

St James Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148676
Inspection date	05 October 2007
Inspector	Aileen Ewins
Setting Address	St James' Church Centre, Kingfisher Drive, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 3LH
Telephone number	0118 966 2568
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Registered person	St James Church 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 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 James Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from St James' Church in the town of Woodley. The pre-school have access to two rooms and a fully enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves a wide geographical area.

There are currently 37 children on role. This includes 11 funded three and four year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions a week. The pre-school supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and 13:00 to 15:30 on Monday and Thursday and 09:15 to 11:45 Tuesday and Friday.

There are seven part time staff members who are employed to work with the children. There is one member of staff who holds a NNEB qualification and four members of staff hold recognised early years qualifications. There are two members of staff working towards a level three qualification and due to complete in December 2007. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to be aware of healthy routines during their time at the pre-school. Children are aware to wipe runny noses and dispose of tissues in the bin. Children also understand to wash their hands after messy play, after playing outside, after using the toilet and before eating. A small toilet area is situated off the pre-school room and children can independently use this. Younger children are helped when needing assistance. Children use liquid soap and bring in a small hand towel which hangs on their peg just behind the toilet area. If parents forget to bring a towel in, children are provided with one for the day. Some younger children are still in trainer pants and are assisted by staff. Any accidents are dealt with sensitively. Children also have access to two other toilets out in the main area but are always accompanied if using these.

The pre-school area is clean and tidy. Cups and plates are washed when used and also washed in sterilising solution at the end of the week. A cleaner also gives equipment, toilets and floors a thorough cleaning twice weekly. Worktops and tables are cleaned with antibacterial cleaner after messy play, before and after children have snacks. Staff are aware to document accidents and incidents and these records are maintained well. Children are kept safe as two members of staff have paediatric first aid qualifications. The remaining staff are updating their certificates after half term. One member of staff has responsibilities for first aid and ensures the contents of the first aid equipment are checked regularly. Medication records are maintained thoroughly too.

Children have lots of opportunities to play outside. Children enjoy the equipment provided for them, which includes climbing frames, scooters, a roadway, sit on cars, a large boat for sand/water, balls, hoops, bean bags and children also have fun with the large blackboard and chalk together outside. Children therefore receive lots of fresh air. Children also delight in the vegetable patch where they are shown how to grow vegetables and herbs. Plans are in place to extend this activity, for example next year children will be able to eat the carrots they have grown at snack times. In case of bad weather children still have time to run around and burn off energy as the main hall within the church is made available to them.

Children enjoy their snack time either as a snack bar where they are offered fresh or dried fruit or as a group when they eat wholemeal or white bread toasted. Children can have Soya spread, jam or marmite on their toast. Children are able to spread the toppings for themselves. Children are offered water, which is also available throughout the day; or milk. Not all children however, have the chance to pour the drinks for themselves. Children are aware of eating healthy and have made a poster about their bodies and keeping healthy. Children talk about how milk makes us big and strong. Parents are made aware of the snack of the day as this is displayed on the entrance door. Staff are aware of children's dietary needs and allergies; and in particular children with severe allergies are well catered for as staff have precise instructions for procedures to be followed in an emergency situation.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are happy within their pre-school environment which is welcoming, light and airy. Good use of space is made of the resources set out and storage of other resources. Children

can access their toys and equipment easily. Children also have their own garden area to play on which has a hard standing, grass area and gardening area too. Toys and resources are kept in good condition with a cleaning rota in place as well, which is carried out each term by staff and parents.

Children are kept safe as parents and staff work together to ensure staff are aware who will pick children up. A password system is used if the person collecting is not known to the staff who are experienced in their care. Any student or parent helping out at the pre-school is never left alone to supervise children. All emergency contacts for parents are in place. The front door is locked during sessions and the garden is secured by fencing. Storage containers in the garden area, as well as the large shed are also locked shut and do not allow access for the children. Children are aware of the fire evacuation procedures and the fire drill is practised each half term.

