



## **St. John's Pre School**

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY245131   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 18 November 2005   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Michele Anne Villiers                                      |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | St John's Centre, Greenway Road, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 6HA |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 0151 420 2942  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |  |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | St. John's Pre School                                      |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated   |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Sessional care   |

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St John's Pre-School opened in 2003 and operates from a church hall. It is situated in the Appleton area of Widnes, Cheshire, and serves the local community. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 term time only.

There are currently 22 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll, of these, two children receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children with

special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs five staff. Including the manager, three of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Staff actively promote good hygiene to protect children from the risk of cross-infection. All play surfaces are frequently washed and a plastic table cloth is used for messy activities, such as baking, to maintain hygiene levels. Children develop a good awareness of personal hygiene. Staff remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack. During baking activities children wear aprons and staff check their hands are washed and clean. On arrival, all children remove their outdoor shoes and put on light-weight indoor shoes, helping to keep the floor clean and free from germs. Children's health is further protected as effective procedures are in place for the administration of medication and the recording of accidents. Staff have accessed training in first aid and there is a well stocked first aid box for staff to use to treat minor injuries. However, there is not a procedure to follow if children contract a communicable disease or food poisoning as a result of attending the pre-school.

Children experience a wide range of physical activities, which contributes to their good health. In the winter months staff organise 'let's get warm' exercises and children wriggle and shake their bodies, stretch, hop and jump. They have free access to an extensive range of wheeled toys whilst playing indoors, to develop their strength and stamina. Children develop good co-ordination and spatial awareness as they manoeuvre bikes, scooters and two-seater trikes around designated areas in the hall. They play outside in the fresh air each day, weather permitting, where they can run around and use the climbing frame and slide. Staff have a close, caring relationship with children, promoting their emotional wellbeing and their self-confidence. Children greet staff with a hug and confidently initiate interaction.

Children develop a positive attitude to healthy eating to foster their growth and development. Snacks are varied and nutritious and fruit is offered daily. Children experience different tastes and textures and enjoy baking using fresh ingredients, such as eggs, milk and bananas when making banana cake. Drinks of either milk or water are offered with snacks and children may freely access water to quench their thirst. Many resources help children to learn about healthy food choices, such as books on 'I eat vegetables', and 'I eat fruit', and jigsaw puzzles depicting fruit and vegetables. Children learn about dental care through planned activities. They have visits from the dental hygienist, and the provision has received a certificate for their promotion of healthy food to young children.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment that is welcoming and maintained to a high standard. The play area is spacious and affords plenty of natural light. Children access a wide range of safe and suitable toys and resources. Staff creatively organise the equipment and space, providing interesting areas of play for children to freely and safely access. Rest and relaxation areas enable children to sit in comfort, and all furniture is child size to promote their independence.

Good safety arrangements are in place and staff conduct a regular risk assessment of the premises, toys and resources to identify any hazards and minimise accidental injury to children. A staff member monitors access to the premises and all parents and visitors sign in. Children learn about safety and keeping themselves free from harm throughout the daily routine and well-organised topical activities. Staff remind children they may not enter the kitchen area unless accompanied by an adult, and children know they do not go in the kitchen when helping to bake cakes if the oven is on, saying "we do not touch the oven because it is hot and will burn us". Staff support the children's learning of safety through well-planned activities, such as 'people who help us'. They have visits from the road safety team who set up indoor activities using a zebra crossing and operating traffic lights, to promote the children's understanding of road safety. Children dress up as lollipop ladies and men and have talks from the local lollipop lady. Visits also include the fire service and road sweepers, helping to contribute to the children's understanding of safety.

The children's welfare is further safeguarded as staff practise the fire evacuation procedure, helping them to become aware of what to do in the event of an emergency. There is a comprehensive child protection policy and a designated child protection co-ordinator. All staff have accessed training and have a good awareness of the procedure to follow.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are progressing well through all areas of development. They are involved in their play and make decisions, choosing whether to play in the home corner, with construction lego, paint, play in the sand, look at books or sit at tables to participate in lotto games, puzzles or small world toys. Children learn to explore and investigate using their senses. They discuss the smell and texture of cake mixture, both before and after it is cooked. Through planned topics such as 'autumn', and art and craft activities, children examine different coloured leaves and textured paper that is soft, hard or rough. They sit and concentrate to complete tasks and engage with interest at story time. Children enjoy singing and learning new songs, such as 'Away in a Manger' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' for the Christmas concert. Staff reinforce children's learning through repetition and asking questions that make children think. During discussion time staff ask children, 'What is the weather like today?', and 'How does it make you feel?'

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and provide a wide range of challenging activities, appropriate for the age and ability of children attending. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation stage and six areas of learning. Activities are well planned, to provide children with a varied and stimulating programme. Staff evaluate to monitor the learning outcomes, but little information is recorded on how this supports plans. Staff use observation effectively to assess the children's progress and track their development through the stepping stones. However, assessments are not used fully to address future plans. Staff creatively organise the environment with a good balance of activities, allowing for both active play and relaxation. Children are supported in small groups and staff enthusiastically motivate the children's learning, skilfully judging when to become actively involved in their learning and when to allow children to independently explore. During group activities, staff give clear and concise instructions. They explain how many eggs and spoons of sugar are needed to bake a cake, and the rules of the game for lotto and matching pictures. Staff show interest in what children do and say. They ask about their painting and what they have made during construction.

