

St James Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	148676
Inspection date	10/05/2011
Inspector	Anne Faithfull
Setting address	St James' Church Centre, Kingfisher Drive, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 3LH
Telephone number	0118 966 2568
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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 James Pre-School opened in 1974. It is managed by a voluntary committee, which is made up of some of the parents of children at the pre-school. The pre-school operates from St James' Church in Woodley, Berkshire. The pre-school have access to two rooms and a fully enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves a wide geographical area.

The pre-school is registered for 18 children on the Early Years Register and is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The pre-school opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am to 11.45 am on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 1.00pm to 3.30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Children can attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 39 children on role. This includes funded three and four year olds. The pre-school is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language. There are five part time staff members who are employed to work with the children. All have relevant childcare qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy attending this nurturing and welcoming pre-school. The dedicated staff team in place recognise the uniqueness of each child and provide an inclusive family environment where each child is respected, valued and included. The pre-schools effectiveness in helping children to develop and learn is good; staff are successful in promoting children's self-esteem and encouraging their enthusiasm for learning. Most resources are readily accessible to the children so they can make independent choices. Good partnerships with parents contribute significantly to children's welfare, however parents views on their children's leaning and development are not actively sought. Staff reflect and review their practice daily to ensure the continuous improvement and development of the pre-school.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the observation and assessment systems in place to include comments from parents in their child's learning journey file
- review the organisation and storage of books so children can independently access and choose the books they require.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The established staff team work well together to provide a stimulating and very caring environment for all the children who attend. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They are aware of the steps and procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Children are cared for by staff that are rigorously vetted and suitable to work with them. Visitor's identification is checked and no unvetted persons are left alone with the children. A comprehensive range of risk assessments are in place to ensure children are kept safe both inside and outside. Daily safety checks completed by staff ensure children play in a safe and secure environment and children are aware of the steps to take in an emergency as they regularly participate in the fire drill.

Children can access the majority of the resources independently as they are stored at child height and readily available both inside and outside. However, owing to the large amount of books stored in the book unit children cannot see or access the books independently. Good emphasis is given to providing a fully inclusive setting where children learn about their own and other cultures through planned activities and resources. Staff promote equality and diversity well. This enables children to readily acknowledge their own unique qualities and the characteristics they share with others. Staff regularly liaise with teachers from local schools to ensure a smooth transition for the children and to ensure information and concerns regarding children's development and learning are shared.

This small and motivated staff team are aware of their strengths and areas for development. Both managers meet together at the end of each session and evaluate how the session has gone and highlight any concerns. All staff readily share their ideas and information they have gained when attending different training courses to ensure they all are kept up-to-date with latest childcare practice and requirements. The committee are very supportive and have regular meetings with the staff which contributes to the effective organisation and management of the pre-school. Good relationships are in place with the parents. A good range of information is displayed and available for the parents to look at. Parents are unanimous in their support of the pre-school and are happy with the care and educating their children receive. During the inspection, several parents stated how much they appreciated the welcoming family atmosphere, the brilliant staff and the safe environment offered.

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

Children happily leave their parents and carers when they enter the pre-school. They are eager to see and participate in a range of activities and resources provided for them. For example, making their own boat which they later take

outside to put in the water tray or using the small whiteboards to mark make and draw pictures. Photographs and examples of children's work is attractively displayed around the room giving children a sense of belonging. All child benefit from the calm, family learning environment provided by staff who have worked together for a number of years.

Staff use their knowledge and experience of how children learn through play to provide a good range of adult and child led activities and experiences both inside and outside. Each child has their own learning journey file which includes observations the key workers make, pictures and items of children's work. Although these are shared with parents, currently there is no system in place for parents to include or write their comments in the file regarding their child's development. Staff make effective use of the outside area to extend children's knowledge of the environment and nature. For example, children plant and grow a range of vegetables and flowers and their senses are developing well as they smell the different herbs and plants in the new sensory garden. Children enjoy finding caterpillars, snails and toads in the garden and staff extend their interest by providing them with a magnifying glass and microscope so they can see the smaller insects they find. Children are beginning to think about sustainability in a variety of ways such as, bringing in boxes from home for junk modelling. They are developing skills for the future as they can access and use a range of technology in their play such as, remote control toys.

Staff use everyday routines to extend and develop children's understanding of number for example, asking the children to count how many items of fruit they can see when having a pretend picnic. Children are beginning recognise different shapes such as, commenting on how their sail for the boat looks like a triangle. Children have many opportunities to experiment for instance, seeing if their boat floats or sinks and how the water changes colour when they add red tissue paper. Children's spontaneity is immediately recognised by staff, such as helping children who decided to draw some traffic lights and parking spaces with chalk on the paving stones outside as part of their game.

Staff encourage positive behaviour, as they are calm role models who manage behaviour appropriately. Children are well behaved and readily help to clear away when they hear the tidy up time bell. They show care and concern and readily include each other in their play. Gentle reminders from staff ensure children are aware of their own safety for instance, when they are using scissors to be careful not to cut their fingers. Children are aware of hygiene procedures as they all use hand gel before snack time and put tissues they have used in the bin. Children's physical skills are developing well as they use a range of craft tools and large outdoor equipment. They enjoy participating in the pre-school pentathlon which gives them the opportunity to use all their skills and help to raise money for the pre-school.

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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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