

St Augustine's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290672
Inspection date	16 April 2008
Inspector	Sharon Waterfall
Setting Address	Herbert Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 3QE
Telephone number	07840 055899
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Registered person	St Augustines's 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St. Augustine's Pre-School Group opened in 2004. It operates from facilities at St. Augustine's Church which is located in the centre of Solihull. Facilities include, a large hall, kitchen, quiet room, toilets and storage areas. The group serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 20 children from two to five years on roll, including 12 funded three-year-olds. The group is in receipt of funding for early education and supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

The group opens three days a week on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday during school term time only from 09:30 to 12:00.

There are six staff who work with the children. The staff meet the minimum requirements for holding a recognised early years qualification, with other staff working towards them. They receive support from an advisory teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is adequately promoted as the setting takes appropriate steps to prevent the spread of infection, has suitable hygiene procedures and provides nutritious snacks. Children are supported in washing their hands after messy play activities, after toileting and before snack time. Through these procedures they are learning about the importance of personal hygiene. Similarly tissues are sought quickly and easily by staff for children with runny noses. Relevant information is sought from parents regarding children's medical needs and a sick children's policy is shared with them. Accident records are completed accurately supporting children's health care needs, though a limited number of staff hold first aid certificates which does not promote children's welfare in the event of an emergency.

Children extend their knowledge of healthy eating through having fruit options to choose from and a variety of other snacks such as, cheese and crackers. They are well-nourished and become independent eaters as they choose their own snacks from those offered. Their dietary needs are met because any medical, cultural or allergy needs are recorded on the children's information sheets and staff discuss these with parents. Although children are offered drinks at snack times they are unable to access drinks independently at other times.

Children enjoy using the varied range of indoor physical equipment. They are beginning to develop confidence in the movements they can make, for example jumping higher on the small trampoline and needing less support from staff. They use both pedalled and ride-on toys as they become more adept at co-ordinating more parts of their body in unison. Staff support children in their throwing and catching skills, moving closer and aiming specifically to help develop children's self-esteem and confidence. Through ring games and action rhymes the children move their bodies in intended ways as they pretend during the songs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The staff are very aware of risks to children and have taken good steps to make the setting safe, for example, the children's security is safeguarded by rigorous access and collection procedures and consistent premises locking systems. Children are well-supervised throughout the session and in all areas of the premises. All regulatory procedures are in place and therefore children's overall safety is upheld. A missing child policy is clearly in place meaning, in an emergency, staff have a clear procedure to follow which promotes immediate action and a consistent search pattern and reporting procedures.

The new committee are fully aware of their responsibilities within the child protection reporting procedures and liaison with appropriate agencies. Staff's strong knowledge of child protection and relevant procedures means children's safety and well-being is supported. Management staff have attended updated training ensuring that correct reporting procedures and legislative requirements are in place.

Children are cared for in premises that is secure and suitable for its purpose. Staff ensure that the environment gives children access to an appropriate range of activities that promote general development. Children are able to move independently around the setting, which is clean and well-maintained. There are displays of children's work around the room and the bright and

warm décor supports children's sense of belonging. A good range of toys, equipment and furniture are provided for the children, which are kept in a clean and safe condition.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

An appropriate framework is being used to support the younger children. Children aged from two years now attend the setting and they are completing activities planned and provided for their age and stage of development. There is a good variety in the types of activities the children can access and they are gaining many positive learning experiences that are stimulating and interesting. For some of the younger children the setting offers many new experiences and is the first time they have been in a form of day care. Within this they need and receive support in separating from their carer and are beginning to form social attachments to staff and other children. They are using paints, crayons and play dough, experiencing books, songs and routines and using construction and role play. Therefore they are beginning to mark-make and represent, problem solve and reason, see print in the environment and enjoy stories and engage in songs and physical development. Key-workers use observations, assessments and planned activities for individual learning which means that the younger children are being challenged and can build on what they already know. The session structure enables the children to partake in a balance of quiet and more physical activities.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate that they have an appropriate and developing knowledge of the Foundation Stage, how to implement it effectively and of how young children learn. Planning relates to the six areas of learning equally and therefore a balanced curriculum is provided for the children. Information gained from parents is used effectively to aid children settling into the sessions and to plan initial experiences for them. Ongoing observations and assessments by the consistent key-worker system are beginning to feed into the planning though this is not consistently used currently. Staff have evaluated gaps in activities that relate to all learning areas to ensure that a full curriculum is offered to the children relating to all ages and stages of development as a strong starting point. At times staff are still over directing aspects of children's play such as in the creative and role play areas which limits the challenge and extension of autonomous learning. The transitions from one part of the routine to another run smoothly with expectations for children's behaviour being appropriately managed.

The children are motivated learners and are keen to access resources and engage in activities as they confidently separate from their carers. They play in self-selected activities and move around the variety of resources confidently. The children enjoy having responsibilities such as helping to tidy away and clean up the water play area. Their independence is not always encouraged through some of the activities and daily routines as staff over direct and do things for the children that they could begin to negotiate for themselves.

