

St Peter's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	317607
Inspection date	15/03/2011
Inspector	Carys Millican
Setting address	St. Peters Church, Kingstown Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA3 0BB
Telephone number	01228 548156
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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 Peter's Pre-School is privately owned. It opened in 1968 and operates from within a church hall on the northern outskirts of Carlisle. Children have access to the church hall, the pre-school room, an adjoining small room, the garden and enclosed outdoor play areas.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the group at any one time, of these no more than 30 children may in the early years age group. Currently there are 31 early years children on roll, of whom 21 receive the free Early Education Entitlement for three and four-year-olds. There are no children under two years. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8.45am to 11.45am, Monday to Friday, during term time only. The setting supports of a number children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language. There are no concerns with access to this facility.

The pre-school employs five members of staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. It is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and National Day Nurseries Association. They are registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in the care of experienced, committed and dedicated early years practitioners who identify children's unique qualities and build on their individual interests to provide an inclusive, welcoming, interesting and stimulating learning environment, where children are kept safe and secure. Highly effective partnerships between parents, providers and other agencies contribute greatly to children's ongoing learning and development. Documents are clear, concise and meticulously maintained to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school group and to protect and safeguard children effectively. The management and staff have a clear vision for embedding ambition and driving improvement through the self-evaluation process that is effectively used to ensure the ongoing development and continuous improvement of this exceptional early years setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- enhancing the current system for the recording of risk assessments for each type of outing.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded by staff who promote children's safety and welfare in all aspects of this exemplary pre-school provision. They are exceptionally well protected because staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures and know when to take action to safeguard children in their care. The staff ensure children's safety at all times through comprehensive risk assessment, daily health and safety checks and well implemented procedures, scrupulously carried out to keep children safe at all times. Through detailed discussion the staff clearly demonstrate how risk assessments are completed to ensure children's safety when embarking on any outings into the community. Regular fire evacuation practices are completed with children to ensure that they understand what to do should an alarm be raised and ensure that children are evacuated quickly from the premises. The staff provide a warm, friendly and secure environment for the parents and children attending where they feel safe and welcomed. Visitors to the setting have their details recorded and identity checked and any parents helping in the pre-school are supervised at all times. Rigorous recruitment procedures and ongoing suitability checks are implemented, therefore ensuring that children are cared for by suitable persons. Staff implement a detailed set of policies and procedures that are regularly reviewed to ensure the smooth running of the setting. This includes a daily register that records the attendance of children and their key workers.

Children's well-being is significantly enhanced due to the exceptional organisation of this setting. This is due to the manager valuing and respecting her excellent staff team. Morale is very high and all staff take responsibility for what they do within the pre-school. The manager and staff are truly devoted to their work. They are dedicated, committed and experienced practitioners, who work extremely well together as a team. The whole staff team have been involved in the self-evaluation process and have completed an exceptionally detailed evaluation of their setting. They meet regularly to review their practice and suggestions and further action is noted with time lines, which are very clear and achievable. The pre-school has made outstanding improvements to its provision which has made significant improvement to the outcomes for children. For example, they have purchased new furniture and equipment and changed the pre-school room layout so that everything is at child eye level, thus enabling children to initiate their own play and learning. The pre-school, with the help of parents and successful funding bids, has constructed a new outdoor play area and allotment garden. In doing so, children now experience exceptional play opportunities in a fantastic environment where they learn about caring for living things, nature, growth, exercise and healthy lifestyles. The manager and staff are confident about the strengths of the setting and acknowledge future development. Systems are in place to ensure parents, carers and staff are fully involved in the self-evaluation process. Staff meet regularly with coordinators to review their everyday working practices to improve the outcomes for children. Parents are extremely involved. They are regularly consulted through verbal discussion and evaluations and questionnaires are completed on a regular basis. The deployment of staff and resources is highly effective. Training is of a high quality. Staff training needs are continually

addressed as part of the regular discussion held at staff appraisals and meetings, which ensures that their ongoing development is exceptionally well supported.

