

St Johns Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	107639
Inspection date	25 February 2008
Inspector	Josephine Geoghegan
Setting Address	64 Larcom St, London, SE17 1NQ
Telephone number	07712 227013 or 0207 358 3349
E-mail	
Registered person	St Johns Playgroup (Southwark)
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 Johns Playgroup has been registered since 1994 and operates from the first floor of a community centre in the Walworth area of Southwark. The group is affiliated with the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is run by a management committee. The group has use of a hall and a smaller room. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday, term time only. Children attend part-time sessions from 09.15 to 11.45 or 12.30 to 15.00 or full time sessions of 09.15 to 15.00.

There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five years on roll, of these 30 children are in receipt of nursery education funding. The pre-school currently supports a few children who have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. No children who presently attend use English as an additional language, although the setting supports six children who are dual language speakers.

The pre-school employs five members of staff who work directly with the children and additional staff are employed to supervise lunch times. Staff working with the children hold a variety of childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared of in a clean and well maintained environment where high regard is shown to promoting good health. Children have constant access to resources aimed at developing their physical control, enabling them to gain exercise throughout the day. They participate in weekly yoga sessions with a peripatetic teacher, enabling them to learn about their bodies and control their movements.

Systems are in place to ensure children's individual dietary needs are known. Healthy eating and drinking habits are encouraged well as children are offered a range of healthy snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables such as carrot sticks; they have constant access to fresh drinking water and know how to help themselves using the drinks dispenser. Parents provide children's packed lunched which are stored appropriately and information is offered to parents regarding appropriate and healthy foods. Children who stay for lunch benefit from a well organised routine; they sit in small groups and hold general conversations with each other, developing their social skills.

Children's health is promoted as staff maintain good hygiene practice, for example, they ensure tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before and after meals and children learn good personal hygiene habits through everyday routines. Staff hold current first aid qualifications, well stocked first aid boxes are easily accessible and systems are in place to record any accidents or medication administered, enabling staff to take prompt action in the event of a child having an accident or being unwell.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good systems are in place to promote safety within the setting. For example, all fire safety equipment is in place and children participate in regular evacuation drills; positive steps are taken to reduce hazards as staff complete risk assessments of the premises and prior to any outings. A range of safety policies and procedures are implemented by staff, including a secure entry system.

Children are able to play in a welcoming environment created by well organised play rooms that are uncluttered, enabling children to move freely and safely between activities. Toys, books and equipment are of good quality and suitable for the numbers and ages of children attending; children are able to make choices and develop their independence as equipment is stored at low level. Children's physical care needs are supported as they use a good range of child sized furniture and equipment.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff know what to do if they are worried a child is abused, relevant information is easily accessible and staff have attended training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children interact well with each other and staff throughout the day, developing good communication skills; they speak confidently in a group

and learn about letter sounds and clap in rhythm to the syllables of their names with staff, developing their speaking and listening skills. Children use books purposefully and show a clear understanding of the story line, developing their reading skills. They show an understanding that print carries meaning as they attempt to write words with their drawings, with some children able to write clearly formed letters. Children sing familiar songs from memory, joining in the actions with enthusiasm. They have good opportunities to be creative, for example, while using a range of paint, collage and drawing materials, however, most displays show children's creative work that depicts a desired effect providing little encouragement for children to develop their free creative expression. Children enjoy being imaginative, for example, as they become absorbed in role-play in the home area, dressing up and imitating cooking, using dolls as babies and shopping. They use play-dough imaginatively, making birthday cakes with utensils as candles that they count accurately in excess of ten, developing their maths skills. They develop their problem solving skills while using a range of puzzles and construction sets and during small group activities with staff, such as playing picture matching games.

