

St George The Martyr Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	203635
Inspection date	17/03/2010
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion
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

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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).

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

St George the Martyr Pre-school is run by a committee. It opened in 1980 and operates from a church hall in Brentwood, Essex. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Session times are from 9.30am until 12.15pm.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to five years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. There are systems in place to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The pre-school employs eight staff, of whom six of the staff, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority, Pre-School Learning Alliance and an advisory teacher from the nearby children's centre.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected and promoted by the caring staff team to ensure they are fully supported and included. The staff work well with parents, carers and other professionals to promote an integrated approach to children's care and learning. Staff implement mainly effective practices and procedures to fully safeguard children and promote their welfare. Significant progress has been made since the last inspection and all areas needing improvement are now successfully addressed. The staff team are now using self-evaluation to give them a clearer picture of the strengths and areas to develop further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the risk assessment to cover anything with which a child may come into contact (this refers to the hot water, radiators and pipes in the toilet area)
- evaluate everyday activities and the use of resources to enhance the opportunities for children to practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- provide an environment rich in print where children can discover that words convey meaning and offer more resources that portray diversity to stimulate new ideas and different ways of thinking.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented by designated staff, who have a very competent understanding of their role and responsibility should a child protection concern arise. Rigorous recruitment procedures and ongoing suitability checks are in place, to ensure children are cared for by suitable persons. The staff are vigilant about security. An alarm is fitted to the entrance doors and any visitors to the pre-school are closely monitored. Risk assessment is consistently conducted, recorded and reviewed to keep children generally safe both indoors and outside and on outings. However, although children are closely supervised, not all hazards on the premises are identified in the risk assessments and potentially children's safety is compromised when they have access to very hot water, radiators and pipes in the toilet area.

The supervisors and staff have a clear vision for the future and have taken many positive steps since the last inspection to improve outcomes for children. There is now a strong team spirit amongst the staff with effective encouragement from a very supportive committee and the parents. By working closely with development workers and an advisory teacher the staff have significantly developed their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children now make good progress in their learning. The staff have considered their strengths and areas for improvement using the views of parents, children and others to form challenging, appropriate action plans for the future.

Staff successfully identify and respect children's individual and unique qualities in order to ensure that they provide an inclusive environment for all. Each week staff identify children's individual needs and enthusiasms to effectively to plan activities that support their interests. Key persons and the special educational needs coordinator ensure when necessary that children also get the support they need from outside agencies. A variety of festivals from the cultural and religious calendar are shared with children so that they gain respect and understanding for peoples differences and similarities.

Children benefit from the good relationships between the staff and their parents. Information is openly shared and parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning by joining sessions and sharing their skills. Notice boards, newsletters and the pre-school website are used effectively to keep parents informed about the Early Years Foundation Stage. The views of parents are sought by distributing questionnaires or through discussions with key persons. The majority of parents speak positively about the pre-school and appreciate the efforts of the staff team in keeping them informed about their children's progress and achievements. Effective systems for liaising with other pre-schools and childminders have been set up to ensure that there is continuity in children's care and learning. The staff also link with other professionals working with children to ensure that sufficient support is offered when they start full-time education.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are happy, confident and independent individuals who benefit from the sensitive care and wide range of activities and play opportunities provided. They relish the freedom to choose between indoor and outdoor play and build strong bonds with the staff team, particularly their key persons. Children confidently communicate with staff and visitors about things that are important to them, such as birthdays or what they did at the weekend with their parents. There are many animated conversations; the experienced staff ask carefully formed questions that elicit interesting answers from the children, particularly when they are investigating the insects and mini beasts they find when digging the garden or exploring under logs.

The staff understand that children have different learning styles and ensure that a full range of activities linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage are offered both indoors and outside every day. There are some constraints with storage on the premises and the staff have already recognised the need to provide a more comfortable and inspiring book corner and also to build on the resources that depict and value multi-cultural society. Therefore, children do not yet have a learning environment rich in print and there is currently limited everyday access to artefacts and images that portray diversity and stimulate new ideas and different ways of thinking.

Good systems are in place to observe and assess the children as they play and staff use this information to identify children's interests and next steps in learning. Consequently, learning experiences are soundly based on what children know and can do and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Key persons compile informative learning profiles for every child with many positive observations supported by photographs and examples of the children's work. However, although adult-led activities are evaluated and comprehensively documented, the staff are not consistently assessing how the continuous play equipment is chosen or used by children. Consequently, sometimes everyday resources are not presented in a way to challenge or inspire children to practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills.

Children's welfare and safety is robustly supported. They feel safe in the setting and with the staff as they confidently approach adults and respond positively to the established hygiene and safety routines. They learn about danger and personal safety through themed activities, routines and staff example. Children understand why they should wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. They are provided with healthy nutritious snacks of cereal and fresh fruit and their independence is promoted as they pour their own drinks. Children are polite, listen to the staff's instructions and behave well. They play cooperatively by sharing and taking turns and are effectively developing the necessary communication, numeracy and technology skills for their future economic well-being.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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

