

# St Nicholas Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	509178
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Carol Cox
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Nicholas Church Hall, Uphill, Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset, BS23 4UH
<b>Telephone number</b>	07910 583216 or 01934 413408
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	u/a
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Nicholas Church Pre-School opened in the early 1970s. It operates from the main hall of premises adjacent to the church in the village of Uphill. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.00, during school term time. Children have access to a fully enclosed safe outside play area.

There are currently 29 children aged from three to under five years on roll. All these children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and most go on to attend the village primary school. The pre-school has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff to work with the children. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted through staff's good knowledge of how to help children develop good self care skills. For example, children are gently reminded to fetch tissues to blow their noses and to dispose of them hygienically. There is a detailed medication procedure in place which includes consent and guidance from parents to administer medication. At present no medication has been administered. Staff are very aware of how to record and meet any specific medical needs and the appropriate actions to take. The accident book records any accidents with details and staff and parents sign to confirm details. However, some records do not preserve the confidentiality of other children. Staff have regular training to ensure their first aid certificates are current and so are able to treat any minor injuries appropriately.

Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise in the large, enclosed garden. Staff also help children develop physical skills inside the playroom through planned movement activities. The committee have recently purchased 24 all-in-one wet weather suits to facilitate outdoor play throughout the year.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks, such as fresh fruit, crackers and cheese and milk or water. All children's specific dietary needs are carefully recorded in detail and displayed appropriately to ensure that all staff are able to meet their needs safely. Staff have completed Basic Food Hygiene certificates to ensure food safety is maximised to protect all children.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Staff have a high regard for maintaining children's safety and have put into place good procedures. For example, to enable children to enjoy outings and walks in their local community staff enlist parents and volunteers to make sure that each adult is only responsible for two children. All adults who help in the pre-school are given clear guidelines of their role and responsibilities and are always supervised by staff. There are very good procedures in place to identify any adult authorised to collect children and a password system is in place for emergencies. The registration system clearly records the times children attend, however, the record of adults responsible for children during the session is not always accurate.

There are clear risk assessments in place to maintain a safe environment for children and staff practise regular fire drills with all staff and children. Children's safety and well-being is further assured because staff have a good knowledge of local child protection procedures. They regularly attend courses to ensure their knowledge is current. Parents are made aware of the child protection policy and all records are shared with them.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for by caring and enthusiastic staff who work closely with parents to identify the care and learning needs of each child. Children learn through a wide range of interesting play activities which are both adult led and child initiated. Their independence is encouraged by easy access to a range of good quality resources which they choose to support

their chosen games and activities. For example, on finishing making a snowflake as part of an adult led activity a child decided to add her own interpretation. She carefully cut and coloured a fairy castle out of scraps of paper and stuck these onto her snowflake.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy close relationships with staff who spend time talking and listening to them and so promote their language development. Children are keen to learn and settle quickly. The learning programme covers all areas of learning but plans lack detail to indicate where children may need extra support or challenge to progress. Staff make and record observations about children's progress towards the early learning goals but these are not yet clearly linked to stepping stones or used to identify and plan for next steps in learning. Consequently, children's learning needs are not always identified and some children are not appropriately challenged to extend their learning. For example, children who count confidently to 10 are not always encouraged to begin making simple calculations.

Children practise mark making skills using different tools and media. They enjoy using paper and pens in role play, however, some activities, such as copying their names, are not always appropriate. Most children competently recognise their own names. Children proudly demonstrate their skills at designing and building with a variety of materials and use language effectively to direct their activities. For example, a child gave clear verbal instructions to a member of staff to build a plane out of stickle bricks. The member of staff progressed the activity by asking challenging questions, such as 'How can we make enough seats for all the people?'

Children develop fine physical skills through a range of planned and freely chosen activities. For example, children expertly move the cursor around a computer screen through good mouse control. Staff plan activities to help children learn about the lives and beliefs of others, for example, children celebrate Eid and festivals from their own and other cultures. Children enjoy visiting their local village amenities and benefit from sharing activities, such as the nativity play, with the local school.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Staff use their good knowledge of the children's needs and interests to promote their development. Children learn to value differences between people through celebrating festivals from other cultures in relevant activities. For example, they made Eid mobiles using Bangladeshi symbols and share food from other cultures. Staff have knowledge and understanding of how to identify children's particular needs, they have good links with other agencies and seek detailed guidance from parents to ensure that each child's specific needs are met.

Children generally behave very well and show care and consideration for each other. For example, children understand the simple rules and routines of the group and learn how their behaviour may affect others through gentle explanations and good role modelling by staff. Parents are given clear information about the pre-school and policies and procedures through a well organised notice board and regular newsletters. However, some parents do not always read information on the notice board.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are welcomed as valued partners in their children's care. Parents enjoy the supportive relationships they build with staff and welcome opportunities

to help out within the group. They become involved in their children's learning through supporting staff when on visits and in the everyday running of the pre-school. Some parents report that this helps them understand how their children learn through play. However, staff do not yet provide sufficient information for all parents to learn about the curriculum their children follow or formal opportunities to discuss the progress their children are making towards the early learning goals. Overall, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The pre-school staff have identified areas for development arising from the last inspection and have taken action to make improvements. Children are well cared for and enjoy a safe and stimulating environment where they learn and develop. Staff are appropriately qualified and attend regular training. Key workers are responsible for maintaining records of children's achievements and sharing them with parents. The environment is well-organised and staff plan effectively to rotate resources which are made easily accessible to children. There are good policies and procedures in place to help children settle and keep them healthy and secure. All necessary documentation and records are in place, policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly.

The parents' committee is active in supporting the group through fundraising and parents contribute their skills through a helper's rota. There is a staff appraisal system to identify individual and organisational training needs. There are sound procedures in place for recruiting new staff and ensuring their suitability. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to address the following recommendations: to continue to investigate the use of the outside area to provide more varied play experiences for children; and to review policies and procedures and update as necessary to reflect current practice. Since the last inspection the outdoor play area has been vastly improved, part of the outside play area has been covered with safety surfacing and all-in-one waterproof suits have been purchased for children to allow them to play outside in all weathers. The large grassed area has been fenced and now provides a safe place for children to play. All policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated and now meet current guidance. Therefore children's play experiences have been extended with the use of the outdoor area and policies and procedures have been updated to ensure good practice.

At the last nursery education inspection the pre-school was asked to consider the following points: to improve the planning of key group activities; and to increase resources and activities to encourage and develop children's curiosity and investigatory skills. Key workers plan key group activities based on their knowledge of the children; the need to further develop the system for planning and assessment of activities remains as a recommendation from this inspection. Children are now offered a wide range of activities and resources to explore and investigate the natural world and their local community.

## **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 that records may be shared in confidence with parents
- record actual times of staff attendance

#### **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):

- further develop the recording of children's achievements and use these to identify next steps in children's learning
- provide more opportunities for parents to become involved and knowledgeable about how their children learn and progress within the Foundation Stage curriculum

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)