

St. John's Pre-School and Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309468
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Ann, Theresa Flynn
Setting Address	St. John's CE Primary School, Preston Road. Coppull, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 5DU
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Registered person	Susan Ryder
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. John's Pre-School and Playgroup is privately registered to provide full day care for 24 children aged two to under eight years, and is based in a purpose built mobile unit within the grounds of St. John's primary school in Coppull.

Children attend for morning and afternoon sessions with hours of opening from 09.00 until 15.30 from Monday to Friday during term time only. Children access one main room which is divided into various aspects of play. There are toilet and kitchen facilities on the premises with access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are a total of 44 children on roll, of whom 22 receive funding for nursery education, the setting supports children with learning difficulties.

The staff team consists of four members, two of whom, including the manager, are qualified to level 4 in early years and are working towards level 5. Two staff are qualified to level 3, one of whom is working towards a level 4 qualification.

The setting receives support from Sure Start and is presently working towards the Lancashire Quality Award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. They choose freely whether to play indoors or outdoors and wander between the two areas throughout the day, thus providing them with regular access to fresh air. They enjoy a range of resources, including construction games, water, mark-making with chalks and water, sit and ride toys and sand. They enjoy music sessions weekly provided by a visiting music teacher and walking within the local community, all of which helps to promote children's health, well-being and enjoyment.

Children stay healthy because staff follow good hygiene practices. For example, they clean tables for meal and snack times and children are reminded to wash their hands following toilet use and following craft activities. Children are encouraged to place their hands over their mouths when coughing at snack time, thus helping children to develop an understanding about hygienic practice.

A sick child policy is in place, which involves comforting sick children and contacting parents. Children have opportunities to rest or sleep in the book area using small settees, or for younger children a travel cot is available, thus helping to cater for the needs of children who are tired or sick.

Accident and medication records are maintained in a basic manner, records maintain confidentiality and a copy is provided to parents. However, the record of medication does not clearly record signatures and it is unclear who has actually signed the medication record.

Children are well nourished through the provision of healthy snacks, which includes a variety of fruits. Meal time provides a social occasion with children and staff sitting together, and children have free access to drinks throughout the session, thereby helping to maintain their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure indoor and outdoor environment. The environment is bright and colourful, with children's work and posters adorning the walls, which contributes to providing a welcoming and safe environment for the children who attend.

Many varied resources are available at child-height, which children freely access, thereby providing children with many safe choices for their play. Space is well organised into planned areas within the playroom, which enables children to enjoy varied choices from a balanced range of continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors.

Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe within the setting by being involved in emergency evacuation practices. Children are kept safe on outings because they wear high visibility jackets, are supervised well and use a walking strap, which children hold onto to help to maintain their safety. Staff explain road safety to children and practise this within the setting

before venturing out into the community, thus helping children to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe when away from the setting.

Children are well protected because staff understand the correct procedures to follow in the event of concerns about the welfare of any child in their care. All staff have attended safeguarding children training and can access information regarding the safeguarding of children, which is available within the setting, thereby ensuring their knowledge is current and accurate, thus helping to keep children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Activities and opportunities provided for children are good. A varied, stimulating and interesting range of age appropriate resources and activities are available. These include areas of water play, sand play, craft activities, painting, construction, role play and an area in which children freely access books. Children also enjoy experiences and activities, such as music, walks within the local environment and a range of activities outdoors, which children freely access. All of which provides interest, stimulation and challenge to help children progress and enjoy their time at the setting.

Staff are well deployed offering appropriate support and guidance. The children initiate their own play within the role play area, socialising well as they discuss the items they are playing with, which develops their social skills, language and imagination. Staff are available to offer support and guidance when necessary, for example, within the painting activity, as they discuss with children the colours of the paints they are using, thus helping to maximise children's learning experiences.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is followed for the younger children and planning is individual to each child, thus catering for the needs of all children who attend. The continuous provision is varied both indoors and outdoors to which children enjoy free access depending on their interests, thereby helping children to learn in a fun way.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children benefit from the staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and effective teaching helps children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are questioned and challenged by the staff, who ask appropriate questions to help children to learn at their own pace. For example, they ask children questions in mathematical terms, such as 'bring four chairs to the snack table'. Staff also use spontaneous events to extend children's learning, for example, when a child draws with chalk on white paper, staff change the paper to black to help children to understand about contrasts. Staff question children to help them to identify the colours of paint they are using within the painting activity, all of which provides appropriate questioning to make children think and to help them to learn.

Children are encouraged to be independent and are able to make their own choices for learning. For example, children choose their own activities, they choose to play indoors or outdoors and they choose their snack during snack time, thus helping children to develop their independence.

