

St Peter's Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317607
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Inspector	Carys Millican
Setting Address	St. Peters Church, Kingstown Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA3 0BB
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Registered person	Margaret Emma Bravo
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 Peter's Pre-school is privately owned. It opened in 1968 and operates from within a church hall on the northern outskirts of Carlisle. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08.45 to 11.45, term time only. Children access a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. St Peter's Pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted by staff who have a secure knowledge of the pre-school's health and hygiene policy and procedures. Children are protected from the potential risk of cross infection by the staff following appropriate environmental health procedures. Tables are consistently wiped before and after children eat their snack and play areas are kept clean and tidy. The food preparation areas in the kitchen are clean and well maintained. Children's hygiene practices are fully promoted. They understand the daily routine and confidently line up to go to the toilet after tidy up time. As they wait staff gently remind them to wash their hands especially after using the toilet. Children's growing independence is aided by the provision of small plastic steps that children use to stand at the sink. Soap and paper towel dispensers are easily accessible to them. Children enthusiastically explain that they 'must wash hands to keep them clean and get rid of germs'. Children learn the importance of looking after the environment and keeping areas safe and clean. They dispose of used paper towels in the waste bins which are recycled in appropriate containers. A nappy changing area is available in the ladies toilet. Staff explain suitable nappy changing procedures following the health and hygiene policy. Children's welfare and the protection of other children are fully considered by staff following the sick child policy. All documentation is in place and written parental permission is obtained for emergency treatment, and to administer medication.

Children benefit from the healthy eating programme encouraged in the pre-school. They learn about food that is good for them and the importance of a balanced diet through the numerous topics and visual displays. Children access a choice of drinks and a selection of healthy snack options during the session. They thoroughly enjoy a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables, with alternatives offered such as packets of raisins or small cheese portions. Children benefit from the social occasion created at meal times when they sit together in small groups. Staff encourage children to recycle the cardboard plates and small raisin boxes in the recycling bag. Older children's independence and self-help skills are encouraged in daily routines. Staff explain that children are encouraged to pour their own drinks during the last term at pre-school in readiness for school. Children's needs are met by staff following care routines, dietary needs and parental wishes closely. Details of allergies are confidentially recorded. Fresh drinking water is not freely accessible to children, however, children can ask staff for a drink if they are thirsty.

Children benefit from a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health and all round development. Physical play is encouraged within daily indoor and outdoor activities. Children enjoy themselves. They run around the large hall confidently finding their own space. They enthusiastically peddle bikes and scooters, practising their gross motor skills. Children climb up the wooden climbing frame and slide down the other side. They enjoy music and movement tapes completing simple exercises to music. They hop, skip and jump, and stretch their arms as they sing the songs. Children laugh and giggle during parachute games gleefully watching the teddies bounce up and down. Children complete obstacle courses practising balancing skills and coordination. All children access the outdoor play area where they play traditional games such as ring-a-ring 'o' roses and walk around the building looking at the natural vegetation growing around the building. Children rest according to their needs as they look at books and listen to stories in their 'quiet area'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe and secure when playing inside and outside. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised. Staff use effective risk assessments to identify hazards and install suitable safety equipment. Children are protected by the health and safety practices and procedures that staff follow to help prevent accidents. Areas are checked daily by staff before children arrive and all play equipment is checked for any damage, such as loose or broken parts. Children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Inner doors are secure and all exterior doors are locked once children are inside. Staff monitor the classroom door to ensure children's safety on arrival and collection. Socket covers protect children in both rooms which are checked regularly. Children are kept safe outdoors. An area of the large car park is sectioned off and staff supervise children's play at all times. Children learn about how to keep themselves safe. They listen to the staffs' gentle reminders not to let go of their partner's hand when walking round the building and why not to play with matches after lighting candles on the birthday cake. Children benefit from numerous visits from 'people who help us', such as the police and fire fighters. These experiences are beneficial in raising children's awareness of personal safety. Fire fighting equipment is in place and all fire doors are unobstructed. The fire evacuation procedure is displayed and practised by children and staff regularly. Children are kept safe on outings as adult to child ratios are maintained, permission is obtained from parents and documentation is in place.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. The pre-school rooms are spacious and well maintained. Children explore and investigate numerous, low level, sensory visual displays and textured experiences. Children confidently move around their surroundings and help themselves to a range of safe, suitable and age-appropriate resources that are accessible to them. The pre-school room is well organised to maximise play opportunities for children. Children access a large hall which is also used for creative activities and physical play. Children feel a sense of belonging. Their art and craft work is creatively displayed throughout the classroom. Named drawers containing children's personal belongings and completed artwork are accessible to them. Children's health, safety and welfare is maintained by staff checking equipment before use and regularly cleaning toys and resources.

