

St Cuthbert's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Setting address

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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 Cuthbert's Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1992 and is run by a voluntary management committee. The group operates from a large hall and smaller room within Doveridge Village Hall, near Ashbourne, Derbyshire. The building is set on one level and is accessed via ramps to the rear of the building. Children also have the use of a small enclosed outdoor play area and make regular visits to the adjacent park. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding community. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 12 noon and on Wednesdays from 12.30pm to 3pm during school term times only.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Staff may care for a maximum of 30 children over two years of age at any one time. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. Currently there are 27 children from two years six months to four years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are six staff who work with the children, five of whom are qualified. The pre-school receives support from Derbyshire local authority and is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff are highly effective in personalising learning to respond to each child's individual needs and interests. Staff build excellent relationships with parents and carers, who play an active role in the pre-school and are highly involved in supporting their children's learning. Leaders in the pre-school are totally committed to the service they provide and use reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify where improvements can be made. Actions taken by the pre-school since the last inspection are well-chosen and effective in improving the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of the outdoor environment to support all areas of children's learning
- provide more opportunities for children to write within their play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff work effectively as a team to ensure children's health and safety are consistently promoted. Comprehensive risk assessments combined with daily checks contribute to the environment being safe and secure. Staff implement the policies effectively and consistently, teaching children the importance of good hygiene and using equipment safely. Effective procedures are in place for identifying any child at risk of harm and staff show a good understanding of the appropriate action to take in the event of any concerns. The pre-school has clear systems to ensure that all adults working with the children are suitable to do so and that unvetted persons are not left alone with children. Staff maintain all of the required records to promote the safe and efficient management of the pre-school and to ensure children's needs are fully recorded.

Staff work hard to create a welcoming environment for the children. Following an environmental audit they have made considerable improvements to the layout of the room and significantly increased children's ability to make choices and follow their own ideas. Rich, varied displays, including photographs of important family members and significant times in children's lives, help children to feel special. Children also benefit from a dedicated small outdoor play area that has been thoughtfully designed to provide some exciting activities for the children. However, this space is limited and currently children can only access this at set times meaning the full potential of outdoor play is not yet realised.

Parents play a dynamic role in the pre-school and are fully involved in supporting their children's learning. They are very well informed about all aspects of their children's achievements through daily communication books, very clearly presented learning journeys and through opportunities for shared learning. Their views are acted upon and form part of the pre-school's action plan for improvement. Staff work closely with parents to understand and respond to children's interests and parents report how successful this is in engaging children in activities they might otherwise avoid. Staff are alert to the individual needs of every child and effectively support children with special educational needs and those who are identified as gifted and talented. They make excellent use of the professions, skills and backgrounds of parents and visitors to enhance children's awareness of health and safety, the community and the wider world. Continuity in learning and successful transitions are supported by the sharing of information between settings and the support given by staff as children move on to school.

The staff team clearly have the children's interests at the heart of all they do. They know the children well and value their individuality. Staff have a good range of skills and constantly seek to improve their knowledge by attending training and meetings. They use a variety of evaluation methods to monitor what they provide and to constantly set themselves targets for further improvement. They have successfully addressed issues raised at the previous inspection as well as other priorities identified by themselves. For example, they have created the outdoor area and purchased extensive technological resources for the children to use. This pro-active approach demonstrates a good capacity for ongoing improvement.

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

Children show great enthusiasm as they arrive at the pre-school and quickly become absorbed in their favourite activities. They question why the water in the trough is coloured red and think of lots of interesting things that might have been added to make it this colour. Children develop the skills needed to work together, for example, as they pour water to fill a tall tube. They cooperate as they fix a train track together and carry a heavy bucket of sand. At times children play alone and become totally absorbed in what they are doing such as when they are completing a jigsaw puzzle or creating a picture. Staff know when to sit back and when to involve themselves in the children's play. They have a clear knowledge of the children's planned next steps and promote these effectively through the children's choice of activities. Some adult-led activities complement the general free choice within the session. Children sing the welcome song at group time and share their news and items they have brought in from home. Short 'sound of the week' activities capture children's interests and they have an array of interesting items starting with 'p' to share. Children are comfortable using a wide range of technology. They operate a music player, take photographs with a camera, and use a computer and programmable toys. This ensures they are developing skills needed for the future. Children are encouraged to solve problems. For example, when staff found a balloon filled with helium on the ceiling they seized the opportunity to challenge children's thinking about how to get it down and recorded their story in a home-made book that helps children to recall this event. Children like to read in the attractive quiet corner and begin to recognise their names at registration and snack time. Many children write and draw as a chosen activity, although opportunities to encourage children to write in other areas of the room are missed.

Children are learning to follow good hygiene procedures. They wash their hands, accompanied by a hand-washing song, and fetch tissues to wipe their noses. They enjoy a good range of healthy snacks and are regularly invited to try new tastes, such as different breads from around the world. Children like to be active and enjoy physical play in a safely sectioned area of the hall. They roll balls and play skittles, using their knowledge of numbers and counting to see who knocks most pins down. Daily outdoor time provides opportunities for fresh air and regular visits to the adjacent park allow children to learn to climb safely. Children explore a water tap as they fill cans with water and pour these down the series of pipes. They dig with enthusiasm in the large sand pit and form their own band by playing musical instruments in the play house. Children behave well and respond to the staff's calm and consistent approach. They understand the expectations for their behaviour and the displayed rules illustrated with photographs of the children help them to remember what they should do. Staff make effective use of visual reward schemes and children are proud of their achievements. Children are developing a good sense of community and enjoy taking part in local events and outings. They see pictures in the setting of the local area and relate easily to these. They recall trips to a farm and numerous visitors who come to the pre-school. Staff involve parents and visitors in activities that enhance children's knowledge of other

cultures and customs and use a wealth of positive resources to promote respect for diversity.

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	1
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	1

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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