

St Lukes Pre-School (Rochester)

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Beryl Witheridge
Setting address	City Way, Rochester, Kent, ME1 2BQ
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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 Lukes Pre-School opened in 1966 and operates from two rooms in a church community hall. It is situated in the town of Rochester, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.15am to 1.00pm Monday and Tuesday then 1.00pm to 3.00pm Monday and Tuesday afternoon and 9.15am to 11.45pm Wednesday to Friday for term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for nursery education. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register. Children come from a local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine staff including one administrative staff. Of the staff seven, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a higher qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff actively promote the unique needs of each child and support their welfare and learning effectively. Children are able to explore within safe boundaries and enjoy their time at the group. Their well-being is considered but emergency evacuation practices are not regular enough to support this. The partnerships between the setting, parents and other providers are well established and help to ensure that the care and learning needs of the children are being consistently met. The capacity of the group to maintain ongoing improvement is good. The strengths and weaknesses of the provision are clearly separated out and priorities for improvement are in place. Ongoing aims to develop the quality of the provision help to promote the outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the policies and procedures to ensure they contain the correct contact details for Ofsted
- review the arrangements for snack time so that all children have the opportunity to have something to eat or drink during the session
- practise the evacuation procedures more often so that all children are included and know how to protect themselves in an emergency

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded effectively through the up-to-date policies and procedures that ensure their welfare is promoted. Staff have attended recent child protection training; they understand the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do and who to contact should they have any concerns. Supporting documentation and guidance is readily available. These measures help to ensure that children's welfare remains a priority. Systems for recruitment and vetting are robust and ensure that all adults working with the children are suitable. The rigorous risk assessment and daily checks ensure that children are safe while at the group.

Staff are committed towards ongoing improvement of the group and the recommendations set at the last inspection have been addressed. Other improvements such as a sensory garden for the children have also been implemented. The resources available to the children offer choice and variety. Ongoing staff training events, the sharing of new information and knowledge and effective deployment helps to ensure good quality provision for the children. Equality and diversity is embedded well into every day practice. This is a very inclusive group and parent helpers come into the group and introduce the children to different cultures and languages. All staff and children know some simple sign language which is used on a daily basis. Children's understanding of diversity is well promoted through the range of toys, resources and experiences provided. The learning and development needs of each child are known and addressed. This helps to ensure that no child is disadvantaged.

The use of self-evaluation is in place and all staff are involved in addressing the aims and objectives and areas for improvement. This is not yet fully reflected in the Ofsted self evaluation form, although the group's strengths and any areas for improvement are clearly identified and plans are put in place to address these. Recent improvements include updating the policy documents although the contact details for Ofsted are not current.

The group has established good partnerships with local schools and other agencies involved in the care of the children. This ensures that the children receive continuity of care. The partnership with parents is positive. They are provided with ongoing information about their children's experiences and progress and a full range of written information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, policies and procedures. Parents feel the staff get to know them and their children well from day one. They are able to attend the group at any time to speak to the staff; they meet their child's keyworker on a termly basis and are able to have an input into their child's future learning. They take children's records home every half term which ensures they understand exactly what their child is achieving. Overall this helps to provide every child with good continuity of care and learning opportunities.

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

Children have an enjoyable time at the group. They arrive happy and eager to participate. They show a good degree of independence; they self register and settle easily to the well planned and interesting activities provided for them. They love playing in the tent with the battery operated lights which they can make change colour. They think of the needs of others; one child goes into the tent and takes a light from another child but on seeing the reaction on the other child's face immediately hands the light back and they share it between them. Children use construction toys to develop their problem solving and numeracy skills and develop their collaborative skills. Several children work together on the construction; they discuss their designs and then when these are built they discuss how to extend their game and turn their models into flying machines. Children are very competent at using the computer, their understanding and mouse skills are excellent and staff ensure that each child has a fair amount of time by using an egg timer to count the minutes. Children enjoy stories read by staff, joining in and answering questions but they also enjoy it when the story is on the computer and they can see the pictures and join in the actions. Children learn skills for the future. Children readily enjoy large group time using sign language to songs and introducing themselves and signing their names. They enjoy planting and caring for seeds and vegetables planted in their garden. Physical activities are used both indoors and out. Children are happy to free flow around the room choosing and selecting activities for themselves or taking part in adult led activities such as art and craft.

Children's development records show they are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff carry out initial assessments of children with their parents. They obtain information on the children's likes and dislikes. Observations are carried out on the children to enable staff to ascertain the levels of children's abilities over the six areas of learning. Staff are able to assess children's achievements and identify their next steps to help them move forward. Activities are planned for each individual child by the keyworker. Observation records are well maintained and contain information of the children's progress as well as examples of children's work. Parents can access the record whenever they want.

Children have healthy options of breadsticks, crackers, fruit and vegetables and a choice of milk and water to drink, when they have their snack. This helps them to learn about a balanced diet. Some children also attend the lunch club, on Monday and Tuesday, when the parents provide the food for their children. However on these days the children do not have a snack, just access to drinking water throughout the session. This may not ensure that all children are receiving enough nourishment throughout the day to keep their energy levels steady, by taking into account that not all children will necessarily have had breakfast. Children sometimes help to prepare snacks such as sandwiches with staff.

Children begin to understand about the effects of physical exercise on their bodies as they do exercises, take part in action rhymes and play outside. They understand the importance of putting on their coats in the cold weather to keep them warm.

Children are also aware of personal hygiene procedures such as washing their hands after messy play, before and after eating or using the toilet. They are also reminded to cover the mouths when they cough so as not to spread their germs.

Children also have a good understanding of the behaviour expected from them. They are reminded about sharing toys, taking turns and being kind. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively and this shows in the children's behaviour and promotes their self esteem and confidence. Staff are good role models for the children. Children cooperate well with staff and get on well with their peers. They are happy and settled in the group.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	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
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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

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