The pre-school room is effectively organised and superbly well equipped to enable children to make choices and decisions in their play. The space and provision provide an excellent variety of high quality resources and a wide range of exceptional activities that cover all areas of learning. Staff deploy themselves exceptionally well to ensure children are effectively challenged and supported at all times as they play. Staff provide a warm and welcoming, inclusive environment for all the parents, carers, and children attending and wealth of information is displayed. Children benefit from these highly effective partnerships with parents. The daily contact with the staff and the role of the key person all contribute to the effective sharing of information and continuity of care for all children. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about key events, topics and information about how their children can be helped at home. This process also enables parents to add comments about how they feel their children are progressing, share information about any changes and events and any concerns they may have about their child. This regular sharing of information contribute to consistency in children's care and welfare needs. Parents' views are valued and sought in the form of questionnaires. Information is used to raise standards and ensure continuous improvement of the setting. Parents express a very high regard for the care and service the staff provide. They find the staff 'very friendly and approachable' and the 'atmosphere is like that of a family'. The pre-school have established highly effective partnerships with other professionals to support individual needs. Communication with speech and language specialists ensures that staff are able to support those at an early age who require support in this area. The management and staff regularly meet with the schools and other settings children attend. This enables the pre-school to complement the learning taking place and also enable a smooth transition for children into nursery or reception class.

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

Children thrive in this vibrant and welcoming environment because the manager and staff are very experienced, understanding how children learn best and have an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff calmly and effectively ensure that all children make excellent progression in developing the skills that will help them in the future. Children settle easily because they have formed lovely warm relationships with the staff and have lots of fun with them. They willingly approach the staff, as and when needed, demonstrating that they feel safe and secure. Children confidently enter the pre-school room and find their name card before going to their chosen activity. They benefit from the excellent care, activities and play opportunities provided by a team of highly skilled, qualified practitioners. The key person system provides children with effective support to achieve excellent outcomes, therefore, children make exceptional progress towards the early learning goals. The staff know their key children well and can explain at what stage of development they have reached and what they are helping children

to achieve next. An extensive amount of initial information regarding care and welfare needs, likes, dislikes and interests is obtained from parents. Staff complete observations and assessment of children's development and learning so the next priorities are identified. Children's individual needs and interests are used effectively to plan activities that support their development. Staff date and record each disposition within observations and successfully track children's progression. Children are well behaved. They develop excellent relationships with the staff and work well both independently and with their peers. Children respond to challenges with great enthusiasm and develop their thinking and problem solving skills in activities. For example, they enjoy building with large hollow bricks of varying size and shape and work together to carry the blocks and decide which planks of wood will fit open gaps. Mathematical opportunities and children's language and communication skills are expertly promoted in all activities.

Children's art work and photographs are creatively displayed throughout the pre-school room, therefore they develop a sense of belonging. Innovative ideas are also effectively used to help with children's learning. For example, folders are created containing numerous photographs of themed events such as different colour weeks, which are used to promote learning opportunities and discussion. Children enthusiastically look at these folders and explain what is happening in the photographs. All resources are stored at low level in labelled storage containers which aid independence, choice and decision making. Children's understanding of diversity and difference is promoted through a broad range of stimulating activities, such as, displays, art, craft and food tasting sessions and the invitation to parents or extended family to share their cultural knowledge. Children use their imagination as they play, not only in the role play area, but in all activities. They pretend to hold birthday parties and talk about birthday cakes, set the table and arrange play food. Children access a phenomenal amount of resources that support their development, including information, communication technology. They use headphones and tapes to help develop listening skills whilst looking at books. They access walkie talkies to communicate with each other when playing outside and play sensory games, matching sounds and pictures. Children mark make using a variety of media. Pens, pencils, scissors, tape and glue are used competently and resources are used safely. Children's learning is skilfully promoted by staff using open-ended questions and skilfully extending their play.

Children's healthy living and lifestyle is exceptionally well promoted. Staff support children during toileting and hand washing routines and they encourage children to keep the environment tidy. Children are provided with a healthy nutritious fresh fruit snacks and benefit from the social interaction created during this time. Children are encouraged to pour their own drink of milk or water, which in turn helps develop hand-eye coordination, independence and self-help skills. Children enjoy outdoor play and physical activities. They access a wonderful outdoor environment with areas to explore and investigate, develop physical skills or sit and relax together in the seated area. Children are provided with materials to investigate and experiment with, such as, wet and dry sand and water using a series of drain pipes and containers. Children's knowledge and understanding of the natural world is exceptionally well supported. They sow and cultivate vegetables and fruit in the allotment garden, learn about different plants and birds, watch birds feeding and make scarecrows. Children plant potatoes, watch them

grow, then use them in cooking activities. They know the names of the different types of potatoes, when they should be planted and when they can be harvested. Excellent learning opportunities are created that help children learn about caring for the environment and living things. Children access a wide range of sit and ride toys, play ball games and practice their balancing skills using wooden stumps and tyres. Children understand about recycling by helping staff sort out waste products, such as paper and plastics. They learn to keep themselves and each other safe as they play through instruction and gentle reminders from staff.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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