Children are safeguarded. The child protection statement is in place and clearly explains the procedures to follow in the event of a child protection concern. The policy has been updated with changes in recent legislation regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board details and who to contact. Most staff have attended recent safeguarding children training, however, staff who have not are not as clear on the procedures to follow under the new legislation. Children's safety and welfare are met by the documentation maintained by the pre-school. Systems are in place to keep records regarding any child protection concerns and confidentiality is maintained. Children's individual record forms contain a wealth of information, including details of named persons allowed to collect them. The hours of attendance of visitors, staff and children are meticulously recorded by pre-school staff in the attendance register.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy, contented and highly motivated to learn. They 'bounce' into the pre-school eagerly greeting staff and their friends as they arrive. They settle easily into the warm, welcoming atmosphere created by experienced practitioners. Children are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They are self-assured in their play, thoroughly enjoying their time at the

pre-school. Children benefit from the exceptional support that they receive from staff and the calm and sensitive approach to their care and learning. Children make excellent progress because staff recognise the uniqueness of each child. They skilfully identify children's individual learning styles in order to maximise their learning. They achieve well because staff are highly skilled and use their exceptional understanding of child development and of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage', to provide high quality care and education. Parents provide staff with detailed written information on their child's individual needs and the developmental progress already achieved. This information is effectively used as a starting point to build on and used to further children's development in line with practice within the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff use their comprehensive knowledge of child development effectively to plan activities and provide resources that are accessible and age-appropriate in accordance with individual children's abilities. Assessment is completed using detailed observations and developmental achievement records are maintained for all children attending the pre-school.

Children are self-assured and eager to take part in activities. They enjoy themselves and form good relationships with each other. Children enjoy making pretend cakes with the modelling dough, creating several different shapes using rollers and cutters. They play in the role play area making cups of tea and finding different food items. They eagerly show how the kettle makes the noise of water boiling and then the noise of water pouring into the toy cups as they tip it slightly. Children concentrate as they access the computer. They confidently use the mouse to drag and drop the tractor in the field. Children settle into the pre-school routines easily and quickly become confident in their surroundings through the excellent settling in arrangements with parents. Consistently close and caring relationships are developed with their 'key worker' which increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children enjoy a rich, varied and imaginative range of indoor activities. Many resources are obtained from other countries. These interest children and stimulate ideas and imagination. Children are busy, highly motivated and actively engaged in their play. They enjoy singing a frog song as they count how many frogs are left as each one in turn jumps into the pond. Teddy bears come alive as they speak to the children through the staff members. Children are full of awe and amazement constantly smiling and happily engaged in activities.

Children play in a visually stimulating environment. Children proudly point out their creative work displayed on walls. Photos of children show them undertaking numerous activities. Staff follow the children's interests, for example, several children build a 'den' in the hall using large wooden construction bricks. They add to it by obtaining the toy kitchen from a staff member pretending it is a barbeque and cook with play food. Children use their imagination as they go outside for a walk around the building with staff. They imagine wild animals are found in the undergrowth and make the animal sounds. Spontaneous learning takes place as they point to the builders close by. Children enjoy physical activities as they access numerous sit-and-ride toys and cars in the main hall. They balance as they climb the climbing frames and use the slide. Children enthusiastically join in the music and movement tape, following simple instructions such as stretching, jumping, and hopping as they move around in a circle.

Children relate well to each other and socialise well, building up excellent relationships with the staff and other children. They begin to learn about right and wrong through gentle reminders from staff, who explain simple rules to them during routines. Children take turns, share resources and learn to be considerate to others. They show concern for others and the environment and confidently ask questions. Children develop self-esteem through the constant praise they receive and the love and attention that enthuses from staff. Children make choices and decisions in their play and there is an excellent balance between adult and child-led activities, which

allows them to experience new ideas and to acquire new skills. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas and interests. Children talk about where they live and the different rooms in their home. They enjoy the interesting and stimulating activities provided and their concentration levels are fully maintained. The role play area is an estate agents complete with house details and photographs. Children sit quietly at story time and enthusiastically join in with the teddy bear and monkey story. Children's communication skills are supported through highly comprehensive adult and child interactions. Staff encourage children to recall past events and activities to reinforce learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. They are highly motivated and stimulated by the extensive range of resources and activities available to them. Staff provide a programme of rich, varied and imaginatively planned adult directed activities and the continuous free play activities that flow from one topic to another. Children are eager to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. Staff challenge and support children's learning in all areas. Children access a varied range of information and communication technology equipment, such as computer programmes, shop tills and phones. They use their imagination to build with construction materials such as small and large bricks. These are rotated to maintain their stimulation and interest. Children thoroughly enjoy creative activities such as painting pictures and drawing, thus developing hand-eye coordination skills. Children happily dress up as the fire fighter and pretend to put out the fire in their 'den'. The staff use the available space well. Activities are well organised to maximise the available space both in the hall and the classroom. Children explore and investigate the blocks of ice in the water tray. They look in amazement as they start to melt giving detailed explanations of why to the staff member. They thoroughly enjoy the experience and staff skilfully extend their learning by introducing animals that live in the north and south pole.

