

St Benedict's Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 220174 |
| Inspection date | 11/09/2008 |
| Inspector | Jan Burnet |
| Setting address | St Benedict's Mount, West Hunsbury, Northampton, NN4 9XN |
| Telephone number | 01604 708469 |
| Email | |
| Type of setting | Childcare on non-domestic premises |

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

St. Benedicts Pre-School opened in 1986. It operates from a hall within St. Benedict's Church in the West Hunsbury area of Northampton. An area adjacent to the building is temporarily fenced for outdoor play. There are no suitable toilets for wheelchair users, but the premises are easily accessible.

The pre-school offers morning and afternoon sessions during term time, Monday to Friday. Opening hours are 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:15 to 14:45. Children attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum 17 children aged from two to five years may attend at any one time and there are currently 27 children on roll. This includes nine children aged three years who are in receipt of Government funding for nursery education.

There are six childcare staff, of whom four are qualified and two are working towards an early years qualification. The pre-school is managed by a committee and holds Pre-School Learning Alliance membership and is registered on the early years register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The pre-school provides effectively for children in the EYFS. Staff satisfactorily meet each child's individual needs and promote most aspects of children's welfare and learning successfully. Children are safe and secure and benefit from an experienced and well qualified staff group who work well as a team. Staff ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included and they are aware of children's cultural and religious backgrounds. Information obtained from parents/carers is thorough and they play an active part in their child's learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- extend opportunities for children to explore and investigate and be creative in a greater variety of ways
- provide more opportunities for children to develop confidence and skills with use of large physical play equipment both indoors and outside
- improve systems for washing hands before snack to prevent the spread of infection
- update the complaints procedure and records
- make sure the risk assessment covers anything with which a child comes into contact and extend the record clearly stating when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident
- make sure that the daily record of children looked after includes their hours of attendance and names of key workers.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective safeguarding procedures ensure that children are appropriately protected. For example, vetting procedures meet requirements and all staff have attended Local Safeguarding Children Board training. There are systems in place for monitoring and self-assessment, but methods of identifying weakness in order to implement improvement are not consistently effective. Most of the six recommendations raised at the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily, but ones relating to hygienic systems for hand washing and recording hours of attendance have not, and are being repeated. The attendance record does not include the names of key workers. A recommendation to improve information obtained from and given to parents about their child's education has been implemented well and parents identify good communication. Public information leaflets available on a range of childcare issues are obtained by staff in different languages including Polish and French. Systems are in place to develop links with other providers in order to provide consistency for all children.

Staff qualifications are in line with requirements and clear systems are in place for recruitment, selection and induction. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of how children learn and they assess their own practice, for example, training needs are identified during the year as well as at annual appraisals. Knowledge gained during training is shared between team members to improve practice and ensure that all children benefit. The committee play an active role and their support is valued by staff members. Advice is sort from other professionals. For example, staff explain how supportive the local Special Educational Needs Coordinator has been in enabling them to provide effective inclusive care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Written information provided for parents/carers is generally good as policies and procedures are in place and are displayed. However, the complaints procedure does not meet current requirements and potentially this impacts upon the overall quality of the service provided. Required records are in place and information on each child includes detail from parents on what he or she knows and can do, as well as the child's individual needs. Staff attend activity planning meetings, activities and children's learning are evaluated and this informs future planning. Resources appropriately meet the needs of the children attending.

Children are safe because staff assess and limit risks on a daily basis. However, the risk assessment does not cover everything with which children come into contact, which has the potential to put children at risk.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with satisfactory opportunities to help them make progress across all areas of learning and development. Staff record observations, complete assessment records and use information to plan for individual learning towards next steps. The manager and staff plan activities for all children on a weekly and termly basis, linking some activities to planned themes. A good staff to child ratio ensures

high levels of support are given to children and enables staff to value and include all children. Some information is shared with parents informally each day and access to children's individual records is encouraged.

Personal, social and emotional development is a strength. Children are sociable and confident with staff and visitors, play cooperatively with or alongside others and are learning to share and take turns. Behaviour is good. Children express themselves well, articulating their wants and needs and during show and tell sessions they confidently speak and are learning to listen to others. They are developing manipulative skills with daily use of small equipment, tools and materials including play dough, scissors, knives and forks. They make marks with pencils, chalks, crayons, paint and also with water on outdoor surfaces. Development of physical skills with use of large equipment is limited to occasional use of a wooden climbing frame and slide indoors and periodic trips to the local park. Therefore children do not practise skills regularly enough to become competent and confident.

Planning includes activities for children to explore texture and colour, however, on a day-to-day basis opportunities for children to explore and investigate and be creative are limited. For example, art and craft activities are generally set out by and led by adults and role play resources are minimal. Children count throughout the session, independently as well as with adult support. They sort and match small toys and repeat simple patterns and they are learning to recognise numbers.

Staff create a safe and welcoming environment and children are learning how to keep themselves safe, for example, road safety when out walking. Children learn about healthy eating and the benefit and effects of exercise, however, staff do not consider the risk of cross-infection as children share a bowl of water to wash their hands before eating their snack. Children's welfare is protected because staff have a clear understanding of child protection and implement policies appropriately.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | Satisfactory |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice? | Satisfactory |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement. | Satisfactory |

Leadership and management

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| How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | Satisfactory |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | Satisfactory |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others? | Good |
| How well are children safeguarded? | Satisfactory |

Quality and standards

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| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop? | Satisfactory |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted? | Satisfactory |
| How well are children helped to stay safe? | Satisfactory |
| How well are children helped to be healthy? | Satisfactory |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve? | Satisfactory |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution? | Satisfactory |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | Satisfactory |

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

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.