

St Helens College Nursery and Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 323089
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Inspector Jill Maguire

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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. Helens College Nursery opened in 1986 and was re-opened in 2009 in a new building on the same campus. It operates from four rooms in a secure, self-contained unit within the Brook Street Campus, in the centre of St. Helens. It serves the local area. It is registered to provide care for a maximum of 64 children in the early years age group at any one time. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 67 children from birth to five years on roll.

The nursery have a fully enclosed outdoor play space. The entrance is accessible as there are no steps leading into the main entrance, all playrooms and toilet facilities are on the ground floor. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open five days a week during term time only. Sessions are from 8am until 4.30pm. Ten full-time and six part-time staff work with the children. All the staff have appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

An enthusiastic and knowledgeable staffing team have a good understanding of each child's individual learning and welfare needs. They make good progress in their learning and development through the support and guidance of caring and experienced staff. Children in the setting are very friendly and move confidently around the well-organised environment. Thorough records, policies and procedures ensure children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted well. Good partnerships with parents and other agencies ensure all children's needs are met. Staff are reflective and use self-evaluation to improve practice although there is room to improve planning and the routine around lunchtime.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that observational evidence is responded to appropriately by identifying learning priorities and plan relevant learning experiences for each child
- revise lunchtime routines for older children to ensure waiting time is kept to a minimum
- analyse observations to help plan 'what next' for individuals and groups of children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of safeguarding children. They are knowledgeable about local safeguarding policies and share these with parents. Effective procedures are in place to manage any concerns they may have about children in their care. Staff and student volunteers are appropriately vetted and are safe and suitable to work with young children. This means that children are well protected and safeguarded in the setting. Thorough risk assessments, policies and procedures enhance all aspects of children's safety. Outdoor areas are checked on a daily basis before they are used. This means children are able to move safely and freely around the setting.

The rich and varied environment is well organised both indoors and outdoors and accessible to all the children. It allows children to follow their interests and engage in opportunities of their own choice. Adults observe children's activities and follow their lead, supporting them appropriately to extend their play. Frequent team leader meetings and consultations with parents and children are effective in identifying children's interests. Adults use information gathered to create an inviting and imaginative setting to allow children to develop their ideas. Professional development of staff is highly valued and its benefits are evident in the setting's practice. Staff recently trained in the 'Stepped Approach' have developed a stimulating and exciting outdoor area which covers all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff and children utilise this area every day, changing the provision according to children's requests and current interests. For example, staff provided fabric to make into cloaks and pictures and resources to support the children's fascination with super heroes. This means there are continual improvements in children's outcomes.

Good relationships are valued by parents who are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning. Information sharing systems are effective in ensuring children's interests and welfare needs are communicated to the setting and parents. Through the sharing of each child's individual Learning Story, parents are able to comment about their child's progress in the setting and at home by completing a 'Parent Voice Sheet'. Parents are invited into the setting to see how their children learn and to comment on their child's progress. A parent notice board provides information on current topics and song sheets so parents can continue their child's learning at home. Information on healthy eating for under five's is available and the Early Years Foundation Stage and weekly planning are on display for parents to see what children are doing each week. Effective communication with other professionals involved with the children ensure there is good information sharing. Discussions with the local authority early years team ensure that children with additional needs and their families are provided with appropriate support. Transition to school is supported through communication with schools and teachers who are invited to visit the children in the setting. Good assessment documentation which shows children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is passed on to schools.

The manager and staff are aware of the strengths and areas for development in

the setting. Ongoing self-evaluation takes place and staff have worked together to contribute to areas for improvement. Evidence of close working relationships with the local early years team and achievement of the quality standards kite mark and healthy food awards demonstrates the setting's commitment to continual self-improvement. Staff development and training is highly promoted and staff are keen to add to their knowledge and skills to improve their practice within the setting. A bank of training information from courses attended by staff is available in a resource room for staff and students to refer to.

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

Trusting relationships are evident between the adults and the children. The key worker system enables children, particularly very young children to build a close bond with significant adults. This supports them to settle well and develop confidence. All children and parents are warmly greeted and children comforted and supported when it is needed. Most children are happy to separate from parents which demonstrates a strong sense of security. Children move confidently around the setting and are comfortable to discuss their feelings about activities with visitors.

The settings healthy eating award means children are provided with a variety of nutritious foods which meet dietary requirements. Parents are invited to comment and contribute to the menus. Children help themselves to water whenever they are thirsty. Children know the routines for hand washing before they eat, however, they become distracted as they sit at the table too long before their food is served. A discussion about favourite fruits and vegetables demonstrates their understanding of healthy foods. Very young children practise being put into the evacuation trolley to transport them outside in the event of a fire. Children show a positive attitude to being active and benefit from the large outdoor area which gives them scope for a variety of physical activities, which they enjoy creating and building.

Children are effective communicators and speak confidently and politely with one another, adults and visitors. They have opportunities to develop language through using the toy telephone, repeating favourite phrases at story time, and at singing time. Adults model good use of language and support children's emerging language with sounds and pronunciation. A good balance of activities are provided and enhancements added to reflect children's interest. For example, zoo animals were put out in the small world area following information from a parent about a trip to the zoo. Children use their knowledge of colour and shape to complete inset jig saw puzzles. They learn counting through using the till and money in the toy shop. The availability of computers in the toddlers and pre-school rooms enables children to develop skills using the mouse and the keyboard. They listen to songs and stories and learn how to operate the CD player independently.

Children are treated with and show respect for one another. Adults know and acknowledge each child's needs. They behave well in the setting and are supported to settle disputes amicably. They support one another with their

learning, for instance, they discuss the colours they are going to paint an airport they have designed and built from boxes and help one another to put on dressing-up clothes. They are involved in celebrations such as Diwali and Bonfire night and show obvious pride in the display of their artwork. They learn about the wider world through a range of activities, pictures and resources which promote positive images of diversity.

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	1

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	1
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

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