

St. Bertelines Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Carol Johnson

Setting address	St. Bertelines CofE Primary School, Norton Lane, Norton, RUNCORN, Cheshire, WA7 6QN
Telephone number	01928 719847
Email	stbertsp-s@hotmail.co.uk
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*.

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Description of the setting

St. Bertelines Pre-School opened in 1988 and is managed by the governing body of St. Bertelines Primary School in Norton, Runcorn. The pre-school operates from various rooms within the school. Children also have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school is open five days a week from 9am to 11.30am and 1pm to 3.30pm during school term times only. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. A maximum of 14 children between the ages of three and five may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 27 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school provides care for children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs two permanent members of staff, both of whom hold relevant early years qualifications. There is also a regular volunteer who helps out during sessions. The pre-school receives support from a local authority teacher and the school Foundation Stage teacher.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are making good progress and their awareness of safety and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle are fostered extremely well. They behave exceptionally well and are eager to participate in the wide variety of interesting and stimulating experiences that are available to them. On the whole, resources are deployed effectively and staff members have forged good relationships with parents and other professionals. Systems for sharing some information with parents are not fully effective, but the pre-school demonstrates a strong capacity and desire for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance two-way communication with parents and strategies that encourage parents to contribute to the ongoing observation and assessment process
- make creative resources more accessible to children so they are able to imagine and bring to fruition their projects and ideas while they are still fresh in their minds, and provide a place where work in progress can be kept safely.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is afforded a high priority. The premises are safe and secure and staff visually check the premises and equipment on a daily basis. Appropriate risk assessment records are maintained and a range of safety precautions are in place to help protect children. Staff are well aware of their individual and collective roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and know whom to contact if they have any concerns. Written policies and procedures accurately reflect everyday practice and these are shared with staff and available to parents. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so.

The leadership and management of the provision is strong. Children benefit from the enthusiastic and committed staff team who actively strive to make the environment attractive and welcoming to all. Staff show a strong desire and commitment towards their personal and professional development, and self-evaluation is ongoing at all levels. Through regular reflective practice, staff are constantly refining procedures and making changes that bring about positive improvements for children's welfare and learning. Parents are invited to express their views about the pre-school and a wide variety of positive responses are recorded on recently returned questionnaires. For example, they comment on the strong links with the school, the wide range of experiences available to their children and how staff are friendly and approachable and really know their children. A range of useful information is shared with parents through notices, newsletters and regular verbal communication. They are invited to special events, and parent evenings are organised on a regular basis.

Children are flourishing in the stimulating environment provided by the pre-school. They enjoy access to a wide variety of good quality resources, and attractive displays around the pre-school room help to raise children's self-esteem and inform parents. Staff are aware of the value of working alongside parents and other professionals and have forged effective partnerships. The pre-school has extremely strong links with the school and works closely with other agencies and professionals. An artist, dance teachers and a French teacher are just some of the people invited into the pre-school and these help to enhance children's learning and broaden their range of experiences. Inclusive practice is evident and staff work hard to ensure that children's individual needs are known and met. Children are learning about themselves and others in meaningful ways. For example, through discussion, various planned activities and exploring a range of religious and cultural festivals. They are developing a sense of community as they participate in charity fundraising events and go on local outings.

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

Children have lots of fun in the pre-school. They are progressing well because they are happy and secure, and staff plan a wide range of experiences based on their

individual needs and interests. Staff regularly observe children during play and record their achievements. This information is then thoughtfully used, alongside that gathered from parents, to inform planning and children's individual learning and development records. However, their learning potential is somewhat restricted because systems for encouraging parents to actively contribute to the ongoing observation and assessment process have not been fully explored. Planning is flexible and includes a good mix of child-initiated and adult-led experiences. Resources are plentiful; however, children's enjoyment and learning is sometimes restricted because of the way these are arranged and presented. For example, a wide variety of creative resources are not easily accessible to children and this limits their ability to spontaneously use their imagination and express their ideas. Also, there is nowhere at present where work in progress can be kept safely for children to return to at a later date.

Children are successfully gaining some of the skills they will need in future life in meaningful and effective ways. For example, independence is successfully encouraged as children wash their hands, use the toilet and put on clothing ready for physical education sessions. They are learning about technology and how it is used as they play with interactive toys and use computers. Counting and calculating are cleverly encouraged throughout sessions and children independently access a wide selection of books. There is a calm and relaxed atmosphere in the pre-school and children chat happily to staff about things that interest them. Staff show children that their comments are valued by actively listening and asking questions.

Children's welfare is enhanced because excellent steps are taken by the setting to promote their good health and well-being. They engage in an abundance of physical activity, and hygiene routines are thorough and routinely reinforced. Children know when and why they need to wash their hands and understand about safety in the sun. Their understanding of safety is clearly demonstrated through their play and communication. For example, they know that they must not run inside because they might fall and hurt themselves or others. They practice road safety on outings and this is reinforced through discussion and role play. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are aware of staff expectations and show lots of care and consideration for others. Staff provide children with excellent role models to follow, and children's good behaviour, efforts and achievements are promptly recognised and acknowledged.

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	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	2

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