Opportunities for mark-making are provided through various creative activities such as painting, and wet sand, and the writing area is freely available to children. However, within role play there are missed opportunities for children to write for meaning such as using shopping lists, recording sales and writing receipts. They enjoy listening to stories and access the book area through choice to look at the books.

A range of interesting hands-on experiences aid the children in learning about the world around them and problem solving. For example, children use cereal in a tray to experience volume and use mathematical language. Lemon peel and cinnamon in the play dough gives a different

texture and possibilities for language development. The creative activities are becoming more child-led and they enjoy printing with fruits and vegetables, looking at patterns and discussing their knowledge of how they are cooked and what they have eaten at home. The children are progressing appropriately towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The setting has an effective key-person system and therefore one member of staff is responsible for the overall development and welfare of a group of individual children. Use of observations and assessments are used to provide children with activities that aid their individual development and learning. Staff are sensitive, they comfort children who are upset as they enter and help to settle them into the pre-school. They interact very positively with the children through activities and ensure all children's immediate care needs are met, with regard to such things as children's toileting, snack and drink needs, emotional needs if upset and ensuring children are occupied during the sessions. Books and resources display positive images of differing cultures, races and religions with children's learning and understanding of positive attitudes to cultural diversity being promoted as differing religious events are celebrated. Staff use their knowledge of child development to identify children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and seek support from parents and appropriate agencies to promote children's inclusion. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children's positive behaviour is promoted as a result of staff's implementation of effective strategies such as discussing with children about sharing with their peers through activities. They are learning about acceptable social skills through the daily routines as they sit at the table for snacks and drinks and line up to move rooms. Staff are appropriate role models and are very positive with the children, praising them and celebrating their achievements, which helps to raise their self-esteem. Use of sticker charts encourages continued positive behaviour from the children through reward.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The group provides parents with a great deal of information about their service through a variety of means. Information is gained from parents on admission about children's abilities and is used effectively to begin to plan activities that will support individual progress. Parents are continually involved with children's ongoing progress as agreed learning outcomes are discussed each term as they look at children's overall progress with their key-worker.

Information regarding topics and activities that support the Foundation Stage is shared with parents through a regular newsletter and white board in the foyer. Parents are asked to come in on a rota and support the sessions or share information regarding a skill or culture as a way of being an active part of their children's learning. Discussions with parents evidence that they have a much better awareness of the Foundation Stage and how the activities support children's development. For example, they have noticed that children's creative work is very much more individual.

Extra details such as a sharing tree, where parents relay children's achievements at home to staff and the nursery rhyme book that the children and families have put together provides evidence of a working partnership. The settling-in procedure for young children is discussed and agreed with parents, ensuring the children are comforted and aided in becoming familiar with the setting. Verbal daily communication is evident and parents feel welcome at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The committee has shown much dedication and commitment in improving the care and education provided by the setting. They have sought and implemented advice and strategies from a range of childcare professionals whilst recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff to move the setting forward. Staff training has been given priority ensuring up to date information and ideas are brought into the setting and put into practice. The staff are fully supported by an active committee who are fully aware of their roles and legal responsibilities. Regular meetings with both management and staff mean that the information is shared and a consistent ethos is known and implemented by all. The task of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of new ideas, routines, learning and improvements is ongoing as further adaptations are made continually.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The setting is welcoming and staff are warm and caring. The management team have a growing awareness of the Foundation Stage and how to implement it effectively. Planning relates to the appropriate ages and stages of the children attending, with regard given to using observations to assess children's progress. The staff as a team hold regular meetings to ensure consistent practice is promoted as they also hold responsibilities as key-workers. Though staff have agreed learning outcomes with parents these are not being currently used to inform future planning for children. This is being developed as all staff are working towards enabling children to gain more independence using the feedback of information from the key-workers. A varied range of interesting activities and resources are provided and children enjoy their time within the sessions.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection six actions were raised to improve the care and education for children. The setting has worked very hard to ensure that all actions have been successfully implemented and improvements have impacted very positively on the children.

Safety has been improved as staff have undertaken training in child protection issues and the committee are now aware of their responsibilities as employers in this area. A clearly defined policy has been put into place regarding lost or non-collected ensuring that staff act immediately in an emergency.

The partnership with parents has greatly developed, they are now actively involved in their children's learning and have their opinions sought and valued. The information shared has increased and the committee, which is made up of parents, is actively involved in supporting staff and children.

Staff have also attended training on the Foundation Stage and have sought advice and guidance from the advisory teacher and development worker. The recruitment of a suitably experienced manager who works in close partnership with other management staff has ensured that the range of activities and experiences provided for the children has been enriched. Assessment and observations are now completed and are beginning to be used to support future learning.

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):

- ensure fresh drinking water is freely available to children at all times
- ensure there at least one member of staff with a current first aid training certificate on the premises at any one time.

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 the curriculum to include more child-led activities and encourage children to be more independent in their self-care and choices of activities
- use the learning priorities to inform planning basing it on children needs to ensure sufficient challenge for all children
- continue to monitor and develop supporting documentation and evaluate adaptations and improvements.

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