

# St Bedes Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	303482
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Deborah Unsworth
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Guild Hall, Leigh Avenue, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 6PD
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<b>Registered person</b>	Marjorie Constantine
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Bede's Pre-School was first registered in 1989. It operates in the main hall of St Bede's Guildhall in Widnes. The pre-school serves the local area.

The setting may care for a maximum of 20 children at any one time. There are currently 33 children on roll, including 21 in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five mornings and three afternoons a week during school term time. Morning sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 each day, and the afternoon sessions are from 12.30 to 15.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

There are four members of staff employed to work with the children of whom all hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives advice and curriculum support from the early years advisory teams within the borough.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and suitably maintained environment. They are protected from infection and cross-contamination through good hygiene routines. Staff have clearly established routines for cleaning surfaces, toys, equipment and when preparing snacks. Children gain an understanding of hygiene as they take themselves to the toilet and wash their hands with anti-bacterial hand wash without being reminded. Records of accidents sustained and medication administered are completed to safeguard children's well-being. All staff have current first aid training which ensures children receive appropriate treatment in the event of minor injuries.

Children are provided with healthy snacks which help to promote their good health. They enjoy the good variety of fresh fruit and vegetables such as carrot sticks, cucumber, pineapple, banana and apple. Snack time is a social occasion where children sit together comfortably. They talk about the 'juicy orange' and milk being 'good for your teeth and bones.' Staff are committed to keeping children healthy. They learn about foods and the importance of keeping healthy through very good planned activities, visitors and events. For example, health professionals visit the pre-school to talk to children about dental health and healthy eating. Children draw their favourite fruits, bring fruits from home to share with their friends and set up fruit and vegetable stalls in the role play. As a result the setting has received a 'Foundation Year Gold Award' from the local Oral Health Promotion Unit.

Children develop their large and small motor skills as they have regular opportunities to be physically active indoors. For example, they use their imaginations well and have good control of their bodies as they move like farm animals, balance bean bags on their heads, make road tracks, use bikes and move in lots of different ways to music. The setting does not have a designated outside play area. Children occasionally play outside in the grounds of the setting, although these activities tend to be spontaneous because the planning for outdoor is limited. Lack of planning means that children are not consistently set challenges to develop their learning outdoors, there are missed opportunities for children's learning to take place outdoors. Children access and gain awareness of their local environment as they sometimes go on walks, recording what they see, hear and smell. They have visited their local park, where children had lots of fun and fresh air whilst acting out the 'Bear Hunt' story. Children are beginning to learn that good practices with regard to exercise contribute to good health as they take part in the 'jogathon' in the setting's grounds to raise money.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a safe, lively and friendly environment. A parent's notice board with useful information, colourful posters, photographs of the children playing and children's work displayed creates a welcoming atmosphere. Children and parents are warmly greeted as they arrive. Children have space to hang coats and their own drawer to put pictures and other personal items. They benefit from enough space and suitable facilities indoors. The staff have worked hard to improve the environment for children. They have painted the premises and new furniture has been purchased. The room is generally well organised to provide different areas for play, rest and snacks. Children have a very good sense of belonging as they know the routine well, move around the environment confidently and express their needs and thoughts freely.

The very good resources in the pre-school provide age appropriate and stimulating play opportunities, which help children to learn and develop. Toys are clean, safe and well maintained, enabling children to play safely. There is some continuous provision, such as the book area and writing area where children easily and confidently select their own resources. Resources and equipment are generally accessible, as they are stored in plastic low level containers. However, these are not clearly labelled and children are not always encouraged to help themselves. In the main children play with toys and equipment that are set out by staff as they are more accessible.

There are good, effective systems for keeping children safe and secure. Regular risk assessments are conducted and safety equipment is in place. Children are well supervised by staff who are alert to their needs and any potential safety hazards. Children's safety and protection is of the utmost importance to staff. They attend appropriate training, have a comprehensive written policy and discuss health and safety issues regularly. Children have very good opportunities to learn the importance of keeping safe through planned activities and everyday routines. For example, visitors, such as the police, talk to the children about road safety and keeping safe. Staff talk to children during their play about the dangers of speaking to strangers and this is incorporated into role play. Simple rules, which are consistently applied by staff, such as no running inside and tidying-up, help children to take responsibility for their own safety.