Children are developing confidence through appropriate praise and encouragement. For example, when they receive praise for their painting efforts, as they butter their own pancakes during

snack time and when helping to organise the area for snack time, which helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Children are socialising well as they learn to wait until their peers have finished their turn for snack and as they share resources when playing within the role-play area, thus helping to develop their understanding of how to share. Children's personal independence is developing as they access the hand wash basins themselves to wash their hands prior to eating their snack and following craft activities.

Children are developing their literacy skills as they are provided with opportunities to mark make using a variety of resources, both indoors and outdoors. They are developing their understanding of mathematics, as they count the number of children present during circle time and count the blocks they are constructing with whilst playing outdoors. Opportunities for children to calculate are provided as they cut pieces of paper to fit into envelopes, which also helps children to learn about shape, space and measure.

Children's creativity is developing well through good experiences, such as painting, gluing, construction, tactile play, including play dough and imaginary play within the role-play area, which provides good and varied opportunities to develop children's creativity and imagination.

Planning is devised individually for children, depending on their interests and stages of development. A planning overview identifies how all six areas of learning are to be delivered. Observations of children and weekly parental comments are used to inform future planning. Assessments and observations of the children are undertaken, ensuring children are well supported and challenged. The system of observing children's progress, clearly identifies the next steps in their learning. Evaluations sometimes link to the learning objective, although this is not consistent, thereby not always identifying if children have met the learning objective.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing their awareness and understanding about diversity, through discussion and activities, such as topics involving Chinese New Year. Resources are available which reflect diversity, including books, puzzles and dolls, and children are made aware of others' cultures by, for example, having access to dressing up clothes and cooking utensils, which reflect various cultures, thus raising children's awareness of the needs and customs of others.

Children are valued, included and have their individual needs met appropriately. Children's all-round needs are catered for and all children are included within the setting. Staff work consistently with parents, carers and with other professionals to provide continuity of care and to aid children's development, thus working in the best interests of the children.

The behaviour of children is good. They accept and work with age appropriate strategies, praise and encouragement, to promote positive behaviour. For example, consistent praise is provided to children as well as smiley faces, which results in choosing from a 'dip box' containing treats. Children are aware that good deeds are endorsed, for example, when helping at snack time, thus helping to develop children's confidence and self-esteem and to develop their understanding of right and wrong.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately as they learn to take turns and share, for example, when using the computer.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children's individual needs are well met because of the good relationships which have been established with parents. Information is shared through written policies and procedures, daily discussions, open days and parents evenings, ensuring parents remain fully informed. Parents are involved with their children's learning by being invited into pre-school to engage in activities with the children. A home to pre-school link is developed through 'Harry the dog' who goes home with children to become involved in the children's home life.

Parents views about children's progress at home is sought on a weekly basis and is used to inform future planning for their child. Parents views about the service provided are sought annually through questionnaires, which are then used to develop the service provided. For example, the development of open days derived from parental questionnaire feedback.

Parents are well informed about the curriculum through booklets regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage, which provides good detailed information about how their children learn and progress, thus demonstrating the positive relationships which have been established with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Time and space is organised effectively so that children are able to independently play and relax within the setting. Children access varied resources, both indoors and outdoors, which help in promoting their all round development. Time is effectively organised to cater for structured, free play and meal times, therefore meeting children's individual needs.

Adequate procedures are in place for the recruitment of staff, who are trained mainly to Level 3 and 4 in childcare, two of the staff are working towards a level 5 qualification. Staff meetings are undertaken weekly and staff spoke of receiving good support from each other. Good staff-child ratios are maintained, thereby ensuring that children receive appropriate levels of support to help their individual developmental requirements.

Documentation is maintained in line with the National Standards and therefore helps in promoting the safe and efficient management of the setting. Thus, the welfare and care of children is maintained. However, the policies do not always relate specifically to the setting, for example, within the child protection policy, children under two years are referred to and yet the setting is only registered for children over two years.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There is a clear understanding by staff of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum and staff are clear on their roles, responsibilities and deployment areas. Curriculum planning is in place and is implemented, delivered and monitored by all staff. Monitoring of the curriculum and children's planning and assessments are undertaken through weekly staff meetings. This helps to ensure the provision of nursery education is effective in helping children progress.

New staff are inducted and there is a staff appraisal system in place, through which staff training needs are identified and accessed, thereby helping to maintain the good service provided to children who attend St. John's Pre-school and playgroup.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection there were two recommendations raised relating to documentation and safety.

The recommendation relating to documentation has received partial attention, the booklet 'What to do if your worried a child is being abused' is available for staff. However, the contact details for the local area child protection team has not been included within the child protection policy.

The recommendation regarding safety has received attention because the steps leading to the outdoor play area have been made safe.

Due to the action taken, the care and safety of children has been enhanced.

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.

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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):

- develop documentation to provide clear detail within the accident and medication records in relation to signatures and ensure that all policies relate directly to the setting.

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):

- ensure evaluations within planning clearly identify whether learning objectives have been met, to help to inform future planning effectively.

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