

St James Rd Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Maura Pigram
Setting address	St James Road, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 0DZ
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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 is committee led and was registered in 1992. It operates from St James church hall in Watford, Hertfordshire. The pre-school serves the local area. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon and from 12.30pm to 3pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 59 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and four hold an early years qualification at level 3 or above. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The manager and staff ensure systems allow them to know each child well. This enables them to effectively meet children's individual learning and development needs. Their positive approach to inclusion ensures children learn to respect each other and recognise their individuality and strategies to fully support children with additional languages are generally effective. They work closely with parents and staff and share valuable information that promote children's welfare and learning. A close partnership with other agencies ensures consistency of care and that individual needs are carefully monitored. Plans for the future are mostly well monitored and involves most parties.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve resources to further promote and value children's linguistic diversity and provide more opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- improve reflective practice and self-evaluation so that the views of children and that of their parents and carers are fully included and use this to further 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

The manager and staff are committed to safeguarding children and attend regular training to ensure knowledge and procedures are updated which promotes children's welfare. In addition, close partnership with outside agencies such as those working within the children's centre ensure children and their families are effectively supported and there is a positive continuity of care. Robust procedures for arrival and departure ensure children are handed over safely to a known adult. Many opportunities are taken to ensure children are safety conscious without been fearful. Effective risk assessments for all areas including outings ensure potential risks to children are minimised.

The manager is a good role model she is extremely well organised and consistently communicates high expectations to staff about making continual improvements. For example, since the last inspection they have changed the layout of the resources and have worked hard on their planning. Equipment is regularly reviewed and recent additions include a popular airport, cushions for the book area making it a more cosy area and a science area with a wide range of interesting resources. Staff are well deployed and the strengths of individual members are effectively used. They are clear about their roles including key person duties. Regular staff meetings and appraisals ensure training needs are identified and followed up. Recently some staff members have attended 'Every child a talker' and 'Boys, boys, boys' information from these are effectively shared so that outcomes for children are improved.

There is a common sense of purpose about what the manager and her staff want to achieve, such as an improved outdoor area. They are well supported by the adjoining church members and the committee. All staff members contribute to the monitoring of the provision and they have started to make effective steps towards completing the Herts Quality Standards Award. An ongoing action plan is effectively used to target areas to develop. Although, views of parents and children are welcome, these are not yet fully used in the monitoring process. Previous recommendations have been effectively addressed. For example, planning is now focused on children's interests along with appropriate themes and the introduction of 'Buggy Buddies' has had a positive impact on children's learning.

The pre-school actively promotes inclusive practice and staff work closely with parents and some other agencies to ensure they have a good knowledge of children's backgrounds and needs. Photographs of resources and the routine of the day help children identify their requests and help them to feel secure and settled. Staff use sign language to help communicate with children and are continually reviewing skills and strategies to help them fully understand all children attending. Parents speak well of the pre-school and comment positively on the care and attention of the staff. Many have older children who have attended the pre-school. Positive steps are taken to ensure parents are involved in children's learning. For example, recently home documents have been introduced to share children's favourite toys or activities undertaken at the weekend. Information from this is

then discussed during snack time which promotes children's skills for the future, such as communicating and listening skills.

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

The committed pre-school manager and her staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and one to one support is provided when necessary so that children are fully included and effectively supported. Knowledge gained from training is successfully used and advice from supporting agencies is sought when needed. For example, voice recorders are very well used to help children to become confident in speaking. In addition, the use of a realistic doll contributes effectively to children's emerging language skills and helps shy children overcome any anxiety. The realistic doll also helps children develop a wide range of skills for the future, such as developing positive relationships with each other and an understanding of diversity.

Open sessions with parents prior to children starting ensure key persons have a secure knowledge of children's starting points and their individual needs. There is a close relationship with professionals from the children's centre and the toddler group which feeds into pre-school. This also contributes effectively to meeting children's individual needs. Since the last inspection, the manager and staff have worked hard on their planning to ensure it is child-led and the focus is on extending and supporting children's learning and development at all times. For example, staff effectively use open questions to help children think and process their thoughts and ideas. Children's learning journals show that a systematic approach is used to make sensitive observations of the children during adult-led and child-led activities. These are evaluated and shared within the team to inform further steps in the children's learning. Staff also record their small group sessions, such as the 'Buggy Buddies' and cooking activities. During these times, children enjoy using magnifying glasses to search for mini beasts so that they learn about the world around them. Cooking supports their understanding of measuring and early numeracy skills. A book lending system is in operation and there are many books available for children. They eagerly share books in the cosy book area and in the home area. However, on the day of inspection few books were available in dual languages to fully support children's home languages.

There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that fosters learning across all areas ensuring children are always well occupied in purposeful tasks. For example, children enjoy creating models from junk and boys in particular take great interest how a table top pencil sharpener operates. This contributes to their eagerness to use their sharpened pencils which supports their emerging writing skills. On arrival children freely play between the outdoor and indoor area. Any unsettled children are sensitively helped to feel settled and secure. Children behave well because they are busy within their play and they are helped to know what is expected of them. Good quality interaction and the well organised routine, such as the small group snack session help children become secure and confident. They adopt good personal hygiene routines and through age-appropriate

discussions are helped to understand what foods contribute towards a healthy lifestyle. For example, they know that milk and fruit will make them strong. Outdoors children enjoy practising their physical skills, such as riding cars, they climb on the various slides and climbing equipment and use the large chalk board and clipboards for drawing and mark-making. Plans are in place to develop the outdoor area so that children can fully benefit from the learning opportunities that the outdoor environment can offer all year round.

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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