

# Saint James Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY390889

**Inspection date**

12/03/2010

**Inspector**

Deirdra Keating

**Setting address**

St. James School, Guildford Road, COLCHESTER, CO1 2RA

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## **Description of the setting**

St James Pre-school is an incorporated charity run by a voluntary management committee made of representatives from the primary school, the pre-school and parents of the children who attend. It opened in 2009 and operates from a designated unit in the grounds of St James Church of England voluntary aided primary school. A ramp to the entrance means that the premises are easily accessible. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is in a residential area of Colchester, Essex. It is open each weekday from 08.45am to 11.45am. There are plans to open for afternoon sessions in April 2010. The setting operates during term time.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 40 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school has a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff, six of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level 2. One member of staff has an Early Years degree and one has Early Years Professional Status. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development are promoted very well in the setting. Experienced and qualified staff have a well-developed knowledge of each child's needs. Children are confident, secure and safe, they enjoy their sessions at the pre-school where they are highly motivated to learn. The setting demonstrates an extremely strong capacity for improvement through the staff's commitment to continue to develop the provision. The partnerships with parents, the adjacent school and other agencies are a key strength of the setting and a significant factor in making sure that the needs of all the children are met. Children all progress well in the inclusive and welcoming environment, given their age, ability and starting points.

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

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

- develop further opportunities and provide more resources to help children use, hear and see their home language in their play and learning.

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

Children are safeguarded well by staff who follow established procedures confidently. These are clearly set out in the setting's policies, using guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Children are cared for by adults who have completed all necessary suitability checks and are qualified in childcare. There is an established and robust recruitment system which is carefully followed and used by the experienced manager and this ensures that suitable staff are recruited.

The newly registered provision has been extremely well-developed by the management committee, resulting in a thriving setting that is very well-led and managed. Resources have been selected carefully and deployed well to providing an environment that is welcoming and promotes children's increasing independence. The ambitious staff are strongly committed to improvement and development and have implemented several plans to improve the setting. Staff regularly reflect on their practice and take time to discuss areas for future improvement which are clearly identified in the setting's self-evaluation.

The play leader and manager work exceptionally well with the school staff to ensure that transition for children going into the school is smooth and managed effectively. This collaborative approach ensures that children with special educational needs are supported well. Staff use outside support to identify additional needs as early as possible. The partnership working with the school and other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children who require additional support are given the time and consideration to ensure their individual needs are met. The setting strongly promotes equality and diversity, children are all highly valued and the staff actively celebrate children's differences in the setting. Children with English as an additional language are given support by staff who ensure that information about children's home language is obtained from parents prior to admission. Some dual language books have been provided, which children can take home to share with their parents. However, children have few opportunities to use, hear and see their home language in the setting to help them confidently use their own language outside the home and build strong bilingual foundations when learning English as an additional language.

Staff recognise the value of working in partnership with parents and carers, and provide regular opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning. For example, parents are invited to join the management committee and take an active part in the running of the pre-school. The pre-school was initially set up after parents in the local area expressed a need for a pre-school provision at the primary school. The setting has responded extremely well to the views of the parents, and the setting continues to adopt this approach involving parents in all aspects of the pre-school wherever possible.

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

Children arrive enthusiastically and settle with ease. They are welcomed by the warm and friendly staff who are genuinely pleased to see them and provide good support as they say goodbye to their families. The organisation of space provides defined areas to allow children free access to a wide range of stimulating activities that have been planned well to look inviting and promote children's choice and decision making. Children are very keen to practise their writing skills, they sit comfortably at the table to practise their writing where they are given help and encouragement by staff as they create letters and put them into envelopes. Children competently make models and stick boxes together which they paint and decorate. There is ample room for children to spread out on the floor and develop their play. Children operate with confidence and initiative, they move resources to support their ideas. For example, children select equipment and use to improvise a ramp, they use this to roll cars down to see how fast they will gather speed.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted exceptionally well by the staff at the setting. Children have free access to an outdoor area where they benefit from fresh air and physical exercise for most of the session. Many children choose to spend long periods of time outside in the fresh air where a stimulating range of activities reflect all areas of learning. Staff truly value the benefit of the outdoor learning environment and have made this attractive and freely accessible. Children learn to move safely in the setting as they are consistently reminded to walk inside and praised by staff for moving appropriately. The children negotiate steps down to the garden well, using a safety rail and showing a very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe.

Children's behaviour is very good, they play harmoniously in small groups and show respect for one another and the environment as they tidy away equipment. Children are secure in the routine and show an agreed understanding of group rules whilst playing games and sitting together for a group story. The story is told very well by staff, who bring it to life and make it fun and inclusive for all children by using a story box and puppets, that children later use to recreate the story. Children are interested and motivated to learn, they develop very good personal care skills which will aid them as they progress through the school. For example, children regularly help in the setting; they prepare snack, pour drinks and put cups and plates into the sink. Children enjoy helping and they gain praise from staff who notice what they are doing. This gives children a sense of belonging and esteem in the setting because their effort is valued and they feel part of what is going on. Staff are careful to ensure that all children can understand the session routine. Pictorial time tables have been created to provide a visual aid and help children understand a concept of time during the session.

Children are highly motivated to learn because the organisation of resources and deployment of staff is flexible and meets their individual needs. Staff have a very good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage, enabling children to make choices according to how they feel and their current interests. Consequently, children are highly engaged in activities that stimulate and interest them and

therefore make good progress. Progress is carefully recorded using each child's key person to observe children and identify children's next steps in learning. These are recorded in meaningful records that are shared well with parents to ensure they are fully involved in children's learning and development.

## 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

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

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Met