

St Lukes Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	137353
Inspection date	30 October 2007
Inspector	Susan Linda Capon
Setting Address	St. Lukes Church Hall, Raglan Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9NN
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Registered person	Sheila Dawn Marshall
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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. Luke's Pre-school has been registered for 29 years. It operates from two classrooms in St Lukes Church Hall, situated in the London Borough of Bromley. Additional facilities including a large hall, small room and associated toilets and kitchen are also used by the group. There is a secure outdoor play area.

The Pre-school is open from Monday to Friday at 09.00 until 12.00. On Tuesday and Thursdays additional sessions are available between 12.45 until 15.35. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school opens during term time only.

The pre-school is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children between two and five years old at any time. There are currently 50 children on roll. Of these, 40 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school also supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of six staff, including the provider care for the children each day. Of these, five staff hold a relevant childcare qualification NVQ2/3. A member of staff is currently studying for her NVQ3.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It receives support from the local early years team and special educational needs co-ordinator.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children spend their time in clean premises free from infection. Staff implement the sound health and safety procedures throughout the setting, ensuring they prevent cross-contamination and the spread of infection, for example, they thoroughly clean the toilets before each session and wash their hands thoroughly before preparing the children's daily snacks.

Staff implement good procedures when changing children's nappies, ensuring they use the child's own creams as required. They wear disposable gloves and clean the mat thoroughly between use, preventing the spread of infection.

Children use good hygiene routines throughout the session. All the children are aware they must "wash their dirty hands" before snacks and after using the toilet. Staff reinforce this information through a song at snack time. Liquid soap and paper towels prevent the spread of infection. Children blow their nose using a tissue, disposing of this in the bin provided.

Children are not at risk from the group pet goldfish called Tom, Dick and Harriet. They enjoy taking their turn to feed the fish always washing their hands after handling the fish food.

Children play with clean sand both indoors and outdoors. Staff ensure they cover the outdoor sand pit when it is not in use, preventing infection and staff regularly check the indoor sand pit. They throw all spilt sand away.

Staff protect the children through their sound medication and accident procedures. The provider completes a care plan for any children with ongoing medical conditions, ensuring everyone is fully aware of how to manage the situation appropriately. Staff label any required medication, storing it inaccessibly to the children. They regularly check all medication remains in date and is suitable for use. Good accident recording keeps parents fully informed at all times. Several staff are qualified in first aid and a suitable first aid kit is readily available when required. Any accidents involving an incident are recorded separately. Staff share this information with the appropriate parent, for example, a child being pushed over by another child.

All parents know they must not bring a sick child to the group, preventing the spread of infection. Staff implement good procedures if a child becomes unwell at the setting, recording the information in their sickness record to monitor all situations. Additional information relating to childhood illness and incubation period times are readily available to parents on the notice board.

All the children enjoy regular physical exercise and fresh air. Staff take the children into the garden for outdoor play whenever the weather permits. They enjoy using the riding toys and other outdoor equipment. The staff involve children in ring games whenever possible, keeping children occupied and interested. Indoors children regularly practise their climbing and sliding skills as they use the large play apparatus in the playroom. Additional physical play opportunities take place in the large hall, during more inclement weather.

All the children may freely access fresh drinking water during the session. They enjoy healthy, nutritious snacks each day, including fresh fruit and milk or water. Breadsticks are available for children as another option, ensuring everyone is considered.

Staff are fully aware of every child's specific dietary needs, ensuring all the children receive appropriate food at all times. They advise the children's parents of suitable healthy options for inclusion in their child's packed lunch box. All packed lunches are suitably stored in the group's refrigerator, keeping them fresh until lunchtime.

All the children are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and the importance of eating fresh fruit and vegetables, for example, one child told staff how tomatoes and cucumber are good for you. The children enjoy additional topical discussions, including looking at a range of food grown in the country during the harvest topic.

Children are developing a good understanding of the importance of caring for their teeth and gums following a visit from the dentist. Staff do not provide squash to drink, helping protect children's teeth and gums.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children spend their time in very clean, warm, welcoming and child-orientated premises. The bright foyer enables parents and children to wait in comfort until opening time, making them feel very welcome. Staff cheerfully greet every child and parent on arrival, ensuring they feel at home and part of the group.

Children use well-organised premises, accessing a wide range of toys and activities every session. Staff ensure the activities are varied and suitable for the all round developmental needs of every child attending.

Children have ample space to move around the premises in safety as they explore their environment. They enjoy opportunities to play, do 'messy' activities, eat and drink, quiet activities and spend time outdoors on a regular basis.

