

# St Richard's Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY240093
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Mann
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Richard's Church
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 Richard's Pre-School Playgroup is managed by a committee of volunteers from a community centre in the grounds of St Richards' Church. It opened in 2002 and operates from the community area of the church building. It is situated in Feltham, in the London Borough of Hounslow and serves the local and wider community.

A maximum of 30 children attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 15:00, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 70 children on roll, aged from two to under five years. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 staff, of whom seven hold an appropriate early years qualification.

The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for at the pre-school. Their well-being is given a high priority by the staff and management committee. Their good health is promoted well by a range of effective routines and procedures. All required documentation is in place to ensure that medication and accident records are properly kept. Staff are suitably trained in administering first aid so they may provide appropriate care to a child who becomes unwell during the day. Children wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. In most areas of the pre-school, children use paper towels to prevent the spread of germs. However, those children who use the hallway toilet dry their hands on a shared towel, and so are at risk from cross-infection.

Children's nutrition is fostered well by a range of healthy snacks. They enjoy fruit to eat and drink milk and water. Children prepare their own fruit and pour their own drinks. This helps to develop their independence and allow them to become self assured. For example, a group of children use plastic knives to chop up apples and bananas. They concentrate hard as they skilfully cut up the fruit. Snack and mealtimes are very sociable occasions at the pre-school. Children and staff sit together and chat about their day as they eat, and it is a happy and relaxed time.

Children's understanding of healthy eating is promoted further by an exciting range of cooking activities that they all do on a regular basis. These are done with wholly nutritious ingredients. Children cook in small groups and these activities are well prepared and are skilfully delivered by the staff. For example, children make stir fry with vegetables and noodles as part of their celebration of Chinese New Year. They prepare the vegetables and observe the differences between raw and cooked noodles. They are well supervised and safe as they help stir the dish as it cooks. They then delight in tasting the finished meal, and each child takes a portion home to enjoy with their family.

Children's physical development and general level of fitness is enhanced by daily opportunities to play outdoors. They have lots of space to use outside, including a soft surfaced area for all weather play, part of which is sheltered by a canopy. Here, children run around, or play on a variety of toys. For example, some children demonstrate good coordination as they manoeuvre cars around the play area, whilst others sit at a table with a member of staff and draw pictures of dragons. Children also have lots of physical play indoors in a large hall. They go up the climbing frame and slide with confidence, as well as using other equipment. For example, a child shows great poise as she walks along a narrow balancing beam, holding out her arms to help her stability.

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

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure at this warm and welcoming pre-school. All staff are vigilant in their supervision. A range of risk assessments and daily checks are made to ensure that the premises are free from hazards so the children do not come to any harm. Staff make good use of the available rooms and outdoor space so that children have plenty of space to play. They enjoy a stimulating environment which is bright and inviting. Displays of photographs and of children's pictures adorn the walls. This adds colour to the room and also indicates to children that their work is valued.

Children play with a wide range of toys and resources that are clean and well maintained. Equipment is presented in low level storage so that children may help themselves. This helps them to make their own choices and become independent. Children who wish to rest during the day may relax in the cosy book corner, or sleep on roll-a-way beds if they require a nap.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They practise the setting's emergency evacuation procedure regularly so that they are familiar with it. When cooking, staff give clear explanations of why they must not touch the cooker or the cooking pan. For example, a member of staff tells them that they could get burnt, and 'that would mean that your skin would hurt'. When a child stands on a chair, a member of staff asks her to get down and tells her that it is because if she fell off it she might hurt herself.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because the pre-school has robust procedures in place with regards to safeguarding their welfare. Staff fully understand their responsibility with regard to recording and reporting concerns. The pre-school child protection officer oversees the provision and is knowledgeable about his role to take effective steps if required to protect a child. This element of the provision is underpinned by a comprehensive policy statement that is shared with all parents.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and busy at the pre-school. They enjoy the wide range of activities that are on offer each day. All children have fun learning through a play based curriculum that is differentiated well to suit their stages of development. For example, two children play happily at a sand tray filled with cornflakes. They chat to one another and laugh as they scrunch up the flakes with their hands. Staff provide a high level of support for all children. They are attentive and provide lots of cheerful company so that children always have someone to talk to or listen to them. Children benefit from the mixed age range. Older children are caring and patient with the younger children. Younger children learn from their older more confident playmates who act as good role models for them.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children in receipt of funded nursery education are progressing well towards the early learning goals. Staff are knowledgeable about the foundation stage curriculum and activities have clear learning objectives. The curriculum is a successful balance of planned and child-led activities. Staff make regular observations on children as they play with them. These are used to track their progress through the stepping stones in their assessment books, in order to gauge how well they are progressing. This system is robust and is used consistently throughout the pre-school so that keyworkers and staff have a clear picture of each child's next steps of learning.

