

St Paul's Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY346119
Inspection date	31 July 2007
Inspector	Jane Mount
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Registered person	Three Rivers District Council
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Paul's Playscheme is run by Three Rivers District Council and opened in 2007 although it had previously run from another site in Bedmond. The playscheme now operates from St Paul's School at Hunton Bridge, Langleybury. The facilities used include two classrooms, a small kitchen and toilets, the school hall and associated facilities. A fully secure outside play area is available and is used on a regular basis and includes the school playground and playing fields.

The playscheme is open during the Easter and summer holidays from 09:00 to 16:00. It is registered for 32 children aged from five years to under eight years and there are currently 97 children on roll. The playscheme also run a holiday club for children aged over eight years and they use adjoining facilities within the school site. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

St Paul's Playscheme has five staff who work at the setting, all of whom have relevant skills and experience of working with children and all hold appropriate play work qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's dietary needs are met well. Parents are asked to provide packed lunches and snacks for their children while attending the holiday playscheme and healthy eating is encouraged. Children are able to freely access drinking water throughout the day with jugs of fresh cold water and cups always available to ensure children do not become thirsty. Staff regularly remind children to have a drink particularly when the weather is hot or after physical exercise. Children's special dietary requirements are effectively met with recording procedures in place so all staff are aware of children with specific allergies and therefore children's health is safeguarded. Children learn about healthy eating through discussion. For example, they talk about the contents of their lunch boxes and which foods are particularly good for the body such as oranges being good as they contain vitamin C. Also, children know when it is hot they must drink plenty of water or they may become unwell and that it is important to keep the food in their lunch boxes cool with ice packs so the food stays fresh and good to eat.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Staff implement the setting's clear and effective health and hygiene procedures in a consistent manner and consequently children's health is protected. For example, staff ensure the toilets are monitored throughout the day to ensure they stay clean and stocks of soap, toilet paper and paper towels are always available to children. Correct accident and medication recording procedures are in place to safeguard children's health and priority is given to ensuring staff have up-to-date first aid knowledge through regular training. Children are aware of the importance of good hygiene and know they must wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. When asked children enthusiastically demonstrate how they wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry them carefully with paper towels before throwing the paper towels in the bin. This is regularly reinforced by staff although there are some missed opportunities to explain to children why it is important to have clean hands. Children also know it is important not to use dirty cups when having a drink of water and know to put their used cups in the silver bowl. Therefore, the risk of cross-infection is minimised and children remain healthy.

Children have regular opportunities to take part in a varied range of activities and play experiences to develop their physical skills. For example, they delight in playing 'Sharky, Sharky' in a nearby field or using the school playground to further develop their climbing skills or to practise their ball skills while playing tennis. In the school hall they enjoy playing a variety of games including parachute games or a particular favourite which develops their listening skills and encourages them to work together as a team and involves discovering who has the missing keys. Staff encourage children to develop a positive attitude towards exercise. For example, they discuss who has walked or cycled to the playscheme and stickers are then put on a wall chart to show how many children have participated over the week. Children have opportunities to rest and relax and some enjoy laying on the large floor cushions and chatting with friends after playing energetic games outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where the risk of accidental injury is minimised through the completion of risk assessments. A comprehensive risk assessment is

completed before the playscheme starts and then daily site checks are carried out in the morning before the children arrive and again at the end of each day. All areas used by the children are included in the checks and additional risk assessments are carried out for specific activities such as when using the bouncy castle. Consequently, children are safeguarded and remain safe. Children are not put at risk because appropriate safety precautions are taken. For example, staff are deployed well to ensure children are closely supervised so they cannot leave the premises unsupervised and no person can gain unauthorised access to the playscheme.

Children are learning how to keep themselves and others safe because staff raise children's awareness of potential hazards. For example, at the morning welcome staff discuss ways of staying safe while at the playscheme such as always telling an adult where you are going and listening carefully to adults when they are talking. Also, staff remind children about the dangers of the sun and the importance of wearing suncream when the sun is shining and to wear a sun hat or stay in the shade. Children learn how to stay safe in an emergency with all staff and children familiar with the fire safety precautions through discussing and practising how to get out of the building quickly and safely.