Staff organise the extensive range of equipment suitably, storing it in cupboards and on shelves both in the playrooms and around other parts of the premises. A good amount of equipment is readily available for the children to make their own choices and selections each session. Large containers are labelled, using pictures and words, enabling all the children to help tidy up by placing the toys in the appropriate container.

Staff ensure all toys, equipment and activities are suitable and safe for the children. They check all equipment daily, discarding any broken or damaged toys immediately for replacement or repair. The provider purchases all new equipment through reputable companies, ensuring it is suitable for the children to use.

All staff have an excellent awareness and understanding of the importance of keeping the children safe and secure at all times. They fully implement the group's health and safety procedures every session. All doors are secured once the children have arrived, preventing them leaving unnoticed. Visitors sign in and out of the premises. Staff escort them round the premises at all times, preventing them being alone with the children.

Staff check the outdoor play area is fully secure, clean and safe prior to the children using it. Children are aware of the group rules when playing outdoors, for example, children remind one another they must not play behind the tree.

Staff continue to complete ongoing in-depth risk assessments, ensuring children are safe and secure at all times. They record any potential dangers or hazards, raising appropriate action plans to address the situation as soon as possible.

Staff implement excellent fire safety procedures at all times. The prominently recorded information throughout all areas used by the pre-school, keeping everyone informed of how to react in an emergency situation. Children and staff participate in regular well-recorded fire evacuation drills, ensuring everyone is aware of their individual role if required. Information is readily available in case an ambulance or fire engine is required, ensuring staff can direct the emergency vehicles to the appropriate place. The group has an agreement with the local school, regarding use of their site in an emergency.

Children are supervised well when they participate in outings away from the setting. Older children enjoy weekly visits to the local infant school during the term prior to leaving the pre-school. All the children enjoy an occasional visit to the local pet shop. Staff ensure sufficient staff accompany the children, holding their hands as they cross busy roads.

Children are developing a good awareness of the importance of keeping themselves safe when out and about close to busy roads and traffic. They enjoy visits from the local 'lollipop' lady and Tufty from the road safety team. The children enjoy playing with the road safety toys and equipment, following these visits, supporting their learning as they play.

Children are safe and secure through staffs sound knowledge and understanding of managing all child protection issues. Detailed information is readily available in the playrooms and staff attend regular update training. Parents see the policy and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All the children are busy, occupied and stimulated throughout the session. They freely access a wide range of suitable toys and activities for the majority of the time. Additional adult led activities complete the balanced programme for each session.

Staff plan the curriculum using the Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters framework. They ensure all areas are equally covered, enabling children to develop their all round skills.

Children are developing good independence skills as they put on their coat to go out to play, use the toilet independently and select their own resources and activities. However, children do not pour their own drinks at snack time, preventing them from developing their self help skills in this area.

Children participate in broad curriculum, learning about their environment and other people as they meet new friends and discuss their local community through the organised topics.

Children are suitably grouped throughout the session, ensuring their individual needs are met at all times. Small group activities enable children to develop good relationships with one another and the staff team.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All the children are progressing well in all areas of the curriculum. They are keen to attend the group with several children discussing how they missed the staff, their friends and the activities, during the half-term holiday. They quickly separate from their carer and excitedly choose an activity, settling down to play with their friends. Children confidently talk to one another in a small group, sharing their news from the holiday. They listen carefully to one another, waiting their turn to speak. Children sit for long periods at activities of their own choice. For example, jig saw puzzles and playing in the home corner. They play well together and relate well to the staff team. The children are developing their understanding of right and wrong and know the group rules, for example, they know they must not play underneath the climbing equipment if children are using it, keeping themselves safe from accidents.

Children use good language skills and sentence construction, making themselves easily understood as they play together, agreeing the rules during imaginative interaction. They are aware of the importance of listening carefully to instructions and stop talking when the leader switches off the light to gain their attention. Children enjoy singing songs and rhymes, joining in the ring game in the garden. They share books together in the book corner, looking at pictures and lifting the flaps. All the children enjoyed the story about silver shoes as they predicted what will happen next and eagerly answered questions raised by the story teller. The children enjoy regular opportunities to develop their awareness of linking letters to sounds and made their own picture alphabet for the wall display. Some children write their own name using recognisable letters in the correct order while others enjoy opportunities to develop their mark making skills throughout the activities.

Children are developing good mathematical skills as they participate in a broad range of activities, linking numbers and shapes. They competently count to 10 and beyond using the comparison bears and can identify the corresponding number card for the number of bears they have collected in their bowl. Children enjoy activities developing their addition and subtraction skills. They understand more or less and big, medium and small as they sort the bears. Children are developing good recognition of different shapes as they count the number of red circles in their Noddy puzzle and discuss the different shapes they are using at the writing table. For example, triangle, square, circle and semi-circle. Staff develop their understanding of shapes as they discuss two semi-circles, make a whole circle. Children enjoy creating patterns as they thread beads onto string and use the magnetic shapes. They enjoy weighing the ingredients to make soda bread and exploring the changes to corn flour when they add water.