The information gathered through making observation and assessment of children's learning is used effectively to plan the curriculum. This is done at staff meetings. Keyworkers and staff discuss the next section of the planning to ensure that the activities will provide each child with the opportunities they need to progress well. The planning is well organised so that all aspects of the foundation stage are covered during the year. Thus children benefit from a comprehensive curriculum. Staff discuss the impact and success of children's learning and the activities offered. However, there is no system in place to fully evaluate the curriculum planning

in written form. This means that there is no record to establish or recollect the success of elements of the curriculum planning for future reference and development.

Children enjoy books and stories. Staff read to them with great enthusiasm and expression. For example, two children listen intently as a member of staff reads them the story of 'The Gruffalo'. Children are confident to express themselves, and many talk readily about what they are doing. For example, a group of children are playing in the role play area. They chat about what they are 'cooking' for their tea and offer food and drink to those sitting nearby. Children use counting and calculating throughout each day. At circle time, many children are confident to count in sequence from one to over twenty as they work out how many children are present. They have fun adding and subtracting numbers as they sing songs such as 'Five Little Flying Saucers' and 'Ten Fat Sausages'.

Children are excited and interested as they explore and investigate. When cooking, they listen to the sizzling of the vegetables as they fry. Staff ask them to think about why it makes that noise. When outdoors, children enjoy examining insects and plants in the natural environment. Children play with programmable toys, skilfully operating battery toys. However, they do not have regular access to a computer, and so cannot always develop skills such as controlling a mouse or operating a simple computer game. Children enjoy a wealth of creative activity. They enjoy a variety of arts and crafts as well as imaginative play and music. For example, children have great fun playing musical instruments. They choose which instrument they would like to use from a large selection. They demonstrate very good controlled use of the instruments by playing them loudly and softly as directed when they sing along to favourite songs.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children demonstrate a superb sense of belonging and contentment at the group. The pre-school is exceptionally caring to children and their families. Their well-being is the top priority of staff and the management committee. This gives the pre-school a strong compassionate ethos that extends into their local community. Along with other services, the group supports coffee mornings every two weeks. Here, families can come for friendship as well as practical help on issues such as housing and translation services for those families for whom English is not their first language. They also support a local 'Homepack' scheme which collects essential items and groceries for those families who need additional help. Families who use the pre-school have a great involvement in both supporting and benefiting from these services.

Children develop an exceptional level of self assurance because staff demonstrate great respect and affection for each child. Children manage their behaviour extremely well. They are considerate to one another, and share toys and resources very well. Staff provide exemplary role models for the children to follow. They are friendly, patient and very kind. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff which positively reinforces their good behaviour. This element of the provision is underpinned by an exceptionally detailed behaviour management policy. This is shared with all staff, committee members and parents to ensure a thoroughly consistent approach.

Children gain tremendous benefit from the wholly inclusive culture of the pre-school. The equality and diversity policy is extremely detailed in providing a comprehensive framework for promoting equal opportunities. Children learn about a wide range of cultures and beliefs in a number of different ways. These are presented to them in meaningful ways that they can easily understand. For example, whilst preparing stir fry as part of the celebration of Chinese New

Year, children are asked to consider what other festivals they might celebrate. They recount their birthdays, Christmas and Divali as recent celebrations they have had at the pre-school and at home. Parents are invited to come and share the practices from their cultures with the children to enhance their experiences further. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given an excellent level of support to help them progress well. The setting's special educational needs coordinator is highly knowledgeable and dedicated to ensuring that each child receives the support they require. All staff work very well together to implement individual education plans and meet all children's needs fully. The pre-school liaises with outside agencies for support and advice.

