

St Pauls Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 109968
Inspection date 05 July 2007
Inspector Amanda Shedden

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Registered person St Pauls 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. Paul's pre school opened in 1981. It is a committee run group which operates in a church hall in central Winchester. The playgroup serves mainly the local area.

There are currently 44 children from two years to five years on roll. This includes 38 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with additional needs and is able to support children for whom English is an additional language.

The playgroup opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:00, Monday to Friday. On Wednesday children are able to stay for a lunch club opening until 1pm on this day.

Four full time staff work with the children. The pre school also operates a rota of voluntary parent helpers. Two members of staff have early years qualifications and another member of staff is working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to be independent in their self-care skills, such as toileting, after which there are individual towels to dry their hands on. Resources such as steps and toilet seats are available in the bathroom to support these skills.

Staff ensure that all areas of the pre school are clean and ready for the arrival of children. All the relevant documentation is in place to support children's well being. The majority of staff have a relevant first aid qualification ensuring that if a child were to have an accident they would be treated appropriately.

Children can easily access drinks during the session to prevent them from becoming dehydrated. Any allergies are recorded in the register and in the kitchen highlighting the children that should not have access to certain foods. Effective strategies are in place to protect children that have severe allergies and the small staff team are able to ensure that all food given is appropriate.

The organisation of snack times is not always organised enough to ensure that all children have equal access to the snacks that are on offer.

Children are able to enjoy the outdoors throughout the sessions. They have access to two outdoor areas where there are suitable resources to stimulate and interest the children. Children are able to take acceptable challenging risks in the pre school to develop their understanding of their own physical abilities. They can carry and stand on chairs to view what is going on in the kitchen, they freely access the climbing frame going up the slide and climbing over the top and they choose whether to wear footwear when indoors. They love the challenge of jumping off the beam and over foam bricks, excitedly counting how many bricks they have jumped over. Children are becoming competent in using tools and materials; staff support children in their learning, for instance, in how to catch a ball or ride a bike.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The pre school provides a welcoming environment for the children; staff greet the parents and children warmly discussing how they are today. Although the pre school have to pack away at the end of each session, they ensure that there are attractive and interesting displays, a mixture of commercial posters and the children's own work each day.

Effective systems to monitor the safe arrival and departure of children are in place; staff monitor the door and it is locked during the session to prevent access from unknown persons. Staff undertake risk assessments daily which ensure that any potential hazards for the children are identified and minimised. Staff and children practise the evacuation procedure regularly, ensuring they are fully aware of what to do if there was an emergency.

Children readily access the resources that are out that day. In some areas such as the role play and garden this is extensive, in other areas they are limited, preventing children from extending their play. Children are free to take resources wherever they wish, for instance, wearing the dressing up clothes and taking the dolls and pushchairs outside to continue the game. However, children have limited access to resources such as puzzles or games. Children are adept at using

resources in an imaginative manner, using the ropes to tie the bikes together to make a bus or using the earth mixed with water to cook with.

Children's welfare is protected due to the staff's understanding of their role; they are aware of the procedure to be followed and which agencies to contact if they have a concern over a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the pre school; they are secure in their environment and keen to take part in activities. Younger children are supported until they have settled, supported in choosing what activity they want to become involved in.

All children are encouraged to join in with all of the activities and staff make observations on the children linked to the Birth to three framework. The staff know the children well and are sensitive to their needs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children are offered a wide range of worthwhile experiences. Children are encouraged to initiate their own play and develop independence and responsibility. This is a new method of delivering the curriculum for the pre school. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage; however, staff have not fully developed their understanding of how to use the stepping stones to promote children's learning during child initiated play.

Children are confident, they concentrate and persevere at their chosen activity. Staff support children, talking to them for instance, when they are painting, talking about the colours and what happens when they are mixed. The children's spoken language is developing well and they confidently talk and predict what is going to happen at music time. They are competent and confident in expressing and communicating their ideas and own knowledge, they are happy to interact with their friends and staff.

Children do not have an opening structured period where they sit down at the beginning of the session. This means that they are not always aware of what activities are on offer, nor do they revisit previous learning, for instance, number counting, sound making or understanding which days follow which in the week. They do enjoy the end of the session where reward badges are given out and they sing songs or have a story.

The children have good opportunities to recognise shape, measurement and number during activities such as puzzles and games. However, the lack of a structured time to reinforce their understanding, means that children are not getting their learning reinforced.

Children have many incidental learning opportunities throughout the day and staff try to extend the child's learning. However, not all staff are clear of the next steps for individual children and therefore at times the more able children are not being fully extended and the less able are not being fully supported.

