

St Johns Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Johns Pre-School has been registered since 1994 and is run by a management committee. It operates from the first floor of a community centre in the Walworth area of Southwark. It has use of a hall and a smaller room. There is no outdoor play area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 26 children aged from two to five years on roll.

The pre-school is open each weekday during school term times from 9.15am until 3pm. Children can attend on a part-time or full-time basis. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning English as an additional language. It receives funding to provide free early education to children aged three and four years.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff who work directly with children. Additional staff supervise at lunch times. Staff working with children hold a variety of early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their learning although staff do not always use resources effectively, such as access to the outdoor environment. Good links exist with parents, carers and other agencies to help meet children's individual needs. There is a lack of challenge for more able children, however. Procedures to promote children's welfare are adequate. The pre-school staff show suitable commitment to continuous improvement, but systems to monitor and evaluate practice do not always reflect the most important issues for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase access to outdoor play, including outings in the local area, to further encourage children to explore and be physically active
- develop reflective practice and self-evaluation to further identify the pre-school's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children
- develop resources and activities to provide a more effective and challenging environment to support all children's learning, including those who are more able.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding are sufficiently robust to help protect children. All staff have appropriate background checks. Employment and appraisal procedures help to recruit and support suitable staff. Sound procedures are in place so that staff have the skills to promote children's safety. Several staff hold first aid certificates to help support children in the event of an accident. The environment is generally safe as basic risk assessments identify dangers and staff take positive steps to eliminate hazards.

The manager works with staff and the committee to evaluate practice and identify some appropriate priorities for development. However, systems to monitor the quality of the learning and progress of children are not fully effective. As a result, staff do not always clearly link areas for development, or the use of resources, to children's needs. Staff share information and ideas they gain from training sessions with other team members at regular staff meetings. This process helps them to secure some further improvements. For example, they now provide active, physical play for children indoors. Staff do not make sufficiently good use of outdoor play and learning in the local environment.

The pre-school provides appropriate experiences to value diversity and to include all children, such as celebrating different festivals. Policies, procedures and staff training appropriately support equal opportunities. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive positive support in a range of ways. For example, there is careful monitoring of their progress with support from outside professionals and staff take them to visit speech and language groups. Children who are learning English as an additional language are making friends and developing their communication skills appropriately. The pre-school has good relationships in place with parents. A particular strength is the ability of staff to settle new children and to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents' contribute their views about the pre-school through questionnaires and they make positive comments about their children's progress. They value the effective support between home and the pre-school, such as the use of communication books. Staff positively support children's transition to schools through a range of strategies in partnership with other professionals.

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

Children who are new to the pre-school receive effective support as there are clear procedures to help them settle. As a result, they are confident to explore activities. All children are confident to join in with circle time and to sing songs. Some children's behaviour requires frequent support from staff to share toys, co-operate and to deal with their feelings. There is an adequate range of resources to help children learn about diversity, such as dressing up clothes. In addition, children make annual visits to China Town as part of Chinese New Year celebrations. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support through sensitive interactions from staff and links with outside

professionals.

Generally, children make sound progress in their learning and development. New children enjoy their activities, such as emptying and filling with sand and water using different containers. However, the range and depth of activities do not always challenge older and more able children, which has some limitations in extending their learning. Children enjoy activities which support some aspects of learning as staff make observations of their individual progress which contribute to sufficient daily planning. Children can access resources independently and staff support them appropriately. For example, while children play in the sand, staff ask a range of questions to support their understanding of number. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through imaginative play with fire-engines and rescue vehicles or shopping in the home corner. They show a developing understanding of letter recognition as they point out their names with enthusiasm. They regularly visit the local library which helps them to develop an interest in books. However, resources to support early writing skills, such as pens and paper, are not always available, which has some limitations in children's development in this area. Children are able to develop appropriate computer skills using a range of software, including matching, painting and drawing programmes. They focus well on these activities with support from staff. As a result of all these activities, children are able to secure some skills for future learning. Children are developing an understanding of a safe and healthy lifestyle. They enjoy a range of healthy snacks, such breadsticks, fruit and water. Some children bring packed lunches and staff encourage them to eat sandwiches before less healthy foods. A climbing frame is available in the main room for physical play, as there is no outside play area. It is very popular with children but can become overcrowded. Children are developing a sufficient understanding of how to stay safe on the climbing frame with appropriate support from staff. However, the raised noise level in the room as a result of this activity makes it difficult for staff to support children's communication skills effectively. The pre-school provides a football coach to further promote physical skills and children engage in exercises, such as copying different body shapes. Children take part in occasional outings in the local community. However, there are limitations for them to explore and be physically active outdoors as staff are not making effective use of parks and open spaces.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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