Children are developing a good awareness of the world about them. They investigate natural materials they collect from outdoors for their autumn table, for example, conkers and fir cones. Children discuss the tree in the garden having a 'hair cut' since it was lopped during the half term week. All the children enjoy daily opportunities to play with the sand, water, dough, paint and glue. They explore wet and dry sand, recognising the difficulties in making sand castles without water added. Children particularly enjoy exploring the changes to washing-up liquid when they spread it onto the Perspex mirror with wet sponges, making it soapy. They competently construct their own models from a wide range of resources. Children use a computer mouse competently, enabling them to select their own programme. They know how to start the table top game without help and competently use other battery operated toys. All the children enjoy discussing what they did during the holiday and discuss other forthcoming events with one another, for example, bonfire night and Halloween. They enjoy learning about Black History and visits from story tellers and the reptile and amphibian owner.

All the children have good physical development and skills. They competently move around the premises indoors and outdoors, using good co-ordination and spatial awareness, ensuring they do not bump into one another or the toys and equipment. They move under, over and around the large equipment safely. The children are developing their awareness of the importance of keeping themselves healthy through regular physical exercise and are all keen to join in physical activities. They are developing an awareness of how their body works as they recognise when they need a rest or a drink after physical exertion, for example, some children choose to go indoors for a story. All the children are developing all their muscles through using large and small equipment. For example, they handle pencils, crayons and scissors well and enjoy climbing and jumping.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to develop their imagination and creative skills. They enjoy mixing paints and making new colours. Children recognise a broad range of colours as they discuss the different colours fallen leaves have turned, including gold and brown. They match the comparison bears to their relative bowls recognising red, yellow, green, blue, orange and purple. Children enjoy musical activities, exploring rhythm and sounds when the music man attends the group. They enjoy singing songs together and playing imaginatively in the home corner. The children create their own pictures using their imagination, for example, one child added a triangular paddling pool to her house and garden picture.

Staff plan the curriculum using long, medium and short term planning, incorporating all the early learning goals equally. Weekly plans clearly identify areas of development and progression for all the children attending. Staff key work the children, ensuring they regularly observe and record each child's individual development and progress. All staff are aware of the stepping stones, identifying the next steps for progression for every child. Staff evaluate special activities and the weekly planning to identify any required changes or improvements. For example, staff identified difficulties in implementing the plans fully when new children are still settling into the setting. Staff support each child well, sitting at the child's level and using open questions and discussion, enabling children to think for themselves. They use some activity sheets to supplement the children's learning and development although it is unclear if these are always suitable for the children participating in the activities. For example, children often scribble over the picture as they do not have the pencil control required to colour in the drawing. Staff prepare well-written reports on a regular basis, sharing the information with parents and enabling parents to add their own comments and suggestions for continued progression. When children leave the setting staff write a detailed report, providing additional photographs and a selection of the child's artwork. This provides parents with an excellent record of their child's time at the group. Children due to leave for school attend the local school with staff for regular assemblies each week. This enables them to become familiar with their new school before attending next term.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Staff value every child attending the group, treating them as an individual. All families are valued and included as they are encouraged to share their personal knowledge and skills with the staff team and the children, for example, parents have been involved in presenting different cultures to the children. Children attending come from a range of backgrounds, including ethnic minorities. Some staff speak other languages, sharing this information with the children, extending their awareness of other people and the world about them.

Children access an extensive range of toys, activities and equipment, representing positive images for all areas of equal opportunities. Everyone plays with everything available, promoting non gender activities, for example, boys push the dolls in the buggies and girls play with the cars in the garden. Staff incorporate a wide range of different festivals into the curriculum plans, including Eid, Harvest and Chinese New Year.

New children settle quickly through the sound procedures used by the group. They initially visit with their parents and play with the toys in the setting, familiarising themselves with the staff team. When they attend the group staff support the child and their parents, enabling them both to gain confidence in the group and the staff team. The individual needs of each child is carefully recorded and met by staff at all times, promoting continuity of care.

Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are included at all times. Staff gather detailed information relating to the child's disability and personal needs, discussing them fully with their parents and any other professionals involved. All staff implement the children's individual education programme, enabling every child to meet their full potential, using small steps for progression and development. The group's special educational needs co-ordinator regularly reviews each child's plan, updating it in discussion with the child's parents. She ensures all staff are fully updated, regarding any changes. Additional one to one support is available when required and some children bring their own personal support worker to the group, maintaining continuity of care.

