

St Pauls Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 323098
Inspection date 23/11/2011
Inspector Jill Maguire

Setting address St. Pauls Church, 75 Chain Lane, St. Helens, Merseyside,
WA11 9QF
Telephone number 01744 453181
Email
Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

St. Pauls Playgroup has been registered for approximately 20 years. The setting is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from the community rooms at the back of St Paul's Church, Blackbrook, which is close to St Helens. The setting serves families in the local and wider community. The setting is open each day from 9am to 12 noon during term time only. The children have sole use of two large rooms, the outdoor play space and the associated facilities, during the hours of operation.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 41 children aged two to five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 36 children on roll, of these, 15 receive funding for nursery education.

The voluntary management committee employs seven members of staff, with support from a volunteer. All of the staff hold relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority. Staff attend local network meetings.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The setting is welcoming to children and their parents and they are greeted warmly on arrival. Overall, staff have a satisfactory understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children make sound progress given their starting points. However, observations and planning for their progress do not fully reflect priorities for learning. Familiarity and understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures are not sufficiently robust to fully promote the welfare of children. Although regulatory documentation is in place, it is not always easily located. The management of the setting is committed to developing the provision, in order to improve outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- implement an effective safeguarding children policy and procedures. This must include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 23/11/2011
- carry out a full risk assessment for all outings, which includes an assessment of required adult to child ratios. The assessment must be reviewed before embarking on each specific outing (Safeguarding and 23/11/2011

promoting children's welfare).

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

- improve observations across the six areas of learning, in order to form a view of where each child is in their learning, what they need to learn next and the most effective practice to support them.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are generally safeguarded and protected in some aspects as the setting ensures all adults have completed a relevant vetting procedure. However, staff are unclear about who to report concerns to and procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a member of the team. This is a breach of the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff use daily check sheets both indoors and outdoors to support them in ensuring the areas used by the children are safe. However, risk assessments for outings are not in place and staff are not able to discuss steps taken before an outing. This is also a breach of the welfare requirements and puts children at risk. Accident logs are in place and parents sign sheets to acknowledge their child has been given medication.

Overall, staff are knowledgeable about the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and use these as a basis to assess children's learning. However, planning is not linked to observations or the Early Years Foundation Stage document. On arrival at the setting, children pass through the main activity room to gather in their key worker groups in a large side room. They then collectively take part in singing activities and remain in these groups for their focused activity. However, this period of time lasts up to thirty minutes which some children find difficult. Children are able to freely access a large outdoor area. However, staff are unsure of the procedures to follow when outdoors, should a child move beyond the area cordoned by bollards. Staff offer sensitive support to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the use of visual aids ensures all children can access activities and be familiar with the routines of the setting. Books and dolls reflect diversity in society and boys and girls have equal access to all resources. Therefore, an inclusive environment is promoted. Adults have attended training to support children with communication needs and also to promote development of all children's language.

The manager is currently compiling a self-evaluation form, although this was not available on the day of the inspection. Work is in progress with the governing body to create an action plan which identifies targets for improvement. This document highlights how recommendations from previous reports have been addressed. For example, to improve systems to actively seek views of parents regarding provision of nursery education, the setting now sends out regular newsletters and parent questionnaires, giving parents the opportunity for feedback. However, parents are unable to discuss their children's progress overall or any updates received. This said, the setting has good relationships with parents and encourages them to

share information about their child's starting points. Information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis largely around children's welfare. Lack of training, particularly around safeguarding, means staff are not up to date with current information and procedures. This has an impact on children's safety and welfare. Record keeping and documentation are not always up to date or easily located by staff and some information is stored electronically on pen drives which are not kept on the premises.

Relationships with other professionals involved with the children contribute to supporting children's welfare and learning. The setting makes contact each year with local schools and takes the children on walks to familiarise them with where the schools are located, before they leave the setting.

