

St George The Martyr Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	203635
Inspection date	13/07/2009
Inspector	Ann Marie Cozzi
Setting address	St George's Church Hall, Ongar Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9EE
Telephone number	07808 638 122
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 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 George the Martyr Pre-School opened in 1980. It is registered to provide care for a maximum of 26 children in the early years age group at any one time. There are currently 38 children on roll, 29 of whom are in receipt of early years funding.

The pre-school operates from a church hall in Brentwood, Essex. It is open each weekday from 09.30 until 12.15, term time only. The pre-school have a fully enclosed outdoor play space. The entrance is accessible as there are no steps leading into the main hall and toilet facilities are on the ground floor. There are some systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school currently employs eight members of staff, of whom six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. There are limited systems in place to accurately monitor children's individual progress. As a result, the uniqueness of each child is not fully identified in order to ensure that no child is disadvantaged. Communication with parents and other providers with regard to children's learning is limited. The staff team demonstrate some understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), however, this is not consistently implemented in practice and as a result children's progress in learning and development is insecure. There are weaknesses in staff's understanding of protecting children's welfare inside and outside of the setting. There are no effective systems for self-evaluation in order to promote future improvements.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that all children are supported in their progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning by making systematic observations and assessments and using these to plan relevant and motivating experiences for each child (Early learning goals) 07/09/2009
- plan and organise systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and 07/09/2009

development experience, including developing a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion in order to promote improvement (Educational programmes)

- ensure continuity and coherence by sharing relevant information with other providers and with parents (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/09/2009
- ensure that an effective safeguarding children policy is in place and understood by all staff, including the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/09/2009
- promote the good health of children and take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection; with particular regard to an effective cleaning routine for resources and children's daily hygiene routines (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/09/2009
- ensure records are easily accessible and available for inspection by Ofsted (Documentation) 07/09/2009
- ensure that parents and carers are provided with all appropriate information; this is in reference to required policies and procedures (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/09/2009
- take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, this is with particular regard to ensuring all staff are aware of the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 07/09/2009
- ensure that a record is maintained with regard to particular aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis and when and by whom they have been checked; risk assessment should cover anything with which a child may come into contact (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 07/09/2009
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children both indoors and outdoors are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 07/09/2009
- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing, ensure that this is reviewed before embarking on each specific outing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 07/09/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership and management of this setting does not sufficiently focus on ensuring the implementation of welfare requirements, raising achievement and

promoting the personal development of individuals. Staff appraisals are currently being undertaken and staff are encouraged to attend training which promotes their ongoing professional development. The management team have started to undertake a self-evaluation of the provision, however, this is not securely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and does not seek the views of others. As a result, systems for monitoring are not meaningful and although the management team is aware of some areas of weakness, limited action has been taken to implement improvements.

There is a range of policies and procedures in place, however, they are not always implemented in practice and some contain information which is out of date or incomplete, for example, safeguarding children. In addition some records are not easily accessible for inspection, for example, information regarding the required checks undertaken by staff. Deployment of staff across the setting ensures that the pre-school routine is implemented. Staff ensure that resources are accessible to children, however, due to the setting's routine and the organisation and maintenance of resources, at times children's access to all areas of learning is limited, for example, toys and resources that incorporate information and communication technology.

Staff demonstrate a limited understanding of safeguarding children issues as set out in current national guidance. The organisation of documentation relating to accident records does not ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Risk assessments are in place for the premises, although, they are not sufficiently maintained and do not include all areas accessible to children. Staff undertake daily safety checks inside and in the outdoor play area, however, children's good health and safety is potentially compromised because staff do not always recognise hazards to children. For example, a number of broken and unused pieces of large play equipment stacked in a corner of the garden, a pool of rainwater on a sheet of tarpaulin, access to a holly bush, potential access to the kitchen area which contains low level hazards to children such as sharp knives, glass and plastic bags. In addition, full risk assessments are not undertaken for each type of outing. This does not ensure the safe and effective management of the pre-school. The security of the premises prevents children leaving unnoticed and alerts staff of persons trying to gain unauthorised access to the building. Some staff have a current paediatric first aid qualification and the management team ensure that at least one person with a qualification is on the premises at all times when children are present.

Children's learning and development is not fostered consistently, this is in part due to a lack of understanding of the EYFS. Consequently, observations of how children are progressing towards the early learning goals are not undertaken systematically and contain insufficient information across the six areas of learning. As a result, activities are not planned to meet children's individual needs and to support them to make progress in all areas of learning. Parents and carers are provided with verbal information relating to children's care and some information via display boards in the lobby of the setting, however, they do not have access to the setting's policies and procedures as required. In addition, because the system for observing, assessing and identifying children's next steps in learning is not fully operational there are few opportunities provided for parents and carers to share

secure information about their individual child's learning. There are no systems for working in partnership with other providers of the EYFS to ensure all children receive complementary provision. Parents and carers speak positively about the care provided for their children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff organise a sound range of activities which are linked to some areas of learning, however, these are not securely based on what children know and can do. There is a lack of consistency amongst staff in promoting learning opportunities in every day activities, for example, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy during snack time to build on children's varying knowledge, understanding and skills in order that they make sufficient progress towards the early learning goals.

Behaviour management is consistently implemented with a satisfactory range of strategies used by staff, however, at times the organisation of the day places expectations on children which are inappropriate to their level of maturity and understanding. For example, the pre-school routine does not take account of the varying concentration levels of the children attending. This impacts negatively on their behaviour and younger children become distracted during registration time or lose concentration during group story time. In addition, the daily routine limits children's ability to make independent decisions about their play. Children are not always provided with challenges which are appropriate to their individual needs and as a result, some children disengage from activities and become bored and disruptive, for example, shouting to each other and getting up from the table at snack time to wander around.

Children have developed warm and caring relationships with staff. They display confidence as they seek out adults for support and comfort. Many children communicate well with staff and visitors to the setting, proudly showing their paintings and how they can make the scooter move. There are some opportunities to develop children's literacy such as mark making when painting and using chalks on the pavement in the garden, however, this is not consistent, for example, children are not always given the opportunity to write their own name on their artwork. There are some opportunities to develop children's language, for example, as a staff member introduces new and descriptive words to children during a conversation about outer space. There are some chances for children to begin to develop skills in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, for example, whilst playing a game which requires them to count and identify numbers on a mat, however, everyday opportunities to consolidate this learning are often missed by staff.

Children enjoy taking part in creative opportunities, such as role play and craft, although this is somewhat limited due to the organisation of the daily routine and staff's understanding of the EYFS and how children learn through play. There are currently limited resources available for children to develop their skills and understanding of information and communication technology. There are few planned opportunities for children to independently explore and investigate. Adult-

initiated and child-led learning takes place during role play, for example, as staff help children develop their ideas about how to organise a party. Children engage in vigorous physical play each day in the pre-school garden. They use a range of large play equipment such as a climbing frame and wheeled toys which helps them to develop their spatial awareness. However, at times access to the outdoor environment is limited due to the pre-school routine. Children at times take part in occasional outings.

Children have access to water and are provided with a balanced range of snacks each day. Parents and carers provide information about their child's individual dietary requirements at the start of placement. However, children's understanding with regard to developing healthy habits such as good hygiene practice is not promoted. Although they are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks their understanding is not developed as they are not given sufficient explanation to understand why it is important. In addition, the setting does not promote good hygiene practice as resources and equipment are not regularly checked to ensure they are clean. The organisation of the setting does not take into account the children's level of understanding and maturity to fully support their understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.

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?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	4
How well are children safeguarded?	4

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	4
How well are children helped to be healthy?	4
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	4
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	4

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

