

St Michael's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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).

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Description of the setting

St Michael's Pre-School is owned and managed by a committee of church members. It was registered in 1975 and operates from two rooms on the ground floor in St. Michael's church hall in Newton, Chester. Children are organised in two main groups according to age and abilities. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 52 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 52 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Of these, 31 children receive funding for early years provision. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens each weekday term time only from 9.15am to 12.15pm and also on Mondays from 1.00pm to 4.00pm during the summer months. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs 10 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and an advisory teacher.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The staff team are developing their understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, children make suitable attainment in relation to their starting points. A high priority is placed on valuing the uniqueness of each child. Procedures and practices, which are for the most part effective, contribute towards the safety and welfare of the children. Purposeful partnerships with parents and others ensure consistency and continuity for children's welfare, learning and development. Processes to monitor and evaluate the setting are implemented to target specific areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement an effective safeguarding children policy which includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).
- 04/12/2010

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

- develop systems to ensure descriptive observations of the children are evaluated in order to consistently identify the next stages of children's learning
- involve parents in identifying children's starting points with particular regard to what children know and can do linked to each of the areas of learning
- implement procedures to monitor the ongoing suitability of staff to work with children
- review the risk assessments to identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis with particular regard to ivy in the outdoor play area.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Suitable systems are in place to ensure the welfare of children is safeguarded. Staff are familiar with the written policy to protect children. They have a sound understanding of the procedures to follow in the event they have concerns about a child. However, the policy does not include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. This is a requirement in regulations. Although, acceptable procedures are in place for the recruitment, selection and induction of staff, there are no systems to monitor their ongoing suitability to work with children. The setting has conducted a risk assessment of the premises and visual checks are undertaken on a daily basis. However, a large amount of ivy growing in the outdoor area has not been identified as a hazard and may pose a risk to children's safety.

Since the last inspection, the staff team have worked hard to meet the actions and recommendations. As a result, children's safety and well-being is enhanced, children's understanding of the wider world increased and parents are provided with detailed information about the provision. A comprehensive self-evaluation system is in place. This takes account of feedback from staff and parents, is in the main accurate and clearly identifies areas for development. It reflects the high levels of commitment of the staff team to providing quality provision for children and their families. All staff attend ongoing training to increase their knowledge and update their practice.

Information is shared with parents and carers in a variety of ways, including daily discussions, notice boards, newsletters and children's learning journeys. These help to promote continuity of care for children. Supportive partnerships with children's key workers and the wider staff team contribute to close working relationships. Although children's individual needs are agreed in the admission procedure, these do not identify their abilities across all six areas of learning to inform planning. Beneficial partnerships with other agencies and providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are a key aspect of the pre-school. Together they help to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care for individual children.

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

A flexible approach is taken in planning to incorporate topics and the interests of the children. Routines include a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed play. Photographs of children absorbed in various activities are evident in displays and children's learning journeys. Planning demonstrates that overall a broad and balanced curriculum is being delivered to the children. However, parents, while given ideas to contribute towards their child's learning, are not invited to contribute towards assessments. Clear systems are in place to track children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Completing jigsaws and counting the number of beads on the thread helps children develop their problem solving skills. Recyclable materials are incorporated into the varied and exciting range of creative opportunities available to the children. Staff make good use of questioning as they ask children to think about what happens to the eggs after they have been cooked. Children engage in meaningful role play as they dress up, prepare a meal and feed the people in the cafe. Such opportunities help children develop skills for the future.

The importance of valuing linguistic diversity and of welcoming all children, including those with disabilities and English as an additional language into a sharing and inclusive environment is recognised. Through discussions children are beginning to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others. Children enjoy the time they spend outdoors, running around in the fresh air, manoeuvring wheeled toys and negotiating the climbing frame.

Children appreciate the varied range of healthy and nutritious snacks which meet their individual needs. They know why they need to wash their hands before baking and eating, and learn that germs can be transferred to food and make them poorly. Stories, fire drills and road safety discussions ensure children know how to stay healthy and safe. Staff present positive role models to children; the children behave well, are polite and courteous.

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	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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