

St Chad`s Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136076
Inspection date	22 January 2008
Inspector	Karen Louise Prager
Setting Address	St. Chads Church Hall, 172 Rodway Road, Patchway, Bristol, Avon, BS34 5ED
Telephone number	07812895114
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Registered person	The Trustees of St Chad's Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 Chad's Pre-school opened in 1968. It operates from the church hall in Patchway, near Bristol. It has access to the church, several shops, local schools and the library. It serves the local community.

It provides sessional and full day care for up to twenty six children aged from two to five years. There are currently 36 children on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during term time only. On Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday the group opens from 09:00 until 15:30 which includes a lunch club and on Tuesday from 09:00 until 12:45.

There are three full time and one part time member of staff who work directly with children. There are two staff who have an early years qualification to level three standard and two are working towards a childcare qualification. The setting receives support from an accredited teacher from the local school and from Children's Playlink.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is effectively promoted and children are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle whilst in the provision. They have frequent chances for exercise whilst playing in the spacious hall. There are further opportunities for children to play outside in an enclosed play space. Children move freely, safely and with pleasure effectively developing their sense of space. They have the opportunity to develop their physical skills whilst using suitably challenging equipment, including the tricycles and tunnels. Children also increase their fine muscle control and coordination through the safe handling of a variety of tools including paintbrushes and scissors.

Children begin to know how to keep themselves healthy. For example, a story about The Selfish Crocodile leads onto a discussion about the importance of cleaning teeth. They learn that fruit is good for them and pieces of fruit are offered for snack each day. Bright pictures of a wide variety of fruit are hung within easy sight of the children and are regularly referred to by staff. Parents supply the children's food for lunch times and the preschool has provided suitable information for parents regarding healthy eating. Children are able to help themselves to drinking water throughout the session and an organised snack time enables children to have a choice of milk or water. Individual preferences and allergies are discussed with parents prior to a child commencing in the setting. Allergies are known by all staff and specific procedures are in place to ensure that the individual children's needs are met.

Children develop their understanding of good hygiene practices as part of the daily routine. For example children become aware of the need to wash their hands prior to eating or after toileting. They benefit from the staff's awareness of first aid and their clear understanding of the correct administrative procedures to be followed if accidents occur or if children require medication. Staff follow generally effective procedures to ensure any risk of cross-infection is minimised. However, children are not consistently able to follow good practices when they wash their hands as the soap and towels are not always within reach.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and rest within premises that are clean, well-maintained, warm and welcoming to children and parents. The spacious playroom is set up, ready for children's arrival. Staff provide activities that promote all areas of children's development, so that they are well stimulated, can rest or be active as they wish, take refreshment if needed or be creative. Children's safety has a high priority within the setting. They benefit from the good range of safety measures that have been put in place to help promote safety and prevent accidents. For example, the premises are secure and daily risk assessments are completed for the premises. In addition, children are beginning to share responsibility for their own safety through practical activities, including taking part in emergency evacuation drills when a new child starts and tidying away resources after play, to help prevent trip hazards.

Children enjoy self-selecting craft items from low-level storage units containing a good range of clean, well-maintained resources. This free choice opportunity helps children to develop their independence, confidence and self-assurance within the provision. Children are also able to freely choose from the selection of other resources selected by the staff. They benefit from

the staff's knowledge of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of equipment. This ensures that the toys are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children and help them to develop skills in all areas.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff who have a secure knowledge of child protection issues, the correct procedures to be followed if concerned about a child and the need for confidentiality of information. Regular training is undertaken by staff who are able to effectively progress concerns should they arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children within the provision appear self-assured, relaxed and very 'at home'. They enter the preschool willingly; separate easily from their main carer and settle to a group time with their peers. The favourable adult to child ratio allows for individual support and this allows less confident children to feel secure in the preschool. The children learn and develop steadily through free play and group times and are supported by adults who understand their needs. The children within the setting are successfully developing their social skills. They are learning to share resources and to take turns, such as when waiting to wash their hands for lunch. Children demonstrate a sense of belonging within the preschool and quickly form positive relationships with staff and peers. They benefit from the established staffing team knowing the children well and having a good understanding of their differing needs. Children develop their independence and self-care skills through practical activities, such as tidying away aprons after use. They speak confidently in a familiar group and are able to concentrate whilst listening to others, such as when discussing the weather at circle time.

Children who are new to the setting receive good staff support to assist them in settling into the provision. Younger children, who have not reached the Foundation Stage, take part in practical, age appropriate activities. Staff undertake regular written observations and assessments of all the children and use the information to identify children's future development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The senior staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage and ensure that less experienced or unqualified staff understand the aims of activities and what children are expected to learn from them. They provide a varied programme of practical activities to support children's learning towards the early learning goals and all areas of the Foundation Stage are well supported. They manage children's behaviour very successfully; act as positive role models and support children in developing their independence, confidence and self-esteem. Children can play well on their own or with others. The staff know the children well, have a positive relationship with them and ask appropriate questions to make children think. They undertake regular written observations and assessments of the children and as a result, staff are aware of children's differing stages of development. Parents are regularly invited to meet with their child's keyworker and to contribute to planning their next steps of learning.

