations with younger children regarding sharing toys. A staff member quickly intercepts and offers other toys for them to play with and any fuss they may have made is quickly forgotten. Staff are also very expert at not giving the children time to get restless and as a result misbehave. Children are waiting at the snack table whilst a child comes from the cloakroom. A staff member engages them in a song whilst they wait. Children receive lots of appropriate praise and encouragement. As a result children are happy in the setting, they make lots of friends and engage in play for long periods of time. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children receive consistent and appropriate care. Parents get regular and useful information. Staff talk to them at collection times and there is a 'what we did today' board as well as regular newsletters. Parents are encouraged to be involved in children's learning by choosing books to take home and read together.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are well informed about their child's achievements and progress, because they are invited to termly meetings where they can meet with their child's key worker on a one to one basis. They are able to comment and contribute to the discussion and note anything they want about their child's progress. Staff talk to the parents at the end of each session. Parents are encouraged to become involved in children's learning through the regular newsletters and taking books home to read. There is some brief information about the Foundation Stage in the welcome brochure, although there is a display of the areas of learning with photographs in the main room.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by adults who are vetted, promoting their safety. All staff have undergone suitable checks and the setting is in the process of updating Criminal Records Bureau checks for staff who have worked at the setting for a number of years. However, the regulator has not been kept up to date with regards to changes to the management committee to ensure suitable checks are undertaken. Additionally, the regulator has not been informed that one of the persons in charge has returned to the setting. This is a breach of regulation within the national standards as the regulator has to be informed of all changes to the registered person and person in charge. However, the risk to children is minimised because checks have been previously undertaken on the person in charge and the committee members do not have unsupervised contact with children.

Appropriate recruitment procedures, along with ongoing supervision and communication meetings are in place to ensure that children are cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff meet before the session to discuss any issues and what is happening. They also receive regular newsletters to keep them informed of any changes. Staff receive a clear and useful induction sheet that covers all of the relevant information they need for their role, including an informative sheet stating how they are expected to interact

with the children. Staff regularly attend relevant training and share this with others which is good practice.

Children are cared for by a friendly and committed staff team. Staff are well deployed throughout the session and children benefit by receiving lots of support and attention. They communicate well with each other during the session and support each other in tasks. Action points are regularly identified and worked on to bring about positive improvements to the care provided for children. For example, staff look at different ways of ensuring children enjoy physical activity when it is raining. An additional member of staff each session enables a focused approach to observing and recording children's development and identifying any development issues and working on these.

Good organisation of space, time and resources provides a varied and fast paced session where children are constantly stimulated and do not become restless. There is a clear and detailed operational plan and all relevant policies and procedures are in place. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the procedures and the routines. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of funded nursery education is good. There is clear leadership of the setting from both of the persons in charge. They demonstrate a clear commitment and focus to provide the best possible quality of care and nursery education for children and are constantly assessing strengths and weaknesses. An action plan details changes they have made or intend to make. They are not afraid to change something if it will make a positive impact on the children and have recently changed the system for planning. Staff are empowered by being given responsibility and feeling part of the setting. Systems are in place that help to monitor and evaluate the Foundation Stage, although they are not always effective in identifying when development records are not up to date.

Improvements since the last 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.

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 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):

- ensure that children's safety is promoted at the time of arrival
- ensure that there is a clear procedure to follow if there is an allegation of child protection against a member of staff
- ensure that the regulator is notified of any changes to the registered person or person in charge.

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 that systems for monitoring the effectiveness of the nursery education identify any gaps in children's development records.

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