All staff have a competent understanding of safeguarding the children in their care. A staff member has responsibilities for child protection issues and a policy is in place, which parents are aware of. Staff are aware to protect themselves from false allegations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the pre-school. Many children are relatively new to the setting but both the children and their parents receive encouraging support from caring staff. Children play with resources which are readily accessible to them and rotated often; and include dressing up clothes, a kitchen area, play dough table with utensils, small world people and toys, cars and a garage, train and track, dolls, Lego and Duplo, painting and craft materials. Children's own work is displayed around the pre-school area. Children can therefore see topics completed such as 'Its Time For' which shows the times that children do things at nursery, for example snack time, outside play. This helps to ensure children are settled in their first initial weeks. Children see other work such as flowers made from paper plates and sea creatures where children have created their own star fish and jelly fish. Photographs are also displayed covering the six areas of learning and show children planting seeds, on the tractor during a visit, parachute games, chatting with friends and outdoor play.

Children have good relationships with the staff and each other. The hall is set up when children arrive and efficient staff know the children well. Children are treated as individuals and staff are aware of their personal needs, likes and dislikes. Children celebrate their own birthdays with friends at the pre-school and also had a special celebration to mark the 30th birthday of the setting.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are aware of songs such as Tommy Thumb and join in confidently with the words and actions. Children also have opportunities to identify their own name as they self register with name cards on arrival; however children receive only limited opportunities to try to write their own name and mark make on paper. Children do however enjoy painting and art and craft activities which are left to children's imagination. Children enjoy sitting down to listen to stories such as Yum Yum Yummy, about bears who like honey. Children are asked open and closed questions by staff who are enthusiastic in their teaching. During another story book called One To Ten And Back Again children call out pig and sheep noise and have fun doing so; however limited use is made to extend the activity with

number and calculation; and opportunities for children to acquire knowledge of number throughout sessions is limited overall.

Children quickly develop personally, socially and emotionally as staff are encouraging and have warm relationships with the children. Children are encouraged to become independent but staff also realise that at times children need a little assistance. Children play happily outside in the garden and completed a sponsored pentathlon which included crawling through the tunnel, jumping through a hoop, onto the trampoline and over the climbing frame. Children received stickers to congratulate them for joining in.

Children join in with stories and songs. Children make good relationships with each other through play and whilst in circle time talk about the colour of leaves and how leaves fall from trees. Children also discuss the weather and how, when it is raining, they put on Wellington boots and coats before going out. Older children are given special responsibilities such as collecting up the cups.

Children learn about the environment around them; and use the church hall for physical activities if it is too wet or cold to go outside. Children also have opportunities to meet people attending the church and often take lunch or cake and drink on a Thursday when a sandwich and cake/coffee bar takes place. Children have opportunities to look at the church hall and discuss with staff the shape of the windows for instance. Children join in a Christian Nativity play and also take part in Pre-School Sunday once a year. Children also have visits from the local Community Police Officer. Children are not able to use the computer at present but do have opportunities to take photographs on the newly acquired digital camera.

Children have many opportunities for art and craft and most are confident to use scissors with ease. Children have access to a range of craft materials, along with glue sticks. Children also have fun with painting, especially when using their fingers. Children are also provided with musical instruments and enjoy experimenting with sound and rhythm when using a shaker, xylophone, drum or triangle.

Children are developing well in the pre-school and supported by staff who have a good knowledge of Birth to three Matters and the Foundation Stage. Planning for activities and the curriculum is completed by all members of staff and a key worker system works well. Staff are enthusiastic and committed in their care. Themes for the half term include all six areas of the Foundation Stage and are adapted for children less able or those in the birth to three range. Staff observe children in the play and records are updated and transferred to children's development books. Key workers use their observations to plan for each child's next step in the Early Learning Goals. Parents have opportunities to discuss their children's well-being and progress with the key workers and are encouraged to help their child learn at home with an extension to the activities carried out at pre-school. From next term each child is to receive a diary which will enable parents to observe their child's progress and let pre-school staff know what their child has done over the weekend for instance; as well as enabling children to keep a record of their pictures and mark making.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident to play with one another and form relationships. Staff, children and parents have good relationships. Children are treated as individuals and staff are good role models. Children's individual needs are recognised and acknowledged which helps children to

