

St Patricks Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY393308
Inspection date 27/04/2010
Inspector Lynne Milligan

Setting address St Patricks Nursery, Marston Road, Stafford, ST16 3BT

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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*.

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Description of the setting

St Patrick's Nursery has been registered with its current owner since 2009. It operates from a demountable building within the grounds of St Patrick's primary school, Stafford. The group has the use of a large classroom and toilet facilities. There is a fully enclosed outside play area. The group operates term-time only and is open from 8.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 15 children aged from three to under five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are four members of staff including the manager, all of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy in the friendly and child-centred environment. The care given to identifying and respecting their individual interests promotes their self-esteem and ensures that they are adequately progressing. Management work alongside the committee to build and motivate the staff team and to oversee the ongoing development of the setting. However, due to poor monitoring systems, some regulations have not been met and there has been a breach of conditions. A culture of continual reflection and ongoing improvement fosters adequate practice, with positive partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the records used to assess the suitability of all staff include the unique reference numbers of CRB Disclosures obtained (Suitable people) 07/05/2010
- notify Ofsted of any change to members of its committee. Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, notification must be made in advance of the event occurring. In all other cases, notification must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the event occurring (Suitable people). 14/05/2010

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

- ensure all staff have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues,

with particular reference to who they should contact in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff

- ensure the contents of packed lunches are stored safely
- develop the systems to monitor documentation to ensure it includes accurate information with specific regard to children's personal details
- provide opportunities for children to use writing in their play and to practice forming letters correctly, for example, labelling their work, making cards and writing notices
- develop further the assessment process by ensuring information is gathered in relation to children's starting points and develop practice to ensure learning intentions are effectively delivered for each child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

At the time of the inspection, it was found that the setting had not informed the regulator of changes to the committee and that the provider was caring for children that are younger than their conditions of registration allow. These are both specific legal requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provider was able to offer a reasonable excuse and Ofsted does not intend to prosecute on this occasion. Systems to confirm the suitability of all staff are adequate, however some records do not contain specific details such as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure number. Staff files demonstrate suitable recruitment and induction procedures, with regular appraisals to ensure on going suitability and continuous professional development. Staff demonstrate a basic understanding of how to protect children as they are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse and who to contact should they need further advice. Written policies mostly underpin adequate practice but staff are unsure of who to contact should an allegation be made against them. Safety around the premises is sufficient with written risk assessments carried out to further ensure children are safe. Staff deployment maintains adequate supervision of the children, with visitors signing in and out in addition to wearing ID badges. Children's records are adequately maintained but insufficient monitoring leads to incorrect information being recorded such as dates of birth and children's specific needs.

The setting's ability to engage with parents and carers is developing well as they regularly inform them of their child's achievements, whilst reinforcing the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents evenings are held alongside access to clearly written policies, information boards, newsletters and constant opportunities to exchange information such as when parents and carers collect their children. The manager is proactive in her approach and is committed to reflecting on how she and the staff can improve and develop partnerships, knowing how important they are. Steps to monitor and promote equality and diversity ensure that stereotypical views are challenged and as they encourage children to respect, value and understand others. Links with other providers who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage are adequate as they exchange information on each child's learning and development and as they visit the local school, liaising with teachers as children move on. As a result children are benefiting from the continuity of care and education. The setting works hard at

relations with other professionals to embed the strategies used to help cater for children's specific needs, with further research carried out to adapt, practice and reinforce their learning.

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

Children are developing sufficiently as planning demonstrates how staff cover each area of learning and how children's next steps are used to include their level of ability and interests. However, in practice this is not fully effective as activities do not always utilise this information in order for each child to reach their full potential. As a result, adult-focused activities sometimes lose momentum, which leads to children becoming frustrated or disengaged. Staff demonstrate a sound ability to use resources to initially interest children with some questioning to further extend and challenge their thinking. Planning reflects the variety of activities on offer with a suitable balance of adult-led and child initiated play. However, some areas such as literacy are not always consistently monitored to ensure they are equally included. As a result everyday opportunities are missed such as children being able to label their own work or to practise writing for different purposes such as making lists in the role play area. Children's progress is recorded in each of their files and these are shared with parents and carers. However, there is little evidence to demonstrate how staff have assessed the level of children's skills and abilities as they enter the nursery. This leads to an unclear picture of what progress children have made and where.

Children enjoy lots of creative work as they paint their own interpretations of what tadpoles look like whilst also exploring such concepts as the growth and life cycle of frogs or as they build a castle out of recycled boxes. Children eagerly and confidently talk about their art work and the recent story of Jack and the beanstalk that links to the model. They build on their imaginary skills as they run about both indoors and out, creating props out of construction materials to further absorb themselves in their roles as superheroes. Their ability to explore technology is fostered as they access computers and various other electronic resources. Children understand how things work as they use the mouse to move the cursor on the inspectors laptop or as they type the keys and show delight when the text appears on the screen. Visits from people in the community such as the ambulance service help children to explore real life situations and different job roles. They eagerly take it in turns to have their blood pressure measured or as they listen to the heart monitor and see the print out of the rhythm. Conversation is common place at the nursery as children consistently chatter, asking questions, negotiating their play and making requests both with their peers and staff. Mealtimes are very social occasions where staff fully utilise these occasions to help children talk about issues that are important to them such as their family life, where they live and what they have done over the weekend. This is extended through the use of diaries that children take home, including photos of their events that they excitedly share with the rest of the group. This helps children develop a sense of time and place and reinforces the close bonds they have with their family, friends and staff.

Children's independence is promoted as they are encouraged to dress themselves

in readiness for outdoor play and as they take themselves to the toilet. Staff minimise the risk of cross infection by following sound hygiene practices. They wear disposable aprons when serving food, and keep surfaces and equipment clean. Their diet is closely monitored as children eat packed lunches provided by the parents but these are not safely stored as some contain perishable foods such as meat and dairy products. Snacks that include fresh fruit and vegetables supplement the children's diet with easy access to milk and water should they become thirsty. Children begin to develop an understanding of safety as staff explain why they need to line up before going outside and why they should not run indoors. Children are closely monitored as they use the bathroom and as they leave one at a time at the end of the session in order to ensure they leave with the appropriate adults. Children confidently abide by the rules and boundaries set by staff and are polite and well-mannered. They eagerly share their toys and help each other with such tasks as opening their sandwich boxes and tidying away their toys.

Children engage in a suitable range of activities aimed at promoting their physical development. On the school site, there is a fully secured outdoor play area which children have access to every day. A simple range of equipment enables children to demonstrate their skills as they confidently manoeuvre their way over and across the beams and ropes of the large climbing frame, Taking risks they balance carefully, calling out to staff to watch as they reach the other side. Staff stand back, supervising closely whilst allowing children to manage and take risks. This everyday practice enables children to understand their limits and how to deal with eventualities should they occur. Indoors they have adequate space to play, with quieter areas should they wish to relax or engage in solitary play.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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