Children use a good range of resources that enable them to explore and find out how things work, such as magnets, mirrors and large egg timers; they enjoy using small wooden diggers and trucks with moving parts and accessories and freely transfer these resources, for example, using them in the sand tray extending their own learning and interests while being supported well by staff. Children develop their awareness of technology as they use old and real cameras with staff; they have opportunities to use computers and electronic equipment such as calculators and keyboards. Children learn about cultures and beliefs through planned activities relating to a variety of festivals and participate in regular outings in the local area, enhancing their understanding of their environment and people in the community. Children show skilful use of hand held tools such as hole punchers. They show confidence as they climb through and over the climbing frame and use the slide, developing their physical control. Children develop their bodily awareness and coordination as they sing action songs and discuss how different fruit taste sweet or sour. Children are well behaved, for example, they play cooperatively and respond to the daily routine, including helping to tidy up and sitting well at group times.

Staff implement effective systems to track children's progress and plan for their next learning steps. They plan a broad range of activities and outings that show regard to the Foundation stage and actively evaluate their plans. Children's progress is recorded in a record of achievement that is shared with parents. Children who have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by staff who are attentive and promote an inclusive approach; they use individual education plans that are drawn up with parents and outside agencies, ensuring children's needs are catered for.

Younger children are supported well within the daily routine, for example, children are separated into two groups for circle time, enabling younger children to participate in a shorter activity of stories or songs that are appropriate to their stage of development and promote the development of their social and communication skills. Children move freely, making choices and becoming competent learners. They enjoy being imaginative and imitate cooking while using the home area. They make purposeful marks while drawing and painting, developing their creative skills. They make connections as they use a range of construction toys effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. Children show a clear understanding of expectations of their behaviour. They respond well to the daily routine

and share and take turns during play, developing their social skills. They are able to learn about cultures and beliefs through use of toys and books that promote equality and during activities and outings that acknowledge a variety of festivals, such as visiting China town to find out about the Chinese new year. Good systems are in place to ensure children's individual needs are known. Children who have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well as staff show an understanding of their individual needs and work closely with parents; staff promote inclusion and encourage children to make choices and respond to the daily routine with the aid of photo cards.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the nursery by participating in activities and helping on a rota basis. They are offered a wide range of information about the setting, including policies and procedures. However, although Ofsted details are displayed on a poster near to the complaints procedure, they are not written in the complaints procedure displayed. Parents are kept well informed about activities and outings through regular news letters. They have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and receive a written record of achievement about the time their child has spent at the nursery when their child leaves.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. All required documentation is in place and shared appropriately with parents, for example, records of children's individual details, their attendance and any accidents or medication. A broad range of policies and procedures are in place to support the management of the setting, however, the complaints procedure does not show Ofsted details, resulting in parents not having clear information of who to contact if they have any concerns. Staff hold childcare qualifications and show a commitment to the development of the quality of the service, for example, they attend relevant training courses and participate in regular staff meetings and evaluate the activities and events of the day. Good systems are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children, for example, appropriate vetting, recruitment and induction procedures. Children benefit from consistency of care as all staff have worked at the setting for many years.

Staff work closely with children, supporting them during play and extending their interests; they plan a good range of activities and outings that support children's learning, however, not many of the wall displays show children's independent work. Staff make good use of time and resources, for example, children are able to play in a well organised environment where they can reach toys and resources with ease, enabling them to develop their independence; they benefit from a well organised day, enabling them to participate in free play, group activities and physical play. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to improve the planned programme of activities for physical play, increase the range of toys and resources that promote equality and ensure the hours that children attend are recorded in the record of attendance. The setting has met these recommendations by planning a full range of daily activities including Yoga with a peripatetic teacher, enabling children to develop their physical skills. They have extended the range of resources that promote equality, including posters and small dolls that reflect a variety of cultures and abilities, enabling children to see positive images and use resources that reflect all people in the community. They have also extended the registration system to ensure children's

hours of attendance are clearly recorded. Regarding nursery education, the setting was asked to provide opportunities to meet with parents to discuss their children's progress and to ensure staff have adequate time to complete children's profiles. The setting has met these recommendations by developing an open door policy with parents, including inviting them to coffee mornings to discuss their child's progress on an on-going basis and developing a system of arranged meetings before children leave to discuss their complete record of achievement. Staff have also developed their system to ensure they have adequate time to write children's profiles.

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):

- ensure Ofsted contact details are included in the complaints procedure.

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):

- encourage children's free creative expression by extending opportunities for children's independent creative work to be displayed.

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