

St Sebastians Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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05/05/2011

Inspector

Melissa Cox

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).

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Description of the setting

St. Sebastian's Pre-school opened in 1990. It operates from a community church hall in Wokingham, adjacent to the site of St. Sebastian's Church of England Primary School and is a committee run group. The group has the use of a large hall with a separate kitchen, toilets and storage rooms. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local community. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for no more than 21 children in the early years age group. There are currently 41 children from two to five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend a variety of sessions throughout the week. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions run from 9.15am to 11.45am and 12.30pm to 3pm, with a lunch club operating between 11.45am and 12.30pm on Monday to Thursday and 9.15am to 11.45am on Fridays. The majority of staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level 3. There are seven staff working with the children on a part-time basis. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

The leadership and management team have failed to reflect on their practice in relation to required checks and updating documentation. This has been an oversight of the current committee but significantly limits their ability to safeguard the children in their care. However, staff demonstrate a good understanding of their day to day responsibilities within the setting. Children are highly valued as individuals by the staff and are provided with an exciting range of activities, which support their individual learning and development needs very well. Self-evaluation procedures overall are ineffective although staff have accurately identified and addressed many other issues within the setting to promote continuous improvement.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure information is gained prior to admission about 01/06/2011

- who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)
- engage with, and provide the following information for, parents: details for contacting Ofsted (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 01/06/2011
 - ensure the record of the risk assessment clearly states when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Documentation) 01/06/2011
 - ensure that records are easily accessible and available for inspection (Documentation) 01/06/2011
 - ensure the correct certificate of registration is displayed and shown to parents on request (Documentation). 01/06/2011

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- involve the parents further as part of the ongoing observation and assessment process, by recording and fully utilising children's starting points before entry into the setting
- 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 .

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are inadequate. The provider has committed an offence by failing to notify Ofsted of a change to the person who is managing the early years provision and changes to the committee. This is an offence, unless the provider can provide a reasonable excuse, and is a specific legal requirement in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provider did provide a reasonable excuse and Ofsted does not intend to prosecute on this occasion. There is a lack of cohesive working between the committee and staff team in relation to maintaining documentation and policies. The complaints procedure does not include Ofsted's contact details and the record of risk assessment was unavailable on the day of the inspection. These are breaches of specific welfare requirements. However, staff's commitment to safeguarding children within the setting is evident. Staff have accessed advanced child protection training and have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child in their care. Daily safety checks are completed within the setting and for outings and staff have completed a comprehensive safety audit in conjunction with the school safety inspector. However, the safeguarding policy is ineffective overall, as the setting has failed to follow set procedures in relation to gaining suitability checks for committee members and have not gathered specific information prior to admission about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child. In addition the current certificate of registration is not displayed. These are all additional

breaches of specific welfare requirements.

Children are happy and settled and participate eagerly and with enjoyment in a warm and stimulating environment. The children really enjoy the time they spend outdoors in the setting, which has been improved and resourced to promote all areas of learning. Resources in the setting are stored at child level with labels and pictures to encourage choice in play and independence through self-selection. The good range of toys and displays depict positive images of gender, race and disability, which help children to build an understanding and appreciation of similarities and differences in each other. Staff are deployed well to activity areas, enabling children to receive a good deal of individual time and attention.

Daily verbal communication and parent meetings keep parents informed of their children's achievements, progress and well-being. The setting have formed good partnerships with outside agencies and linked services in order to support the specific needs of individual children. The very close links with the local school supports children's welfare, learning and development well, ensuring a smooth transition to school.

The staff team have an adequate understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the manager is extremely motivated. Areas for development within the setting are prioritised to ensure continuous improvement. The development plan and current practice clearly demonstrates the impact that improvements have made to date, which have had positive outcomes for all children. Recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed and plans for the future are well targeted to ensure further improvement. However, as a result of the failure of the committee to recognise their statutory responsibilities in regard to documentation, self-evaluation procedures are inadequate overall, as key management issues have not been prioritised and addressed within suitable timescales.

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

Children show a strong sense of security and belonging within the setting. They are confident and build good relationships with staff and each other. Staff work well together as a team, providing a welcoming environment and promoting children's welfare and learning. Warm, caring relationships are established and children readily seek out staff for comfort and support. Staff intuitively know when to stand back and when to intervene in play. They are on hand to give guidance and extend learning where necessary and skilfully encourage thinking during routine play, as they ask open-ended questions.

Behaviour is good. Children are familiar with the routines and expectations of the setting. For example, when staff give a gentle reminder that pack away time is imminent, children recite the 'tidy up' rhyme and make sure they work together to tidy away. Therefore, they demonstrate a good awareness of responsibility and developing independence. They are forming friendships with their peers and play cooperatively, taking turns and sharing. They are developing a good understanding

and awareness of their local and wider community through the activities, experiences and resources provided. For example, children were able to handle and care for small farm animals during a recent visit from a petting zoo. Children are learning to value and respect those who are different from themselves.

Systems for observing, assessing and planning for the individual needs and interests of each child are detailed and staff are using these effectively to ensure each child is supported to make good progress. Staff find out about the children's likes, dislikes and capabilities from the parents before they start. However, staff do not record this information down as clear starting points for learning and as a result, the information is not fully utilised to fully enhance the children's settling in period, and their learning environment, whilst at the setting. Children are independent learners who are motivated and busy at their chosen activity. They benefit from a balanced routine and take part in a wide range of activities that support their learning and development. They work well both independently and in cooperation with their friends.

Children display a very good awareness of how to stay safe both indoors and outside. They use scissors and knives safely and with confidence, and have opportunities to take risks as they climb and balance on equipment outdoors. Children learn how to leave the building safely and calmly when they practise the evacuation procedure. Children have opportunities for regular fresh air and exercise as these are an important part of the daily routine. Children enjoy using the well-resourced garden to practise their ball skills and skilfully manoeuvre on their bikes. Healthy eating is encouraged and staff provide children with an exciting menu of snack options, which children self-select, carefully counting out pieces of fruit or breadsticks in line with the menu plan for the day. Children learn about the natural world as they plant and grow vegetables in their garden patch demonstrating their commitment to sustainability. Their learning is further enhanced as they count how many potatoes they have grown, measure the progress of their sunflowers plants and recognise natural growth cycles in nature. Children have further opportunities to explore early science and problem solving as they experiment with magnets, discovering how items can repel and attract or take part in a cooking activity, adding flour and water to make a basic cake mixture.

The children are developing a good understanding of early communication and literacy through the innovative activities provided by the staff team. Animated conversations take place as staff listen actively to the children, responding with interest and enthusiasm. Children enjoy listening and taking part in stories, they handle books with care and become engrossed in the story sack activities that staff have developed to support their love of literacy. Children have opportunities to 'act out' their favourite stories as they dress up as the characters and perform the stories to their families and peers. The team have embraced the 'Every child a talker' scheme and staff work tirelessly to ensure that all children make good progress to ensure future well-being.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
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	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	4
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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