feel valued. Children celebrate festivals such as Eid, Divali, Chinese New Year and Christmas. Children can use the dressing up clothes to form an idea of religion; however limited resources are in place to give children insight into the diverse world around them in regard culture, disability and gender. Children with particular needs and difficulties are cared for well and good use is made of parental advice and support; outside professional agencies and the Early Years co-ordinator. A member of staff has responsibility for special needs and confidentiality is understood. Parent's wishes are always adhered to.

The relationship with parents is good and parents have positive comments to make about the staff at the setting. Parents are expected to complete a session to help out each half term and a rota is posted on the notice board. Parents help wash up the snack time cups for example on their rota day. Parents are given information about the pre-school and forthcoming events, for example the table top sale where parents can hire a table and sell their goods. Parents also receive information about what is going on outside in the community.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately. Children at the pre-school develop relationships and behave well. Children are given insight into various religious backgrounds and are offered an insight into the community around them.

Children behave well and staff talk calmly and nicely to children which in turn helps them to respect one another. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with consistently and children are helped to understand why an action for example may not be nice. Children have formed their own rules for the pre-school for example saying please/thank you, not running indoors and taking turns. A policy is in place which acknowledges anti-bullying.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents attend visits with their children before they start at pre-school and are given committed and effective support to help their children settle particularly in the early weeks. Children's starting points are discussed and staff have a thorough knowledge of each child. Parents can meet with key workers and children's well-being is discussed with parents on collection. Parents are made aware of the policies and procedures for the pre-school. Parents are made to feel part of their children's learning as information is given about the theme for the term and topics for the week. Children also delight in taking turns to bring home Percy the penguin. Parents write about Percy's adventures with their child and each child draws or paints a picture.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children develop effectively amongst staff who are efficient, organised and motivated. Children feel valued and secure. Good use is made of the space available and the setting is welcoming to the children who attend. Staff work well together and are given opportunities for personal responsibility, training and further development. All staff take part in planning and observations of children and all staff understand to evaluate activities.

Children's personal information is stored appropriately and maintained to a good standard. Consent forms are in place in regard to outings, emergency medical treatment and photographs for example. Staff are aware of children's dietary needs, particular needs and allergies. Accident and medication records are secure. Fire evacuation is practised regularly. Registers are maintained as legally required. Policies and procedures relating to the pre-school are also in place and staff are aware of these details.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The pre-school benefits from strong management between the committee, its Chair and the supervisor. Staff work well together and are supportive of one another too. Staff are deployed well and valued. The setting is aware of both its strong and weak points and plans ahead for its future.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the pre-school were set just two recommendations. These were to develop procedures for protecting staff from allegations of abuse; and to further develop registers to include hours of attendance. The nursery have addressed these points in the following ways. Staff have completed child protection training and a child protection policy is in place which parents are aware of. A record is made in the incident book if any child arrives with marks on his/her body for example. Staff assist children in the toilet areas but the pre-school hall, entrance hall and toilets are only divided by a glass panelled door, making it virtually open planned. Staff can see each other throughout the session. Children are therefore protected from harm during the pre-school sessions as staff have a good working knowledge to safeguard the children they care for. Registers now contain a note of the session times and staff attendance is monitored also. Should a child arrive late or leave early to the stated and normal times, this time is entered on the register. Children are once again kept safe from harm with the procedures now in place. Children do self register as such with name cards, but the supervisor signs children in as they arrive and also again when they leave.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- extend opportunities for all children to pour their own drinks during snack time
- ensure children are offered positive images of society in regard to culture, gender and disability

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to experience the calculation of number, shape and measure
- allow children more resources to enable them to mark make during play.

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