

St Josephs' Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 402029
Inspection date 03/06/2009
Inspector Lynn Denise Smith

Setting address The Parish Hall, Highview Crescent, Hutton, Brentwood,
Essex, CM13 1BJ

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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 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. Joseph's pre-school is committee owned and managed. It opened in approximately 1960 and operates from a Parish hall in Hutton near Brentwood. A ramp to the hall entrance means that the premises are easily accessible. A secure enclosed outdoor area is used for outdoor play activities. A maximum of 26 children aged from three to five years may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open five days a week from 09.00 to 12.00 during term time.

There are currently 50 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. They live in the local area and a number of children also attend a childminder, early years unit of the local primary school or another pre-school.

There are 10 members of staff, including the manager of the early years provision. The manager has Early Years Professional Status and seven staff hold other appropriate early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of each individual child's needs which enables them to promote their welfare, learning and development effectively. Children's safety is considered at all times and they are encouraged to keep themselves safe by following the staff's clear directions. The high adult to child ratios in place enable each child to fully benefit from their pre-school experience in a well-planned and inclusive setting. Robust self-evaluation of the setting by the staff team and parents identifies any areas for improvement, changes are then implemented in accordance with the feedback received. Good links with parents and other establishments providing for the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children's continuous learning is effectively shared and the transition between settings is smooth.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a system of using information gained from parents as an aid to planning to help individual children make progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure all relevant documentation regarding staff is accessible and available for inspection.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for all children (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).

18/06/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting is led and managed by a voluntary committee comprising mostly of current parents. The committee supports a staff team which consists of a good balance of new and more established staff. All staff are recruited through the setting's clear procedures ensuring that all adults have been appropriately vetted and cleared. Systems are in place to enable the setting to review and evaluate the policies and practices and parents are asked to contribute towards this process through questionnaires and by re-visiting a 'policy of the week' and providing feedback on it's effectiveness. The setting has made a number of improvements to it's practices over the previous months including implementing more first-hand experiences for children rather than using pre-printed work sheets to evidence their progress.

Children are effectively safeguarded and protected from harm as staff have completed an in-house safeguarding course. They feel confident about following the written procedures and understand their responsibilities. The premises both indoors and outdoors is kept safe and secure as staff carry out daily risk assessments to identify any potential hazards. Written policies and procedures are in place and support the staff's practices. Documentation regarding the children's details, home information and development are effectively recorded, however, there is currently no process in place for obtaining parent's written consent to seek emergency medical treatment. Records regarding staff are also limited and copies of the staff's qualifications are not held on site.

The setting works effectively with parents and other provisions following the EYFS. Good links are in place with the local school which is adjacent to the premises and the two settings regularly share visits.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's welfare, learning and development needs are effectively met by a group of caring and consistent staff. Children develop a sound understanding about keeping safe and healthy as they follow the staff's clear directions on good hygiene and safe practices. Children are actively encouraged to become independent as toilets and washing facilities are integral to the main hall. Children are very fit and active as they participate in energetic activities which help them to understand how their bodies react to exercise in the pre-school garden. Children have excellent opportunities to make choices about playing indoors or outdoors as they are offered continuous free flow play between the hall and garden. Children actively participate in preparing their mid session snack which comprises of an exciting range of fresh and healthy foods. They use a safe cutting machine to make neat, easy to handle cucumber and carrot sticks and enthusiastically dip their Pitta bread into the bowls of Humous. Drinks are always available for children and they proficiently pour their own water throughout the session as well as their milkshake and juice at snack time. The snack is offered through a 'snack bar

system', enabling the children to choose when to sit down and eat and for how long.

Children play and learn in a welcoming and attractive environment. The premises used offer a good amount of clear floor space which staff utilise effectively to provide children with an exciting and enabling environment. Toys and activities are presented on low tables and floor mats both indoors and outdoors, making them easily accessible.

Children's unique needs, likes and dislikes are recognised by staff and well met through the setting's inclusive policies. Parents share information about their children's home backgrounds and starting points with their child's key worker verbally, however, at present this information is not clearly recorded to show how staff are using it to assess children's progress. Staff make clear observations of the children's achievements and present photographic evidence and examples of drawings and creative work in individual scrap books. The information is also plotted against the stepping stones to show each child's stage of development. The scrap books provide a very clear and interesting picture of the children's learning journeys. Children participate in a wide range of exciting and stimulating activities which enable them to make progress in all six areas of development. They have very good opportunities to make marks in a range of ways, such as, in sand trays and with shaving foam. Children chat confidently and re-tell real and imaginary stories. Children learn about nature and the living world as they explore planting and growing. They excitedly turn a very large box into a comfortable den with blankets and other toys from the garden. They take 'Josh' the persona doll in their den with them and reassure him, as he is feeling a bit worried about starting school soon.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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