Children's curiosity and investigation skills are promoted by the staff, who encourage children to explore the world around them. The children relish being able to dig in the dirt and add water and other natural resources to 'plant' flowers or bake cakes. Children extend their play,

for instance, after making play dough inside they come outside with the recipe card and make their own using the earth and water repeating what they have seen inside. They carefully stir until it is all mixed up and then they cook it on the cooker in the play house.

Children enjoy the musical sessions, they stare in awe as a flute is played to them, they guess the tune played and then sing along accompanied by the flute. Children readily clap out the syllables of their name, each taking a turn on the drum. Children have fun using different parts of the body, listening carefully to the song so they know which part of their body to use. They are keen to show that they can remember which symbols link to which sounds, for instance, high and low sounds as they learn in a simple manner how to write and read music. They practise using different instruments that are introduced at these sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as staff have a good understanding of their individual needs treating each child with equal concern. All children are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities. Children who are not yet ready to join in fully are allowed time to settle until they are happy to select activities for themselves. Staff build on the children's self esteem by praising and encouraging them in their efforts. General discussion, topics of celebrations and festivals and resources that reflect diversity are in place and undertaken. Parents are encouraged to come in and share their knowledge of other cultures. This helps children become aware of a wider society, thus developing self esteem and respect for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with additional needs are supported through the key worker system, however, not all staff are fully aware of what support is needed for individual children which hinders children being able to participate fully in the activities. Most children's behaviour is good. They benefit from positive role models provided by the staff. Positive behaviour is praised and rewarded on a regular basis, staff praise the children regularly and they are awarded badges for their efforts. However, at times, staff do not intervene with children who display challenging behaviour and therefore at times the activity becomes disrupted and other children become distressed.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the strong relationships between parents and the staff. Parents regularly help in the group, they are informed clearly as to their role to ensure that they become part of the team whilst there. Parents state that they are very happy with the pre school, they are kept informed of their child's experiences and progress. Informative notice boards are displayed supporting the parents understanding of the activities their children are undertaking, who the staff are, the Birth to three framework and the Foundation Stage. All parents are given detailed information about the pre school explaining the policies and procedures.

Partnership with parents and carers of nursery funded children is good. Parents are given good information about the progress their child is making. They are offered two parent evenings a year to discuss their child's progress and development and they are aware that they can access their children's observation books at any time. Staff make time to talk to parents each day and they are able to talk to their child's key worker whenever they wish. Regular newsletters and notices are displayed informing parents of relevant events and topics planned which contributes to children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are able to freely access the two fully enclosed gardens and the main playroom. Children feel at ease within the environment and with the staff. Children's confidence and independence is encouraged as they choose from the range of activities, this is conducive to their play and learning. However, at times, the organisation of the sessions, for instance ,snack times does not ensure that all children are treated equally.

All required documentation is in place and all staff have a good understanding of the pre school's policies and procedures. Volunteers such as parent helpers are given clear explanations as to their role while in the pre school, ensuring that children are kept safe.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The staff and parent committee work closely together for the benefit of children. Management are proactive in ensuring that they are delivering the curriculum in an interesting and beneficial manner for the children. The new staff team work well together and know their key worker children well. They make observations on the children and when planning activities the key workers ensure that the planning reflects the next stage for the children. Time is made each week to ensure that all staff meet together to discuss planning, share ideas and discuss the children. Management encourage staff to undertake training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre school were asked to review their admissions policy, provide a wider range of resources to reflect disability and to update the complaints procedure. The admissions policy has been adjusted to allow children who are not fully toilet trained to attend. There are now posters and other resources that reflect disabilities. On the parents notice board there is now a poster with Ofsted's contact details and parents are given a copy of the complaints policy, ensuring they would know who to contact if they had a complaint.

At the last inspection to improve the Nursery education the pre school needed to allow children more opportunities to develop handwriting skills, learn about addition and subtraction, to have activities to enable children to develop their balancing skills and to use malleable materials. All areas are now included in the planning to ensure that children are now given regular opportunities to have experiences linked to these areas of the curriculum.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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.

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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 that all staff have regard to children with additional needs to ensure that their needs are being met throughout all sessions
- ensure that the management of children's behaviour is not detrimental to the other children and that all staff have a clear understanding of managing the more challenging children's behaviour.
- ensure that the organisation of the sessions including snack and lunch times benefit all of the children
- allow children easier access to the resources to promote their 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):

- increase staff's understanding of how to use the stepping stones to promote children's learning during child initiated play.
- develop a balance of adult led and child initiated play ensuring that all children are progressing through the Foundation Stage

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