The protection of children is maintained as staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of their roles and understand the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect. A written statement for child protection is in place and understood by staff. However it has not been updated in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staff have attended child protection training and a nominated member of staff takes responsibility for liaison with child protection agencies.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are motivated and interested in what they do. They are confident and keen to participate in activities. For example, they show good levels of involvement when working together to make a large collage of a house as they carefully cut pieces of paper to stick on the roof, draw the windows and make the doors. Staff support the children well throughout the session. They work alongside them and engage with them at a variety of activities and experiences which successfully enhances all children's confidence and learning.

Children confidently explore their environment. They have great fun dressing up in multi-cultural costumes. One child dresses up and asks another child 'Do I look beautiful?' the child replies 'lovely' and excitedly asks a member of staff to help put on her chosen costume. Older children show off their writing skills as they visit the writing area, independently select pencils and confidently write their names on their pictures. All children access the book area, they demonstrate a love for books as they sit with their friends or an adult looking at books and listening to stories.

Children benefit from very good relationships with staff who show a genuine interest in their development and well-being. Staff are particularly skilled at acknowledging children's feelings as they work with them skilfully to deal with their emotions. For example, children who are new to the setting are given lots of reassurance to help them settle. Staff talk to them about different emotions using props, such as masks which show different feelings. As a result children are happy and quickly become confident and secure with staff.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good strides in their learning as staff have a very good understanding of the foundation stage and a firm grip on how children learn. Staff observe and assess all aspects of children's development and learning regularly and evaluate planned activities. They draw on these observations and assessments to extend activities and plan what children need to learn next. As a result staff provide children with a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum indoors which meets their individual needs and interests. Staff are enthusiastic in their teaching methods and conscientious. They ask challenging questions and promote lively discussions in everyday activities. Consequently, children have a positive attitude to learning, they are motivated and show great interest in activities, concentrating for long periods of time.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a key strength within the setting. They develop a strong sense of community as they form very good relationships with other children and staff, take part in fund raising events and talk confidently about their families and homes. Children are confident communicators as they listen carefully to each other's news, ask questions and express their wishes and desires. During play they negotiate and discuss ideas for play. Children begin to learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds letters make as they practice writing letters in their 'ABC' books and bring objects from home which begin with the 'letter of the week.' Practicing letter sounds is fun as all the children enjoy singing rhyming songs.

Children have good opportunities to count and learn simple calculations and number concepts in everyday situations and planned activities. For example, whilst completing a number puzzle one child says 'I'm doing numbers but I can not find the number seven,' another child steps in to help and both continue working together to successfully complete the puzzle. Children measure out ingredients when baking buns and measure how tall their plants have grown. They talk about size when they act out the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears.' Children have good opportunities to examine objects and living things to find out more. For example, they learn about the life cycles of butterflies and visit the local park where they see cocoons and butterflies. They plant seeds, watch them grow and record their findings. Children develop good skills in using technology as they use the computer confidently and independently.

Children's fine motor skills are developing well as they use pencils, paintbrushes, scissors, construction and malleable materials safely and with good control. Children experience an environment in which creativity is valued. They learn about colour, texture and shape in two and three dimensions as they use junk boxes, glue, paint and collage materials purposefully to make their models. Staff fire children's imaginations as they expose them to a good range of inspiring, meaningful role play situations, such as a shop, hospital, market stall, café and home area.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are treated with respect and as individuals. Their needs are known because staff discuss and record information about each child on entry to the setting. They make regular observations of children to find out their starting points for learning and then plan successfully for their individual learning needs. Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are supported very well. The staff work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure children's needs are met

and that they are fully included in the life of the pre-school. A comprehensive special needs policy and good recording systems ensure that the care of each child is appropriate.