Children are happy, interested and involved in activities. They relate well to each other and adults, demonstrating high levels of independence. Children change their shoes on arrival, hang up their coats, put on paint aprons and help to tidy away and give out plates for snack. Children are given responsible roles and take turn to strike the musical triangle to inform children of a change of activities or to tidy away. Children concentrate well and persist in tasks to achieve outcomes, putting puzzles together and building with lego. During the daily routine and planned activities, children count and develop good mathematical skills, showing a keen interest in numbers and counting. They take turns to calculate how many children are present and how many plates are needed for snack. When baking, staff explain how long the cake needs to be in the oven. They demonstrate time with the clock and encourage children to move the hands on the toy clock, helping them to recognise numerals. Children enjoy sorting small animals into baskets, differentiating between different kinds of animals and their size. Children arrange shapes to create pictures and patterns. They make their house out of cardboard boxes and arrange square windows and a rectangular door.

Children become confident communicators. They initiate conversation with adults and chat about their home life and past and present events. They have access to a very good range of books for enjoyment and learn that print carries meaning through displayed words and captions. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise their writing skills and mark-making, with free access to writing materials and paper. Children begin to recognise their name and the names of others. On arrival they find their name card and hang it on their cloths peg. Staff provide interesting activities to encourage children's curiosity and investigative skills. Children examine ice and learn about why it melts, during planned activities of hot and cold. They use a range of media and different textured paper to create autumn scenes. Children delight in painting their feet, laughing and giggling, discussing the feel of the paint and walking on paper to create footprints. A computer is available for children to use at any time, developing their knowledge of technology and hand-eye co-ordination, as they competently move the mouse to click on pictures and match shapes.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children develop very good levels of self-esteem and staff form close and caring relationships with children. The effective equal opportunities policy ensures that all children are included and valued as individuals. New children are introduced to the group and given the opportunity to freely explore their environment and become familiar with the routine at their own pace. Children learn about other cultures and celebrate different festivals such as Diwali and Hanukah. They gain an awareness of diversity through toys and resources. Children play with a variety of different nationality dolls and books that reflect positive images. They have a doll named 'Claire', who is in a wheelchair. Staff encourage children to make up stories about her and to include her in activities, helping them to acknowledge and respect differences, thus fostering their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Staff manage the children's behaviour well and use effective strategies to reinforce good behaviour. Children play happily together and willingly share and take turns. Staff are consistent in their approach and provide good role models, resulting in children showing a growing awareness of right and wrong and having consideration for others.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the close relationship staff have with parents. Parents speak highly of the provision and of their satisfaction with the care provided and their children's level of attainment. Parents receive written information each week about specific activities and events. They are welcomed into the setting at any time to informally chat to staff and discuss their child's progress. Parents receive regular newsletters, keeping them updated on the running of the pre-school. Open days provide parents with the opportunity to meet with their child's key-worker and put forward ideas and suggestions. Parental involvement is very much encouraged. Parents may be volunteers within the provision and they are invited to participate in special events such as the end of term 'fun day' and the Christmas concert. Parents of children who are in receipt of educational funding are informed about the learning programme through discussion, and may have access to the children's development files at any time. However, they receive limited written information about the Foundation stage and areas of learning to fully convey the educational programme.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from qualified and enthusiastic staff who provide a stimulating environment and welcoming atmosphere. The quality of leadership and management of the provision is good. The manager and staff work well together and this is reflected in the children's happiness, strong sense of belonging, confidence and independence. The manager effectively monitors activity plans and organises staff meetings and appraisal sessions to identify any staff training needs. There is a strong commitment to improving the care and education for all children. Staff attend training and access childcare information in order to improve their skills and knowledge.

Staffing ratios are good, affording high levels of individual and group support for children, helping to meet the needs of all children.

Effective recruitment procedures are in place, and appropriate checks are conducted to ensure the suitability of staff before they are employed. Written policies and procedures are shared and understood by staff and parents, and all relevant documentation pertaining to the provision is maintained. However, informative paperwork has not been collated to produce an operational plan, explaining how the setting runs.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection it was recommended that the pre-school should effectively manage access to the building, include relevant contact numbers in the child protection policy, obtain parental consent for the administration of medication and produce a staff induction procedure. The main entrance to the provision is kept locked at all times and a designated staff member manages access to the building when children arrive and depart and ensures that all visitors sign in. Contact numbers have been included in the child protection policy and parental consent is in place for the administration of medication. All new staff receive induction training and this is recorded and signed by staff.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should

take account of the following recommendation(s):

- become familiar with reportable communicable diseases, as defined by the Health Protection Agency, and the procedure to follow should any children have a serious disease or contract food poisoning whilst attending the provision
- devise, and make available for parents, an operational plan and use as a working document.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure parents receive sufficient information about the Foundation Stage, six areas of learning and the learning programme for those children in receipt of educational funding.
- continue to develop and evaluate activity plans and show how the children's assessment records are used to inform future plans.

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