

St Bernards Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	31/01/2011
Inspector	Gillian Sutherland
Setting address	St. Bernards Church Hall, Sherbourne Road, Ellesmere Port, Merseyside, CH65 5EW
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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 Bernard's Pre-School is a privately owned group and was registered in 1997. It operates from the church hall and adjoining side room in St Bernard's Church and associated facilities. Designated areas inside and outside the adjoining St Bernard's primary school may also be accessed by the pre-school children. The pre-school group serves the local community and operates during school term time only and is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12 noon. The group is also registered to provide care in the afternoons from 12.45pm to 3.15pm when required.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 24 children at any one time aged from two years six months to five years old. There are currently 21 children on roll and children may attend for a variety of sessions during the week.

Five members of staff work with the children and four of those hold early years qualifications to a minimum Level 2. The setting receives support from an early years adviser.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff at St Bernard's Pre-school ensure the environment is warm and welcoming. Suitable safeguarding procedures are in place and children's individual needs are met. Partnership with parents is well-promoted and this partnership has begun to extend to other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are making steady progress in their learning and development and are supported by staff who observe and assess their development. Consequently, the setting has the capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update further the risk assessment to include any outings undertaken
- increase the range of resources and activities to include more which promote positive images of others, particularly relating to disability.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Suitable policies are in place to safeguard children and staff are aware of the child protection procedures to follow. Risk assessment of the areas and resources used,

are carried out and recorded. However, risk assessing the occasional outing that takes place is not included. Sufficient staff are suitably qualified and appropriate vetting procedures are in place.

Participation with parents is well-promoted and there is always time for a discussion with parents and their child's key worker. Parents can access their own child's development file at anytime. They have access to lots of photographic evidence of the different activities the children participate in. Information with parents is shared through daily discussion and other opportunities for them to contribute include a home diary and through completing questionnaires.

The provision supports and promotes equality and inclusion and the setting is accessible to all. There are some resources and planned activities, to help develop children's awareness of different cultures and the toys and resources are available to all. However, there are very few resources or activities available which help children become aware of the needs of others, particularly those relating to disability.

The experienced staff team use their knowledge and skills well to support and encourage the children during their play. They ensure a welcoming environment is created by the layout of the room and the good deployment of resources. The wide range of toys and activities are easily accessible to children and set out in such a way that promotes freedom of choice. The manager has begun to evaluate the care provided and completed a self-evaluation form but recognises this needs to be used as an ongoing tool to identify areas for further improvement.

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

Children excitedly enter the provision, self register their attendance and settle quickly, eagerly exploring the activities which are set out for them. After greeting their friends, staff and visitors they quickly leave the book corner to go and participate in an activity of their choice. Some children go and put on their paint aprons and begin to create their pictures using brushes, fingers or hands. Others may choose to go and play in the well-equipped home corner and here either by themselves or with their peers they access the dressing up clothes or take the doll for a walk in the pram around the setting. They develop their sense of smell as they enjoy the feel of the coloured, slightly scented play dough which a member of staff has made up for them. Children skilfully learn how to use the shape cutters and soon know that when the dough gets sticky it needs rolling in the flour.

Language and literacy skills are well promoted as the children recognise their own names on the registration cards. They are also encouraged to take home a library book and parents can add their comments into their child's diary as to whether the children enjoyed the book not. Children's names are also on their drinking water bottles which are freely accessible to them throughout the morning. They usually need a drink when they come inside after having had a play session on the outdoor play equipment in the playground of the adjoining infant school. Here the

children access the wheeled and push around toys, they learn to balance on the low level planks, climb on the sturdy wooden play apparatus or recognise the numbers on the marked out hopscotch patch. For some children, they just enjoy the freedom of the outdoor play space and the chance to play with a ball.

Children learn to share, take turns and are given roles of responsibility, helping to promote their self-esteem and confidence. For example, at tidy up time when they listen to the tidy up song they are encouraged to assist staff by putting puzzle pieces on the tables or in boxes, ensuring the water toys are back in the tray and that dressing up clothes are on the hangers.

Planned activities help children become familiar with measuring concepts as they pour water from one container into another, having to determine which size container will hold the amount of water. During snack time children are offered cheese, fruit and they confidently use the plastic knives to spread their own jam onto the cream crackers. When a member of staff asked if anyone knew where jam came from one child shouted out strawberries. Programmable toys and games enable children to learn about technology. The children learn about safety during their play and how not to run around indoors whilst the table and chairs are still out. They regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure with staff.

Once a week children are given the opportunity to take home Chloe, who is a large cuddly doll, who along with a small suitcase, a diary and a camera is taken home with a child for the weekend. Parents are then able to help the children complete Chloe's diary along with any photographs about the activities and venues she has visited with the children and their family.

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

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	2
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	2

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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met

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

Met