Children chat confidently using a wide range of language, vocabulary and sentence construction and their thinking and recall skills are excellently promoted at circle time. Children talk about the toy 'alien' brought in by a child. Staff skilfully reinforce learning through the well planned activities they provide. Children's individual needs are met. The environment is rich in language promoted through visual stimuli such as labels, dual language books, and pictures and posters. Children thoroughly enjoy the valuable play experiences. They are inquisitive and ask questions as they play. Children confidently count in ten and know their colours and shapes. Children recognise familiar letters of the alphabet in their names and recall the sound each makes. They enjoy simple sound games like 'Simon says', taking turns to provide clues to the other children and staff. Children are very confident, friendly and have fun. They eagerly join in numerous activities which are used to extend children's mathematical skills. They count the number of rollers required for each child and recognise when they have too many or not enough.

Children begin to make sense of the world around them. They benefit from visits from people who help us within the community. They learn about fire safety through visits from the fire fighters and how to keep safe. Parents are encouraged to visit and talk to the children about their work or about different cultures. Children's art work is creatively displayed on walls throughout the pre-school. Children listen to staff and follow simple instructions. They stand still when staff shake the tambourine and line up to go to the toilet. Children work well together and develop socially. They enjoy each others' company and work well together during activities.

The manager and staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the 'Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage' and how young children learn. The learning environment and programme of activities allows for child led and adult led activities to be completed. The learning environment is well organised and planned to provide a broad and balanced curriculum across the six areas of learning. The teaching is well suited to the needs of the children attending. The planned activities reflect the community the children come from and from the wider world. The teaching of the different areas of learning truly interests the children. Children are focused, able to resist distractions and persist for some time working on their own and with their key worker. Staff support the children very well. They skilfully challenge children by using questioning and reinforce learning through daily activities and routines. Children are very well behaved. All children are valued and included. Planning allows for differentiation to take place and for adaptations for different children's age and ability. Therefore the inclusion of all children is actively planned and monitored. Staff collect comprehensive information from parents about what their child can do on registering. These include a child's personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication skills. The detailed information gained from assessments is used to show achievement and progress. However, children's next steps are not used by staff to inform planning or linked to the progress reports for all children. These completed records on children's progress are welcomed by parents and local schools. Children work at their own pace; they are given sufficient time to maximise their learning and play experience. Staff are sensitive to all children's individual needs. Children are very relaxed and have a loving relationship with staff. Children show a keen interest in what they do; they ask questions and use their initiative while at play. Children take responsibility for themselves and the environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time spent at the pre-school. All children are welcome and fully included in the life of the setting. Children play harmoniously together and are very considerate towards each other. They begin to understand and respect the values and feelings of others through activities and daily routines. Children mix well together and form constructive and harmonious relationships. Their understanding of equality is promoted through the many activities that encourage equal play. During activities they show consideration towards others as they share and take turns. Staff are sensitive to all children's individual needs and met by staff in discussion with their parents. Children are very relaxed and have a loving relationship with staff who are on hand to help, praise and constantly support the children throughout the session. Children are very familiar with the routine. They take responsibility for themselves and the environment as they help each other tidy up and line up to wash their own hands. Children take part in many activities that celebrate diversity where they begin to appreciate their own culture and the cultural traditions of others. For example, children celebrate Christmas by taking part in a nativity play in the Church and celebrate Chinese New Year. They taste Chinese food and learn about Chinese culture, dress and traditional dance and music. Children access numerous resources that promote positive images of difference and diversity. Photos, posters and pictures of positive images adorn the walls of the classroom, Children read dual language books in Mandarin and Maori. They access soft bodied dolls in traditional dress from a number of different cultural backgrounds. During circle time children begin to value each other's contributions as they listen to each other when sharing personal experiences. Children begin to become aware of the wider society as they listen to the travelling adventures of the manager as she describes her visits to Hong Kong and New Zealand, and her visits to help orphaned children in a several countries.

