

St John's Pre-School

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*.

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Description of the setting

St John's Pre-School opened in the 1960's and is run by a parent committee. It operates from a church hall in Crowborough, East Sussex. The pre-school is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 09.00am to 3.00pm, Wednesday and Friday 09.00am to 1.00pm, during term time only and an optional lunch club operates from 12.00 noon to 1.00pm. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 24 children aged from two and half to under five years on roll. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification to at least NVQ level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children make progress in their learning and development because staff know the children well and plan activities to address their individual needs. Each child has a file displaying some lovely photos, but written evidence using observations does not always reflect the progress being made by the children. They benefit from the relaxed and welcoming environment and experience regular opportunities for outdoor play, although the organisation of routines at snack time has not been effectively evaluated. The setting has a good relationship with the parents and obtains relevant personal information about each child to meet their individual needs. However, there is no system to ensure they access their children's records regularly. The setting has recently appointed a new supervisor who is in the process of carrying out a self-evaluation of the practice to identify strengths and areas to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the observational assessments of each child's achievements and interests to plan for the next steps in their development ensuring all areas of learning are given equal consideration
- improve the organisation of everyday routines such as snack times to minimise the time children spend waiting passively

- lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children
- involve parents in practical ways to support their child's learning and development and gather their views on a regular basis regarding their children's progress

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding from their training and have established clear procedures for dealing with allegations. They are all aware of how and when to record information and how to use this to refer any concerns to the appropriate agency. There is information provided for parents on how to raise complaints or concerns and the committee is in the process of reviewing and amending the policies and procedures to help support their practice. The environment is safe, secure and welcoming to children, because staff carry out risk assessments to minimise hazards both indoors and outdoors.

Equality and diversity is promoted within the setting. Children are all equally included in all experiences and their needs and interests are identified from the moment they join the setting. Children's understanding of the differences between people in society is positively promoted through posters and celebrating a range of festivals. Many resources are stored in low level units around the room so all children can access the learning environment easily. This encourages children to locate, identify and choose their preferred activities.

The use of self-evaluation is satisfactory. The group has recently started to use the Ofsted document and has considered some areas that need to be developed. These include arranging training for staff and extending the already well established garden and other resources to ensure that children's needs are met. There is a strong staff team who are supported by a committee and they work together well as a stable team. Staff have participated in a variety of training opportunities and use the knowledge and experience they gain to bring about improvements. The committee support the staff and this has a positive impact on outcomes for children.

The partnership with parents is valued for its importance and the pre-school show a strong commitment to keeping parents informed about their child through newsletters, contact books and daily discussions. Parents have positive views about the service they receive. They describe staff as 'friendly and approachable'. Staff extend their welcome to other settings that children attend, such as local schools, who they encourage to visit in order to share information and make transitions easier for children or to participate in celebrations throughout the year. Childminders are welcomed into the setting and can discuss the progress their minded children make here.

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

Children settle well into the pre-school because of the secure systems in place to help them adjust to pre-school life and the welcoming environment. Children are confident individuals who are able to make choices from resources around the room, often having favourites, such as the cars and the baby dolls. Staff ensure these are readily available but also extend children's learning by adding further resources or joining in with the children's play. Staff carry out regular observations of children's development, although this is in the process of being changed under the new supervisor, as existing assessments do not sufficiently plan for individual children's needs and are not clear in planning their next steps.

Children access the role play area, developing their imagination as they act out familiar roles such as visiting the shop or being the 'mummy' or 'daddy' with the dolls. They are given access to a range of different art and craft materials to develop their creativity, with children's creations being displayed on boards around the room. The book area is welcoming, with a comfortable chair and cushions. Children freely choose to look at books on their own or ask an adult to read to them, developing their language and literacy skills. They complete jigsaws with letters and pictures, beginning to link the sounds and letters with the aid of the picture.

Children are happy in this safe environment and feel secure, enjoying contact with staff who they trust. Children's understanding of right and wrong is successfully promoted through consistent boundaries which enables them to learn desirable behaviour, developing their confidence, and to learn to take turns and share. They assist staff in tidying up and have positive relationships with adults who employ sensitive strategies to support their self-esteem.

Children can easily help themselves to tissues and older children use the toilets independently. They help themselves to water to drink and each have a plate at snack time, which reinforces their understanding of good hygiene. They have a variety of fruit and sultanas during snack time, although the pace and organisation of routines sometimes leads to a lack of participation where some children wait passively while others are disruptive and staff have to intervene. Children who need medicine to be administered receive care from staff who liaise with parents about their needs. Medicines are stored safely if they are kept on the premises.

Children have lovely opportunities to play outdoors and learn about growing plants from seeds or the life cycle of the frog, developing their understanding of the world in which they live and what plants need to grow. The range of construction toys enables all children to build and join structures in different ways to create their favourite toys, such as racing cars and fire engines. They use the small world toys, some reflecting positive images of diversity, to develop their imagination with scenarios involving their favourite super heroes or situations from home. They use a wide variety of equipment, such as balls, to practise their catching and balancing skills, while developing hand and eye coordination.

Opportunities to make marks are offered daily. They use paint to create pictures and use sand trays and chalk in the garden to practise their writing skills. Children are beginning to develop their numeracy skills through practical counting during snack time, matching the number of cups to the children around the table. Children's numeracy skills and literacy skills are further promoted through small group work and various programmes on the computer. Children have use of other forms of information technology, such as cameras and programmable toys, to further support their development of skills for the future.

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	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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