

# St. Charles' Catholic Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	226235
<b>Inspection date</b>	19/06/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Underwood
<b>Setting address</b>	Bosworth Road, Measham, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 7LQ
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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 Charles' RC Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from a mobile classroom, with associated facilities, in the grounds of St. Charles' R.C. School in the village of Measham. The children also have access to further toilets and the computer room in school, a safely enclosed outdoor play area and the school field. The pre-school serves the village and the surrounding rural area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early years Register and may care for 14 children each session. There are currently 45 children from two-and-a-half to five years on roll. This includes 19 nursery education funded three-year-olds and 18 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

Children who speak English as their first language, but also have an additional language, currently attend the pre school. Staff have experience of caring for children identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pre school opens five days each week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 12.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 09.00 to 11.30 on Tuesday and Thursday. There are afternoon sessions from 12.30 to 15.30 on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and from 13.00 to 15.30 on Wednesday afternoons. The sessions on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are for children aged four.

Five members of staff work with children throughout the week. Four members of staff usually work each morning and three each afternoon session. Three members of staff have National Vocational Qualifications in Childcare to Level 3. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and works cooperatively with the school.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children attending the St Charles' Catholic Pre-School enjoy good provision. Staff are dedicated and committed to ensuring children are well cared for, safe and secure. Children enjoy a range of activities that reflect all areas of learning, which encourages them to explore the world around them. Parents have very positive views of the setting and the way staff care for their children. The setting effectively supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. The leader and staff know the strengths and areas for development well. As a consequence, capacity for further improvement is good.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the outdoor area to reflect more closely the activities in the classroom
- clarify the next steps for learning in the learning journals to more effectively

inform staff when planning appropriate challenges for each child

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Staff are committed to ensuring the pre school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. They work well together as a team, know their roles and responsibilities and are actively encouraged to seek further training to extend their knowledge. All staff are carefully vetted and hold appropriate qualifications. Risk assessments are carried out annually with regular daily checks. All policies are reviewed by the staff and updated as required. Effective systems are in place to identify any child who may be at risk. Consequently children are well protected and safe. A good range of resources is available and readily accessible for the children, who enjoy choosing what they want to play with.

Parents express every confidence in the pre-school and appreciate how hard staff work to look after their children. 'My child loves coming, can't wait to get here': 'I really enjoy my child's learning journey - its good to know what they can do': 'My child would come Saturday and Sunday if it was open'. These comments support the responses found in the parent's questionnaire. The learning journals contain a lot of useful detail and photographs, about what each child can do and has done. Parents are encouraged to contribute and share information about what their child can do at home.

The pre-school has a very good relationship with the school and especially with the reception teacher. The older children visit the reception class regularly, attend assemblies, stay for lunch and join the reception class's playtime. The pre-school leader and reception teacher share information about the children and about the activities they provide. As a result, transition to the school is less traumatic and a smooth process for them. The playgroup is forging links with other local early years providers. Strong links with outside agencies ensure appropriate provision and support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for children for whom English is an additional language.

The leader and staff have all contributed to a written evaluation of the pre-school's strengths and areas for development. An action plan has highlighted priorities for immediate action and all recommendations from the previous inspection have been very competently addressed. Consequently they are well placed to move forward.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

A stimulating, exciting and very caring environment greets the children as they arrive. A wide range of activities, that reflect all areas of learning, encourage children to explore their surroundings. Planning is clearly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements but also takes into account the needs and interests of the children. Assessment procedures are detailed and highlight the next steps for learning. However these are very general and not specific to effectively inform planning to ensure all children are appropriately challenged. However despite this, children make good progress from whatever their starting points. The learning

journals clearly track each child's progress. Key workers have a vital role in planning for their group and in helping them to settle and be happy.

Staff are very caring and supportive. They make children's welfare a priority. They have very good relationships with the children thus ensuring children are confident, happy, settled and safe. Children are very well behaved because good behaviour is praised and encouraged. Personal and social skills are developing very well as children are learning to wait patiently for their turn, to share resources, to help and respect each other and to play together. Celebrations from other cultures feature regularly in the planning and photographs show how much children have enjoyed joining in.

There is a strong emphasis on developing communication and number skills. Open-ended questions provide children with opportunities to express their thoughts and views. During a good story time session children respond eagerly to the questions about Goldilocks' feelings, and was she doing the right thing? The story was used to help children think about 'Stranger Danger' and keeping themselves safe, as well as right and wrong. There was limited evidence of number activities being readily available, although planning clearly shows a lot of activities provide that focus. One child was asked to count plates, beakers and chairs for the snack table, enhancing their number skills as well as making a useful contribution to the setting. The computer is very popular and children demonstrate good mouse control as they play a variety of games.

The outdoor area is a hive of activity especially when the sun is shining, with children riding bikes up and down, watering plants or chalking on the blackboards. However the activities outside do not reflect all the areas of learning and the grassed area is in need of further development. Plans have already been drawn up to do this. The pre school has use of the school hall and uses the facility to enhance children's physical development through music and movement.

Healthy snacks of fruit, vegetables, milk and water are readily available for the children when they want them. Discussions about healthy lifestyle and stress on personal hygiene help children begin to understand, and promote well, the need for healthy living.

All the above activities prepare the children well for the next stage of their lives.

## 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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	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?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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