

St Paul's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Kathleen Snowdon

Setting address	Doddington Drive, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6DF
Telephone number	07811 973027
Email	donnamsouthgate@aol.com
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 privately owned and managed. It was registered in 1995 and operates from an early years unit in St Paul's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided First School in Cramlington, Northumberland. Children also use the school hall and there is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. There are no issues to hinder access to the setting. A maximum of 32 children aged three to under five may attend at any one time. The setting is open each weekday in term time only. Sessions run each weekday from 9am to 12 noon for those children in receipt of funding for early years education. Afternoon sessions also run each weekday from 12 noon to 3pm. Children may attend all day.

Currently, there are 23 children on roll all of whom are in the early years age group. Of these, 22 are in receipt of funding for early education. The children who attend live in the local and surrounding communities. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are five members of staff who work directly with the children. The manager holds Early Years Professional Status and an Honours Degree in Early Years. Of the rest of the staff, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Staff's excellent understanding of every child being unique and individual creates a totally inclusive environment. This is highly effective in promoting children's welfare and, along with mostly excellent play opportunities, supports the outstanding progress they make in their learning and development. No recommendations were made at the last inspection. Excellent self-evaluation and exceptional partnership working mean that the capacity for continuous improvement is outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- creating props to support role play, with particular regard to extending the potential of the home corner.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Excellent priority is attached to safeguarding. All staff are vetted to determine their suitability to work with children. Staff are very experienced and knowledgeable about child protection through ongoing training. As a result, they are highly aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and referral procedures. Thorough risk assessments help to minimise accidents while clear explanations from staff raise children's awareness of potential dangers. Staffing ratios are excellent. This means that the children are extremely well supported by skilled and sensitive practitioners in the beautifully resourced indoor and outdoor environments. As a result, children feel very safe, secure and happy. Documentation is impeccable. All essential policies and records are in place, which underpin the safe and efficient management of the group.

Exceptional partnership working further promotes the highly inclusive approach the setting takes. Staff have formed excellent relationships and work very closely with staff in the host school, other professionals and with the retailers in the surrounding locality. This ensures that the needs of the children are met as fully as possible and helps children to develop a sense of belonging to and an awareness of the wider community. Partnership with parents and carers is similarly excellent. Parents and carers participate in joint projects with the manager to explore relevant childcare topics, such as child development and the importance of play. They say that they are kept very well informed of their children's progress. Parents and carers describe the setting as 'an amazing place' with a 'calm, serene and loving atmosphere' and say staff are 'brilliant and very supportive.'

Exceptional leadership inspires an experienced and skilled staff group, which is highly motivated and completely dedicated to early years work. Staff are totally focused on the children and their commitment to equality of opportunity means that there is excellent scope for every child to reach their full potential. Staff take part in and are very enthusiastic about ongoing training to improve their professional development. As well as this, extremely effective and reflective self-evaluation gives staff the ability to sustain exceptionally high standards.

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

Excellent partnership with parents and a hugely effective key worker system enable staff to establish, with great accuracy, children's starting points and abilities. They make very perceptive and extremely well informed observations and assessments of the children. This enables staff to make exciting plans that cover all areas of learning and help children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Plans are very clearly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and include clear details of how to help children reach the next step in their learning and development.

The layout of the indoor environment is exceptional and completely supports the

children's personal, social and emotional development. For example, using a shared space, children from the pre-school play alongside with children in the reception class, most of whom formerly attended the pre-school. This allows the older children to continue their attachment with pre-school staff and allows the younger ones to become acquainted with reception class staff. This makes the younger children's transition into formal schooling seamless and largely stress free. Play areas are exceptionally well defined allowing children to focus on their chosen task. However, the home corner area is rather cramped, which slightly restricts the amount of props available to the children during role play. High quality resources are easily accessible and children have huge scope to initiate play that appeals to their personal interests. The environment, both indoors and out, is rich in text and number, which strongly supports children's literacy and mathematical development.

Children's behaviour is outstanding through the excellent guidance they receive from staff. The children talk with staff about the challenges faced by people with special educational needs and/or disabilities during group discussions and make insightful observations of the impact of negative behaviour. This successfully promotes the development of highly positive personal qualities, such as empathy and compassion. As well as this, they celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year, Harvest Festival and Christmas. Such meaningful experiences help raise children's awareness of diversity and increases their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Excellent emphasis is placed on children's physical development. They thoroughly enjoy a superb range of opportunities that teach them that exercise is fun. For example, they take part in energetic and fun filled activities, such as Irish dancing and games like 'Sticky Feet' and 'Steady Beat.' These experiences encourage children to explore how they can move in different ways. The policy for sick children is very clear and readily available to parents and carers. Very good regard is given to developing children's awareness of personal hygiene. For example, children brush their teeth after eating. In addition, they clearly understand that they must wash their hands after using the bathroom to prevent the spread of illness or infection. Delicious and appetising snacks help children to develop healthy preferences, while a very well balanced daily routine gives them opportunities to relax after being very busy. The exceptional early experiences provided by this exemplary and inspirational setting, lay an excellent foundation for future learning.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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