Children learn to understand and have respect for differences as they play with a wide selection of toys and books which have positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. Children are learning to appreciate different cultures and religions through activities and lively discussions. For example, children celebrate different festivals, such as Divali, Christmas and Chinese New Year. Visitors come to share with children their own interesting experiences and articles from their homeland. A topic on 'Homes' helps children become aware of the wider world as they discuss, for example, where Eskimos live and draw their own homes.

Children are well behaved. Staff give them plenty of praise and support for their efforts and achievements. They act as good role models, showing respect and consideration for children and each other. Children are well mannered, kind, enjoy each others company and play happily together. They understand responsible behaviour, such as tidying-up, sharing and helping each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Warm and friendly relationships with parents contribute to meeting the children's needs successfully. Parents are provided with a variety of information regarding the setting, including information about the Foundation Stage and some information about current topics. Children benefit from the involvement of their parents in their learning as they eagerly bring things from home. For example, they bring items in which begin with the chosen letter of the week. Staff made rhyme books for children to take home so that they could practice with their parents in preparation for the 'rhymathon.' Children and parents take part in fundraising events, such as the annual 'Teddy bears picnic' which helps develop a good sense of community. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing through daily discussion, photographs, the sharing of children's work, their observations and assessment profiles. Parents attend an open evening before their child starts where information about the setting is disseminated. Parents speak highly of the provision.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. Good recruitment and vetting procedures and a suitable induction for new staff help to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. Children benefit from a consistent staff team who work very well together to ensure that they are provided with good quality care and education. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are deployed effectively to ensure that children have a good level of attention and support. The children benefit from the smooth running of the group and clear routines which make them feel secure.

The manager demonstrates a high level of enthusiasm and commitment, recognising her responsibility to support staff and develop their roles. Staff show a strong commitment to developing their knowledge and improving their practice through accessing regular training. They understand their responsibilities in developing children's learning. This maintains and improves the quality of care and learning for all children. Staff review the quality of their provision, practice and children's progress. They are mostly aware of their strengths and weaknesses and act on their own and others evaluations to make improvements. Staff demonstrate a very good attitude to continual improvement, to further raise the quality of care and education. They have much relevant experience and all are suitably qualified. This has a positive effect on children's learning and welfare.

The setting has an operational plan which includes all relevant policies and procedures. These are understood by staff and are consistently applied to ensure the service operates smoothly and efficiently. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well being is in place and is stored securely to maintain confidentiality. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to: develop risk assessments; include the contact details of Ofsted in the settings complaints procedure; keep a record of staff and volunteers induction training and ensure confidentiality when recording children's accidents.

Since the last inspection the provider has attended health and safety training and set up a system for recording risk assessments. Staff now conduct regular risk assessments and records of these are kept. Ofsted's contact details are now clearly displayed for parents and children's accidents are recorded on separate pages to ensure confidentiality. A new process for staff and volunteer induction training is currently being set up and records of induction on individual staff will be kept. These improvements contribute to positive outcomes for children.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to maximise everyday opportunities for children to develop mathematical ideas and solve practical problems. Also for children to have more opportunities to practice writing skills and for children's comments to be recorded and displayed on their artwork. The staff have made good progress in addressing the issues. Children now develop mathematical ideas and solve problems in everyday activities and routines. For example, snack monitors work out how many children need milk or juice at snack time and children often sing number rhymes. They predict how many jugs of water will be needed to fill the large container whilst playing in the water and how many people are left in the car when two are taken away. These improvements ensure that children are making good progress in their mathematical development

Children now have good opportunities to practice their writing skills. They independently access the writing area which has a range of writing materials available. A large chalk board and wipe board are used on a daily basis for children to make their mark. Children have good opportunities to write down their findings in role play. For example, they record what they see, smell and hear during the 'Bear Hunt' story. Children's comments are now recorded on their work. These improvements ensure that children are making good progress in their communication, language and literacy development.

### **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):

- update child protection policy and procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- review the organisation and accessibility of resources to promote children's independent learning.

#### 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):

- develop planning for outdoor play to ensure consistent and sufficient challenges are set for children's learning outdoors.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)