

# St. Paul's Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

147621

**Inspection date**

12/07/2011

**Inspector**

Vicky Vasiliadis

**Setting address**

St. Pauls Church Hall, The Ridgeway, LONDON, NW7 1QU

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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 Paul's Pre-School is a voluntary organisation run by a management committee. The pre-school opened in 1975. It operates from a church hall situated in Mill Hill, which is located within the London borough of Barnet. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.00am to 12.30pm during term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting may care for no more than 30 children under eight years; of these, not more than 30 may be in the early years age group, and of these, none may be under two years at any one time. Currently, there are 41 children on roll within the early years age range. There are also children in attendance who receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language, and children with special educational needs. The pre-school employs eight members of staff; of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The children are settled, happy and content within the warm and welcoming environment. Overall, the children are provided with a good range of learning opportunities and experiences. The systems for observation, assessment and planning continue to evolve and develop. Effective systems are in place to promote partnership working; this ensures that the children's welfare and learning needs are well met. The manager is aware of the setting's strengths and weaknesses, and is keen to make improvements in order to develop and enhance the service that is offered.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- refine the systems for observing and assessing the children's learning and development
- create further opportunities for children to experiment with numbers and enable them to discover things about numbers, counting and calculating through practical situations.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's safety and welfare is well promoted because staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities in relation to identifying possible indicators of abuse and reporting any concerns. Effective risk assessments are in place that identify possible hazards that children may come into contact with, and appropriate action is taken to ensure these risks are minimised. Staff are well deployed, which ensures that children are well supervised and kept safe. There are robust recruitment procedures in place to ensure that those adults caring for the children are suitable to do so. In addition, those individuals who are not yet vetted do not have unsupervised access to the children.

Although the manager has only been in post for a short period of time, she has a clear vision and knows where the setting's strengths lie and where improvements are needed. She is able to identify realistic but challenging steps for improvement. For example, she is reviewing the policies and procedures to ensure they comply with legal requirements. In addition, she has sought support from the local authority to focus on strengthening the systems for observing, assessing and planning for the individual learning needs of the children. The views of parents and carers are sought verbally and through questionnaires. They are able to make positive contributions to how they would like the service to be developed. The children are provided with a welcoming environment that takes into account their different interests, understanding, home backgrounds and cultures. They are enabled to make choices in their play and readily help themselves to toys and equipment from the low-level storage units and resources that are put out for them. Consequently, children are helped to feel included and valued. Children are also developing in confidence and self-esteem; they enjoy taking 'Digger' the stuffed dog home with them, or on family holidays or days out. The setting has addressed most of the recommendations from the previous inspection, thereby improving outcomes for children. They continue to work on their systems for monitoring the children's learning and development.

There are good systems in place to promote partnership working with parents and others. There are notice boards displayed around the hall and entrance area that provide parents with information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, as well as the setting's policies and procedures. Parents have opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their children's achievements and progress. Each child has their own personal developmental record, which shows how children are making progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are unanimous in their positive feedback about the care and education their children receive within the setting. In addition, the setting continues to develop links with the adjoining school. For example, the children access the outdoor reception play area at the school and teachers visit the children at the setting. Staff produce transitional documents in preparation for when children leave to go onto school. This ensures that children are suitably supported in the transition from the setting to school. Furthermore, necessary information is shared with other professionals to support and extend children's learning and well-being within the setting, such as the local authority

inclusion team.

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

Overall, children are making good progress in their learning and development. They are provided with a well-balanced curriculum which includes a balance of child-led and adult-led activities. The systems for observing and assessing children's learning and development continue to evolve and develop. The setting is working on these systems to ensure that the children's next steps are effectively identified and securely linked to their plans. Daily free-flow play between the indoors and outdoors supports children's physical development.

Children are learning the importance of developing healthy lifestyles as they have good opportunities to use their physical skills. For example, children play with the bikes and step cycle while outside. In addition, all children are encouraged to take part in the stretch and grow sessions, where they are beginning to make links with exercise and healthy lifestyles. The children learn about the importance of healthy eating as they help to grow vegetables at their local allotment. Once the vegetables are harvested, the children can taste what they have grown. The children learn the importance of maintaining appropriate hygiene precautions as they are reminded to wash their hands before eating, and some of the more proficient children are able to do this with little reminding.

The children are able to explore their environment from a secure base, because they have developed healthy attachments with their carers. For example, there is a key person system in place and staff are kind and caring towards the children; this helps children to feel safe and secure. In addition, the children are learning the importance of their own safety. For example, there are conversations with the children that encourage them to think about their actions, such as not standing too close to the edge of the steps in case they fall, and using the scissors safely. The children also learn about the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency, because regular fire drills take place. The children are well-behaved and they respond positively to praise and encouragement. They can play and work feeling safe and secure as the staff maintain clear, reasonable and consistent limits. In addition, some of the older children act as positive role models to the younger children, as they are polite and involve them in their games. For example, one child guides the younger child to the activities, holding her by the hand and telling her to come and join in. The setting provides children with opportunities to access resources that are reflective of the wider community, and they acknowledge a selection of festivals such as, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Eid and Hanukkah. This supports the children's understanding of diversity and helps to promote a sense of belonging.

Children are provided with a good selection of resources that enable them to practise their early mark making skills, such as pencils, crayons and a selection of painting tools, which they use to make patterns and marks on the walls with

water. They are beginning to understand that print carries meaning, and the more able children handle books with care and enjoy having stories read to them. Children are learning to take turns in conversation and enjoy talking to their peers and adults. For example, children excitedly talk about their own computers that they use at home, and what they like to do while attending the setting. Staff encourage the children, clarify ideas and ask open-ended questions; this supports and extends the children's thinking, and helps them to make connections in their learning. The setting is also part of the Every Child A Talker programme.

Children investigate the outdoor environment and take great delight in digging in the mud to try and find spiders and other insects. They also thoroughly enjoy mixing mud and sand with water, and watching how the consistency of these materials changes when water is added. Children are developing an interest in Information and Communication Technology as they have access to resources that promote this, such as programmable toys and computers. Children are developing an understanding of problem solving as they try and organise and fit together the large soft play blocks to make dens. There are some discussions with the children about shapes, patterns and colours. However, children have fewer opportunities to experiment with numbers and to discover things about numbers, for example by counting and calculating through practical situations.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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