Children are exceptionally well settled and happy at the pre-school because of the superb partnership between the group and their parents. Staff are extremely welcoming at the start of sessions as they greet each child and parent. Parents are reassured when their child starts at the group. This is because of the detailed and individual induction where staff and parents share information so that the child's needs are fully met. Parents are fully involved in the running of the pre-school. Many of them sit on the voluntary management committee which provides extremely efficient management of the group. All parents are invited to committee meetings so that they can share their views and keep up-to-date. This means that the pre-school accurately reflects and accommodates the needs of families who use it.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is outstanding. Parents are fully informed of their child's progress and what they are learning. The pre-school actively seeks the views of parents to ensure they are meeting their needs completely. Parents complete satisfaction questionnaires, and the group uses their responses to plan future developments. For example, a recent questionnaire highlighted that some parents felt the need for greater communication about what children have done during the day. This resulted in a daily information board about activities and events that gives details of what children have done. In addition, curriculum planning is displayed on the notice boards for parents to read if they wish. Colourful displays of photographs help explain the curriculum and learning process.

Parents and keyworkers have informal discussions about children's progress and well-being at any time. These chats are supplemented by regular appointments where parents can meet with staff and discuss their child's assessment book in detail. These 'Green Books' are illustrated with many photos of the child at play. They are notated to provide parents with a clear picture of how their child is learning in all areas through play. Children benefit further because the pre-school encourages parents to extend their learning at home. Families may borrow books to enjoy, and the newsletter provide a wealth of ideas about simple activities and topics to cover at home if wished. In addition, the pre-school encourages and supports parents to participate in early years training and several have successfully taken up this opportunity.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the efficient organisation of the pre-school. All documentation is robust and accurately maintained. Policies and procedures are well designed to accommodate the needs of the children, families and staff of the group. The staff and committee work very well together to ensure the pre-school runs smoothly. Recruitment practices are effective to ensure that adults working with the children are suitable and well trained. Existing staff work very well as a team to provide a high level of care. They have lots of opportunities to further their

knowledge and skills through regular training courses. There is documentation in place to support a staff appraisal process. However, this is yet to be implemented which means that staff and management do not have a formal opportunity to review and evaluate their practice.

Leadership and management are good. The pre-school manager works effectively with her team to ensure that the curriculum successfully promotes the learning requirements of each child. She provides clear direction and adopts a forward thinking approach to evaluate the provision and plan new developments. She is dedicated to her role, and has the welfare of the children and their families as the main focus of the pre-school. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection the pre-school were asked to consider a number of recommendations in the provision of care and education. Practice has been revised and now the pre-school ensures children's safety by carrying out regular and thorough risk assessments to identify hazards and limit risk. Fire drills are recorded in a fire log and are evaluated to monitor their effectiveness. Registers clearly record the hours of attendance of all children and adults. Documentation has been revised to update certain policies. The child protection policy states action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The procedure to be followed is clearly stated in the relevant policy and this is followed by all staff consistently. The complaints procedure gives details of how to contact Ofsted and this is displayed in the pre-school for parent's information.

With regard to the delivery of the foundation stage, several areas of the curriculum have been enhanced. Children now have daily opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding. They routinely count and calculate during their play. Children show great curiosity as they explore and investigate. They use battery operated toys to help develop their grasp of technology. However, they do not have regular access to a computer in order to develop their understanding further. Children enjoy free art and craft activities where they can express themselves through a variety of mediums, as well as imaginative role play each day. Staff support children's learning well. Many have undertaken relevant training and all demonstrate a good knowledge of the foundation stage. Finally, parents are involved in their child's education because the pre-school keeps them well informed. Parents are invited to attend regular meetings with keyworkers to discuss their child's progress, as well as being given a wealth of information about the curriculum.

### **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 children always use paper towels after washing their hands to limit the spread of infection
- implement a system to ensure that all staff receive regular appraisals

#### 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):

- develop a system to evaluate the curriculum on a regular basis
- provide children with more opportunities to develop their skills in using ICT.

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)