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

Children are happy in the setting and enjoy themselves as they select resources and make creative pictures to represent a story they have heard. This allows for children to some have control of their play. However, some children have difficulty at the beginning of the session when they are expected to remain with their key worker for focused activities for a considerable period of time. This impacts on their enthusiasm and reduces spontaneity. Children take turns fetching and carrying water to pour down the channels in the outdoor area, This helps them to learn how to collaborate and work as a team. They access all the areas of learning and enjoy mark making indoors and outdoors, pouring sand, completing jigsaw puzzles and dressing up. This means they have access to a variety of resources across all areas of leaning. They use hammers confidently to knock pegs into pumpkins, counting them as they go along and pointing to the patterns made by the holes from the pegs. This helps them to begin to understand number and shape concepts. They wait patiently for their turn to try matching and puzzle programmes on the computer, which is helping to develop their knowledge of information and computer technology and develop skills for the future. However, delivery of specific activities to support individual learning is not fully embedded in planning systems across the setting. Staff largely rely on continuous provision to support children's learning. Therefore, some children do not always make as much progress as they could.

Children enjoy using the large wheeled toys in the outdoor area and carrying water to the play house to paint it. This supports the development of their large muscle and small manipulative physical skills. They sit at the snack table when they are hungry and use knives, under supervision, to spread butter and cream cheese onto their toast. This helps to develop their independence. They chat confidently with visitors about their favourite spreads and offer to share their toast. They show they feel safe as they approach staff for assistance with spreading the cheese. However, children's safety is not fully assured due to the staff's insufficient knowledge of safeguarding procedures.

Children celebrate bonfire night and enjoy talking about their artwork depicting fireworks. Evidence of children's work is displayed throughout the setting which

gives the children a sense of worth and raises self-esteem. An interest in pirates has generated lots of creative activities, such as making treasure maps. Photographs show children dressed as pirates on a treasure hunt around the setting. Some children bring in mark making which they have done at home, which is displayed alongside examples done in the setting. This demonstrates how children's examples of learning continued at home are valued and helps to boost their confidence. Parents support children to keep a diary of activities and photographs of cuddly toys taken home at the weekend. This provides a good link between the setting and home.

Staff observe children and record achievements during focused activities but do not always use this information to identify appropriate next steps or use them to inform planning. This means they do not identify appropriate learning priorities to ensure children can consolidate their learning or make maximum progress. However, regular assessment procedures provided by the local authority show children are making progress in some areas of their learning and development. Staff know where the children are up to in line with the Development Matters statements in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance, although planning is not securely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Good access to the large outdoor area ensures the children have ample opportunity for fresh air and exercise. They manoeuvre large wheeled toys around obstacles and access climbing equipment which challenges their physical skills. A wide range of activities in the outdoor area cover all six areas of learning. Children make sure their hands are clean by using wet wipes before helping themselves to milk, toast and fresh fruit at snack times. Fresh drinking water is available at all times for the children to access independently. The setting has achieved the local authority early years healthy eating award and is currently working towards a further healthy lifestyles award.

Children are keen to share what they know and try to solve problems with adult support. Their achievements are applauded which boosts confidence and raises their self-esteem. When pouring water out of watering cans they count how many times they fill them up and work collaboratively to fill the cans with water. These activities help them to learn how to work and solve problems together. They confidently use pens on touch screen computer games to play pairs matching games and know how to follow the tick and cross instructions if they want to continue a game.

Children behave well in the setting because the adults give clear explanations and set appropriate boundaries. Children develop a respect for themselves and others in the setting and are supported with sharing and turn taking. They talk confidently with visitors and chat happily with each other around the sand tray and at other activities. A child in a doctor's outfit tells visitors they are going to check another child out who is lying on a bed. Throughout these activities children learn communication skills and develop good attitudes to 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?	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	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
--	---

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	4
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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- keep and implement a statement of procedures to be followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard the children being cared for from abuse and neglect (Arrangements for safeguarding children). (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 23/11/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Arrangements for safeguarding children). 23/11/2011