Extensive information relating to disabilities and learning difficulties is readily available to parents via the notice board. For example, information on the local drop in speech and language centre.

This is a positive approach. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All the children behave exceptionally well at all times. No behaviour management was required during the two days the inspection took place as children know the rules and respect one another and the staff team. They play well together, sharing the toys and equipment. The children happily take turns to use the equipment or play the games together. Older children ensure younger less confident children are involved in the ring game by choosing them to be their partner.

All staff implement the group's sound policy and procedures for behaviour management at all times. They praise and encourage the children's efforts and achievements, developing the child's self esteem and confidence. Staff support less confident children by taking them to activities or giving them a cuddle to help them settle quickly. Special stickers are regularly available as a reward for good work.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are extremely happy with the care their child receives. Many have other children in the family who have previously attended the group, recommending the group to their family and friends. Parents find the staff team motivated, caring, helpful and supportive to both their children and themselves, for example, a parent of a new child felt fully supported during the settling-in period, helping her through the difficult time of initial separation.

All parents feel they receive excellent information, keeping them fully informed about the curriculum and activities through regular newsletters and the information board. They receive a well written report about the child's development and progress with opportunities to add their own comments if they wish. The provider responds to every parent in writing particularly

taking on board any suggestions they make, for example, staff have implemented additional writing opportunities for children to write their whole name, following a request from a parent.

Staff gather detailed information for every child attending, identifying any specific needs and including all required consents. For example, written consent to seek emergency treatment or to observe the children. All parents are fully conversant with the complaints procedures although no one has used this to date.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Suitable persons care for the children at all times. Rigorous employment checks on all staff ensure they are suitable to work with children, keeping the children safe and secure.

The staff team work very well together, promoting a professional approach to their work. New staff have been warmly welcomed by long standing staff, ensuring they all work together harmoniously to provide good quality childcare for all the children attending. Daily rotas identify each staff member's personal role and responsibilities for each session with all staff covering all areas during the week, enabling everyone to develop all round skills.

The majority of staff hold a childcare qualification. They all attend additional training opportunities whenever possible, developing and updating their childcare skills on a regular basis. The team has undertaken a wide range of training opportunities since the last inspection. This includes behaviour management, story box and safeguarding children.

Children receive a high level of support each session as the team provide a high adult to child ratio. This provides every child in the group with the opportunity for individual or small group time with staff members, enabling children to develop positive relationships with all the staff and confidence in the setting.

Staff operate an excellent registration system, ensuring they know exactly which children are on site at any time each day. Children collect their name card, staff complete the register with their individual arrival time and headcounts are undertaken to ensure numbers agree. Staff sign in and out of the setting and the visitor's book is kept with the register, making it readily available in an emergency situation. This ensures everyone on site can be accounted for at all times.

The group's detailed records are suitably stored, maintaining confidentiality at all times. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place fully implemented by the staff team every day.

The provider is fully aware of changes to the National Standards, implementing these immediately. For example, she informs parents Ofsted are undertaking an inspection and makes the report readily available to parents. She keeps Ofsted fully updated at all times. For example she advises Ofsted of changes to her staff team.

The leadership and management is good. The provider is a good role model to her staff, enabling them to develop good practices within the group. She is very aware of her personal role and responsibilities, ensuring her staff provide good quality childcare through the groups ethos of 'learn through play' and meet the National Standards at all times. She has high expectations of her staff team, ensuring they implement the group's policies and procedures and follow the planned curriculum. The provider currently undertakes informal staff appraisals. These could

be developed, enabling staff to identify their personal training and development needs. Parent's questionnaires are offered each year as a self-appraisal tool, enabling all parents to share their views and ideas. The provider replies individually to all replies, implementing suitable suggestions whenever possible. This makes parents feel their views are valued and respected. The provider has a clear understanding of the group's strengths and weaknesses. Future plans include continuing to develop the childcare provision she already offers, maintaining good quality care for the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The group has worked hard to make the required improvements, following the previous inspection. Children now enjoy regular opportunities to develop their creative skills through a readily available range of materials and equipment. For example collage materials to create their own master piece.

Several staff have attended a 12 hour first aid course, updating their skills as required, enabling them to manage any accidents appropriately.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action 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):

- provide children with additional opportunities to develop their self help skill during snack time (this is also applicable for Nursery Education)
- develop the current staff appraisal system, making it a more formal process

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):

- review the use of activity sheets ensuring they provide meaningful opportunities for the children to develop and progress at their own level (this is also applicable for childcare).

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