Children behave very well. The positive strategies staff use encourage children to explain their behaviour and acknowledge wrong doing. Any incidents of unwanted or challenging behaviour are recorded and explained to parents. However, the recording method used to record such incidents does not fully maintain confidentiality as both parties names are listed. Staff listen to children, praise achievements and provide individual support and comfort when required. Children become aware of their own needs and the needs of others. They show concern for other who get upset and put a caring arm around them. They make suitable choices and decisions about their play from the continuous free play opportunities available to them and adult directed activities. Staff fully support children's interests and change the activity following the requests of the children or in spontaneous play situations. Children's confidence and self-assurance are fully promoted by staff constantly praising achievement. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children make a positive contribution because staff have a good relationship with parents and carers. Children settle easily, supported by the induction arrangements in place. They are introduced to their 'key worker' who has responsibility for them throughout their time in the pre-school. Children's individual care needs are discussed with parents prior to registering. Their initial developmental starting points and achievements already reached in the home are obtained from parents. Ongoing assessment in the pre-school informs the progress reports and child profiles completed by staff and is made available for parents. Parents feel well informed about their children. They see a big difference in their children from when they first started and they are continually updated on the level of progress their child has made towards the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage. Parents and children are made very welcome. They are extremely happy with the care and education their children receive. Parents express a high regard for the managers and staff of the setting. They say how fantastic the setting is and how welcoming, friendly, helpful and approachable staff are who care for their children. Parents are provided with information about the nursery and the care and activities within a detailed prospectus. The policies and procedures for the pre-school are maintained, however, they are not readily available to parents. The complaints procedure is displayed. Parents and staff are aware of the procedures for complaints and a system to record complaints is established. Children's daily activities are shared verbally with parents on collection and within home school diaries. Opportunities to discuss their child's progress are welcomed by parents and staff. Information about the weekly activities and planned topic for the coming terms is contained in regular newsletters which are given to parents. Children's exceptional progress is welcomed by parents. Opportunities to extend and reinforce children's learning potential at home is firmly established. Examples of this are detailed in newsletters showing how parents can collect items linked to the theme or topic and sing particular songs with children. Parents' evenings held at the pre-school create a social occasion and also linked to particular topics such as introducing phonics.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for by adults who have a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. Most staff members hold appropriate qualifications. Children benefit from a well organised environment where staff are experienced practitioners who work extremely well together as a team. They are clear on their roles and responsibilities which shows in their daily practice. The recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff checks are rigorously completed and the induction procedure ensures that the policies and

procedures are applied. Staff appraisals are completed and individual training needs are recognised with continual training and development fully encouraged. Staff have an excellent understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Regular staff meetings take place to make sure continuity is maintained and information and planning is developed following children's interests. Positive behaviour management strategies ensure children's self esteem and confidence is fully promoted and consistently applied in practice. The premises are well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is suitably laid out to maximise play opportunities. It is effectively organised to allow choice, independence and decision making and to encourage children to explore the environment. Children are provided with natural materials to enable investigation and exploration. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. Small group sizes and staff deployment contribute to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement, and the ability to take an active part in the pre-school. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being are in place and regularly reviewed.

Leadership and management of the nursery education provided for children is good. An all-inclusive environment is provided where all children are included and treated with equal concern. Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals from the effective learning experiences planned for and through the exciting and stimulating activities provided. The manager is committed to the development and continual improvement of the pre-school and has a clear vision for future improvements. These include provision of a specific outdoor play area and nature area, and the alteration of the storage room into a craft area for children. Planning is well recorded and maintained, and detailed observations are used to highlight areas of progress and development. Staff complete detailed progress reports for parents. Home school diaries acknowledge activities undertaken by children and comments added from parents. The manager motivates staff well. They all enthusiastically work well as a team to promote children's all-round development and the care and routines of the pre-school. Staff act as good role models by actively taking part. They effectively deploy themselves where children play and motivate the children by challenging and reinforcing the learning taking place. Daily routines are followed although they are flexible to the children's needs. Children's personal information is collected and recorded. Their individual needs are known and children are very well supported. Parents are provided with a prospectus containing information about the provision. The key worker system is established and children relate well to them. Parents are kept informed about their child's day on collection and welcome the detailed information, parents' evenings and extra activities, to help their child at home. Staff know the children well and can identify the progress and achievement each child has reached.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve documentation and record keeping, safety, planning of activities and children's access to resources that help develop competence in information and communication technology.

Since that last inspection the provider has enhanced and improved documentation and record keeping including planning systems. All systems are in place and meticulously followed. The teaching of health and bodily awareness is fully promoted in everyday routines and daily opportunities are offered to children to develop their competence in the use of information and communication technology. All policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect current legislation and guidance. All documentation required including

parental consents and children's personal information is obtained from parents. Safety aspects identified at the last inspection have improved. The doors are monitored and secured and children cannot access the kitchen.

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):

- make sure all staff update their knowledge and understanding in child protection issues and procedures
- make sure all policies and procedures are made accessible for parents.

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):

- make sure the next steps in children's learning are identified.

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