Children have access to a varied range of safe resources which are developmentally appropriate for the ages of the children who attend the club. Resources help to create an accessible and welcoming environment and staff oversee the activities and offer support as needed. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded because staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection. Priority is given to ensuring all staff have current and up-to-date information and all have attended child protection training and the leader, who is also the designated named person responsible for child protection has attended an advanced course. A child protection policy is in place which is informative and which staff are fully aware of. They have a clear understanding of child protection issues including correct recording and reporting procedures if they had a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children experience a varied range of activities and play experiences which develop their confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, this enables children to confidently access the play and learning experiences that are available and develops their sense of belonging. They are happy and settled and talk about the holiday playscheme with pride. When asked children say they have a great time and it is fun playing with their friends. Staff plan a programme of activities which is flexible and children's preferences are always taken into consideration. The playscheme likes to focus on children's interests. For example, there is an ideas box available for children to contribute their ideas for activities they would like to take part in while at the playscheme. Children's independence is promoted and they are encouraged to use their initiative as they are able to freely make choices in their chosen play. Children play co-operatively and feel confident to play independently as well as in small or large groups. Staff ensure children are purposefully engaged and are on hand to support them as needed which enables children to be more confident and play more effectively.

Children develop a sense of achievement as they keenly take part in art and craft activities. They enjoy making arm bands which are to be part of their Roman costumes for a carnival procession they are all to take part in and children proudly show the shields and swords they have already made. Children's work is valued with some finished pieces of art work are displayed on the classroom walls and special lego models are saved and displayed for all to see. Children's communication skills are fostered well with staff skilled at extending children's language. For

example, when playing games with children such as 'Tumbling Towers' staff ask children open-ended questions and listen to what children have to say. Children are attentive and self-assured, regularly asking questions and show high levels of interest in what they do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and with equal concern and all children have equal access to the resources and activities available. Staff ensure they are aware of and able to meet any specific needs a child may have through discussions with parents. Children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others is promoted through the range of resources and activities they are able to take part in. For example, children enjoy creating and making Roman costumes ready to participate in a carnival procession based on the theme of a Roman celebration of Spring known as 'Ludi Florales'. Children also have opportunities to learn more about the local community. For example, the local fire service has been invited in during the summer holidays for their themed week called 'fire'.

Staff work in close partnership with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met well. Parents receive information about the playscheme prior to it running and an informative noticeboard keeps parents up-to-date with most information. However, parents are not made aware of all of the setting's policies and procedures and therefore, parents may potentially not be fully informed to ensure their children receive appropriate care and support while at the playscheme. Staff talk to parents when they sign their children in and out and ensure all required information is shared. Parents have the opportunity to give feedback about the playscheme through the use of comment cards and parents spoken to at inspection were very happy with the quality of care their children receive.

Children understand responsible behaviour and play well together. They are learning to respect each other's feelings, share resources and take turns. Staff talk about acceptable behaviour and reinforce sharing and respecting others. Children are involved in making the 'rules' and these are displayed as a gentle reminder of positive behaviour. Each day behaviour is discussed at the morning welcome and children delight in confidently saying how they should behave when attending the playscheme. Behaviour is managed in ways which are appropriate to the child's level of understanding and in a clear and consistent manner so they know what is expected of them. Staff focus on positive behaviour and children are regularly praised by staff which develops their confidence and self-esteem. Children are taught to be polite to others and staff are good role models.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care, learning and play are positively supported and promoted through good organisation of space, resources, time and staff. Recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by staff who have relevant skills and abilities to do their jobs well. Children's welfare is protected as there are clear systems in place to ensure all staff working with children are suitable to do so. All staff have appropriate checks completed and any person not vetted would not have unsupervised access to children. Consequently, children are safeguarded and safe from harm.

Children's well-being and their safety is promoted because staff induction is in place and is effective at ensuring all staff are fully informed and able to implement the settings policies and procedures along with the National Standards. Regular staff meetings take place and staff training takes high priority which ensures children are cared for by staff who are knowledgeable and up-to-date with current childcare practices. Documentation for the efficient and safe management of the setting is in place and generally in good order. However, recording procedures for staff registers do not always accurately show staff attendance which potentially puts children' safety at risk particularly in an emergency. Children and visitors attendance is accurately recorded and show times of arrival and departure.

Children are supervised and supported in their play by staff who work well together as team. Staff are effectively deployed, know what their roles and responsibilities are and efficiently carry them out. Children are safeguarded as correct staff to child ratios are always maintained. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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 all of the setting's written policies and procedures are made available to parents
- review and improve systems for recording staff attendance in registers.

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