Children have a developing range of vocabulary and speak with increasing confidence with adults and their peers. They discuss their home lives and special occasions, such as a planned family outing. They are learning to recognise familiar words in print through practical activities, including finding their name cards at snack times. Children explore books, both spontaneously

and as part of routine group activities. Children have opportunities to practice their early writing in the craft area where they have access to various mark-making tools.

Children count and use numbers confidently, such as when counting the number of spots on a dice. They enjoy solving simple practical problems regarding the number of drinks needed, involving addition and subtraction, when prompted by staff. Children have varied and meaningful chances to identify and reinforce their awareness of shape through activities such as discovering that the cylindrical magnet block can roll across the floor. They enjoy considering how to join pieces of track together to form road and rail lines.

Children become engaged when using scissors to cut wool into pieces and are able to construct in different ways. They manipulate tools, understanding that they have different purposes. The occasional visits into the community offer children the opportunity to become aware of their local environment. Children learn about the natural world through a selection of activities, including completing a daily weather chart and linking this to their journey to pre-school and their experience of hearing the heavy rain on the roof. The children regularly have access to the outdoor area within the church grounds. They also have occasional opportunities to explore the local area, for example when they visit the local shops. Children have also on occasion enjoyed visits from the fire service. Children enjoy using role-play to initiate and develop their imaginative ideas, such as telling themselves stories about the vehicles, or pretending to look after a baby. They enthusiastically sing songs from memory and play musical instruments with a purpose.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is acknowledged and respected. They benefit from the staff having a good awareness of their home circumstances. Children play with a suitable range of easily accessible, age appropriate resources, which help them to increase their awareness of diversity. Children attending with special educational needs receive appropriate support to assist their development and learning.

Children behave very well and relate positively to adults and peers. They benefit from the good role modelling demonstrated by the staff and their sound knowledge of effective, age appropriate strategies to encourage suitable behaviour. As a result, children are successfully learning the difference between right and wrong whilst in the provision.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing confidence, independence and demonstrate good self-esteem. They spontaneously share information about their family, such as talking about a planned family outing. They start to learn more about their own and other cultures through craft and themed activities. This helps children start to increase their awareness of the wider world.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the good rapport that exists between parents and the staff. There are daily, informal opportunities for discussion about any care issues. All parents have free access to their child's assessment folders. They are kept up to date with information about the setting through notice boards and regular newsletters. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in their child's learning. For example, parents and carers are invited to assist in the setting, and some have taken up this valuable opportunity.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children attending the preschool benefit from the experience of the staff team. The preschool maintains a good level of adult to child ratio so that the staff are able to offer good supervision and support for the children at all times. The provision follows a generally consistent daily pattern, which enables children to become settled and familiar in their routines. Staff are also flexible in their planning, such as taking them for a listening walk round the outdoor area on a windy day. This offers an appropriate response to children's varying needs when they became unsettled and noisy indoors.

The staff use regular team meetings and talks with the parents to ensure good communication in supporting children's care. Children's personal records are carefully maintained and easily accessible to support their welfare, such as in an emergency. An extensive range of suitable policies and procedures are in place and are updated on a regular basis.

The leadership and management are good. The supervisor provides clear leadership to the staff team for whom she is a good role model. The staff work well together as a team and staff moral is high. There is effective liaison between the staff and management committee which aids the smooth running of the preschool. There are regularly opportunities for the senior staff to meet together to plan the Foundation Stage programme and all staff contribute to identifying areas for children's development. The staff effectively monitor the children's assessment records and are effectively deployed to support children's learning.

Planning includes differentiation to enable the appropriate level of support and challenge for children. However this is not always implemented resulting in some children becoming disengaged during group times. The whole staff team is experienced and there is a genuine commitment to improving the quality of care and education offered to the children. For example, all staff attend professional development training. A current project involves the development an adjacent enclosed outdoor area which the children will be able to access throughout the session. The supervisor seeks, takes and acts on advice from the local Accredited teacher and Area Special Educational Needs Coordinator. The setting meets the needs of the range of children from whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection three recommendations were raised relating to children's health and safety.

This area of care has now suitably improved as the outdoor area is now safely enclosed when in use and an appropriate risk assessment is carried out, hygiene practices have been improved regarding hand washing as the children now have access to warm water. Also the child protection procedure for the pre-school has been expanded and now includes a statement of procedure if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

There were three key issues arising from the Nursery Education inspection which related to planning, organisation, resources and staff training. Planning has developed and is now clear and encompasses all areas of the Foundation Stage. Resources and the organisation of the session have improved to provide more challenge to children particularly in the areas of creative and physical development. Staff also now attend relevant training regularly and this is closely monitored and followed up through regular staff supervision.

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.

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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 hand washing procedures consistently promote children's health and safety

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):

- extend children's opportunities to make links with the local community
- develop the organisation of group times to ensure all children remain suitably engaged

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